

Role and Mission of Vietnamese Revolutionary Press in Protecting the Party's Ideological Foundation, Fighting against Wrong and Hostile Views and Some Recommendations

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Abstract: *The article discusses the issue of promoting the role and mission of Vietnamese revolutionary press in protecting the Party's ideological foundation, fighting against wrong and hostile views. The author affirms that the revolutionary press is a pioneering force on the front to defend the Party's ideological foundation as well as fight against wrong and hostile views. Also, the article offers solutions for the revolutionary press to promote its role and mission in the context of media explosion today.*

Keywords: *defend the Party's ideological foundation, revolutionary press, roles and missions, fight against, wrong, hostile views.*

1. Vietnamese revolutionary press – a spearhead force in the front of protecting the Party's ideological foundation, fighting against wrong and hostile views

The Politburo issued Resolution No. 35-NQ/TW dated October 22, 2018 on strengthening the protection of the Party's ideological foundation, fighting against wrong and hostile views in the new context. The Resolution states that Vietnamese revolutionary press is a spearhead force in the front to protect the Party's ideological foundation and fight against false and hostile views.

“...The press in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam is an essential medium of communication for social life; the voice of Party and State agencies, socio-political organizations, socio-politico-professional organizations, social organizations, socio-professional organizations; and a forum of the People...” (Press Law, amended and supplemented 2016). Accordingly, the press has the following tasks and responsibilities: “To provide truthful information about domestic and world affairs in line with the interests of

the country and People; To communicate and disseminate, and contribute to forming and protecting the guidelines and policies of the Party, policies and laws of the State, achievements of the country and the world according to the guiding principles and purposes of press agencies; to contribute to the political stability and socio-economic development, raising the People's intellect, satisfying the healthy cultural needs of the People, protecting and promoting national traditions, building and promoting socialist democracy, strengthening the great national unity bloc, and building and protecting the socialist Fatherland of Vietnam..." (Press Law, amended and supplemented 2016).

The Vietnamese revolutionary press demonstrates its role and strength in the ideological and cultural front by well performing its functions and tasks and ensuring its operation according to the principles of a revolutionary press.

Firstly, journalists and press agencies must well perform their social functions in professional activities.

First, the press must really be a useful and convenient means of daily information and communication for the public. People need social communication for their development. Among various means and channels for an individual's information and communication need, the press is a modern, popular, convenient and reliable mass media. To attract the public attention and promote the use of press as a regular, continuous and positive means of communication, the contents, methods and techniques of the press must be suitable for the public needs, especially in the context of the present media boom that requires the press to assert its name and position in the social mass media.

The press must affirm its role and position as a means of social connection and linkage. Today, the social public has many forms and means of communication to link and connect individuals to individuals, individuals to groups, social communities to countries, regions and the world. Those forms and means of social connection and linkage have both advantages and disadvantages, either contributing to promoting the development or creating communication crisis that inhibits the development of individuals and society. Especially, this has become more and more complicated and

difficult to manage communication activities when we are living in a digital society, with the boom of the Internet and social networks.

In this context, the press is still considered the “mainstream” media, the most reliable of all. If journalist works and products become close, friendly and useful to the public, the press will be used by the public as a trustworthy instrument and means to link and connect socially. Then, the press is really a “spearhead force” in the “troops” of social communication.

In the context of a diverse and complex society with chaotic information, the press has played an increasingly important role in ideological and information orientation for the public. In particular, the press must promote its role in protecting the Party’s ideological foundation, fighting and refuting false and hostile claims that are being frantically carried out in the mass media, especially on the Internet and social networks today.

Along with that, the press must play a more active role and function as an instrument and means involved in social organization, management, supervision and criticism. Over the past time, the Vietnamese revolutionary press has been performing this function very well. However, in order to meet the new requirements, especially in the context of the media explosion and the disturbance of true and fake news, journalists and press agencies need to make even more efforts, follow the vibes of reality, thoroughly investigate hot issues of public concerns to inform methodically and accurately to the public. In that way, the press can promote its power to join the political system for effective governance, administration, supervision and social criticism.

Besides, the press has cultural, educational and entertainment functions as it is a field of cultural life. The press products have both material and spiritual values which will be everlasting if journalists and press agencies always create high quality journalistic works and products for the society.

The press must be a large and special “school” of society, in which there are special “teachers, learners, and lessons”. Journalists are the special “teachers”. Each journalist work and product is a profound lesson with high educational and intellectual significance, so journalists deserve to be “teachers” and the public deserves to be “learners” to accept that great knowledge.

The press is not only an instrument and means of social information - communication, linkage, connection, monitoring and social criticism, a cultural and educational product, but also has meaningful entertainment values. A journalist product that is attractive to the public must be important and interesting. Important information must be correct, beneficial to the public and the institution. Interesting information must be good, attractive to the public that entertains, refreshes and relieves the public from stress. Also, it helps to cultivate knowledge and improve education through its cultural and recreational messages.

In addition, the press must play the economic and service functions. Journalism is considered a special kind of goods with qualitative values, especially in terms of spirit and ideology. Regarding economic value, press agencies also make certain contributions to the State budget through revenue-generating activities such as selling products, posting advertisements, providing social services, etc. The press agencies in Vietnam has gradually become financially self-sufficient, balancing revenue sources, serving effectively and efficiently for press activities; at the same time, significantly reducing expenditures from the State budget.

Second, journalists and press agencies need to comply with the principles of journalist activities and regulations in the law and professional ethics of journalists, especially in the context of the present media explosion.

According to the theory of Vietnamese revolutionary press, journalists and press agencies operate according to fundamental principles, including: ensuring orientation; truth, objectivity; democracy, openness; humanity. Regardless of its affiliation, State-run or private press, the press has a distinct political bias. The Vietnamese revolutionary press is an essential instrument of communication of the Party, State and people. Press activities are to protect the interests of the Party, State and people. Notably, the most notable factor of Vietnamese revolutionary press is the Party-oriented character. The Party plays the leadership, direction and orientation role over the press activities, and this is a core and unchanged principle. State governs the press based on the legal system, particularly the Press Law and related legal documents. In addition, the activities of journalists and press

agencies are also based on the convention of journalist ethics promulgated by the Vietnam Journalists Association.

Truth and objectivity are important principles for the press to build up prestige, brand and trust with the public. The public trusts the press more than other media and forms of communication (e.g social media) because the press' voices are objective, collective, and legitimate with clear stances, viewpoints and interests of the collective and take responsibility for the messages given. The press's messages are very high value in terms of culture - ideology, education, entertainment, etc. Voices of social media (Facebook, Youtube, Zalo, Twitter, Viber, Instagram, and such) are subjective statements, for personal benefit, with little social responsibility for the effects of the message.

The spectrum of truth and objectivity in journalist activities is relative. Objectivity or non-objectivity depends a lot on the viewpoints of information and the interests of the press. To build and maintain trust in the public, the Vietnamese revolutionary press information must be quick, up-to-date, current, new, correct and highly humanistic.

Vietnam's revolutionary press must be a free, democratic and open so that all people have the right to receive information and freely express within the framework of the law. Press agencies must report quickly, timely, honestly and objectively pieces of news, focusing on public and transparent information quality. Journalists, press agencies must have the mindset that "dare to think, dare to do, dare to take responsibility" to promptly publicize journalistic work on the issues that society concerns, the government needs, and the people require. Besides, the press must focus on information that protects the Party's ideological foundation, be resolute and stronger in the fight to refute false and hostile views taking advantage of the Internet and social networks views to smear the Party's prestige and destroy the path to socialism, dominating and obscuring the press role as an essential instrument of communication of the Party and State.

Vietnam's revolutionary press must be humane, for the people, serve the social life and protect people's interests. It is a preeminent press, and this has been proved for over the past 90 years through immense achievements that Vietnam's revolutionary press has gained.

For the press to become professional and advanced, it must clearly demonstrate the nature, functions and tasks and strictly implement the principles of the revolutionary and professional press. Particularly, it must well perform the duty of communicating, facilitating and mobilizing the masses to take part in protecting the Party's ideological foundation, fighting against wrong and hostile views.

2. Solutions for the Vietnamese revolutionary press to continue promoting its role and responsibility in protecting the Party's ideological foundation, fighting against false and hostile views

To promote the role and responsibility in protecting the Party's ideological foundation, fighting against false and hostile views in the context of communication boom today, the following points should be taken into consideration:

First, the Party and State should pay more attention, exert more directions and guidelines, orientation and governance in the press activities so that the press can develop and promote its strength, role in the front of culture and ideology. Particularly, the press must be the spearhead in this front.

In fact, the Party has issued many resolutions, directives and guidelines related to the field of ideology and press publishing through the Party Congresses, the plenums of the Party Central Committee. From correct and timely direction and orientation, Vietnam's revolutionary press has always taken the lead in the field of cultural ideology of the Party, being the voice of the Party and State and forum of democracy, openness for the Party, State and people.

Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc signed and promulgated Decision No. 362/QĐ-TTg dated April 3, 2019, approving the Plan for development and management of Vietnam's press by 2025. The decision clarifies the orientation, plan and roadmap, in which special attention should be paid to the restructuring of printing press agencies in association with reforming the organizational and management model in the direction of downsizing press agencies, focusing on the role, responsibility of the press agencies, creating more favorable conditions for the direction and management work besides offering financial autonomy to press agencies. Additionally, the State allocated budget to a number of key news agencies and implemented

the mechanism of ordering newspapers and magazines to serve the defined political tasks.

The restructuring and downsizing of press agencies from the central to local levels aim to make the press leaner, more capable and professional in operation. The key press agencies should be properly invested in resources so that they can well perform the political tasks assigned by the Party and the State, including the important task of coordinating with other “troops” to protect the Party’s ideological foundation and fighting against false and hostile views.

Second, press agencies need to focus on innovating the content and form of journalistic products to meet the public’s tastes in the context of information boom and harsh competition, particularly information on the Internet and social networks.

In the Plan for development and management of Vietnam’s press by 2025, it defines that the press innovates the form and content of products to meet the general and specialized information requirements of specific groups of readers and areas.

To implement the task of protecting the Party’s ideological foundation, fighting against false and hostile views, broadcasting radio and television programs should increase the quantity of special pages and columns on “Protecting the Party’s ideological foundation, fighting against false and hostile views” apart from diversifying the contents, press agencies, especially political-social newspapers (both print and online);. Simultaneously, it is necessary to organize journalist teams with creativeness, firm political quality, profound professional knowledge and journalistic skills, capable of creating journalistic works that are high quality to fight the enemy on the ideological-cultural front.

Third, press agencies and journalists need to innovate, update their journalism methods and skills, especially in creating and publishing journalistic products on protecting the Party’s ideological foundation, fighting against wrong and hostile views.

Today, thanks to scientific and technological advances, journalistic techniques are renewed rapidly by using a number of applications to create high quality communication efficiency. Traditional press has become

“weaker” than new types of newspapers and media in using technology platforms to create content and publish journalistic products.

Among various types of press (print press, radio, television, online newspaper), radio, television and online newspapers have many advantages to use innovative technology platforms. Today, radio and television stations also produce programs for broadcasting on the Internet, and receive signals on mobile devices, so they provide a wide range of options for the public to use their products; at the same time “retaining” the customers in the context that social networks have strongly dominated the public’s demands.

Online newspapers are the most dominant type in terms of the new technique and technologies application to create and online products, and the ability to reach new audiences. However, the online press agencies also face with the risk of “being left behind” if they fail to approach new technologies and transforming the operating model. Consequently, the public will be interested in using the new one and forget about that type of press, even it used to be the most advanced form - online newspapers.

To promote the press’s strength in the new context, especially the role of the spearhead force in protecting the Party’s ideological foundation, fighting against false and hostile views, the Party, State and governing agencies must pay special attention to renovation of the press operation model according to newsroom convergence, multi - media, multi - skill, multi-type, on multi-technology, multi-platform, and multi-interactive, etc.

Multi-platform journalism products will be more appealing to the public and will have overwhelming effects on social networks which post fake news, malicious, false and hostile news that day by day smear, infringe upon the interests, insulting the honor and dignity of organizations and individuals; contributing to firmly protecting the Party’s ideological foundation.

Fourthly, each press manager should have a comprehensive and correct awareness of the press’s role in protecting the Party’s ideological foundation and fighting against false and hostile views. Besides, this is also the responsibility of journalists and press agencies. To protect the Party and its ideological foundation is also to protect the press agencies and journalists, because the revolutionary press is the press of the Party, the State and the entire people.

Fifth, to promote the leading role of the press in protecting the Party's ideological foundation and fighting against false and hostile views, the State needs to have specific policies to encourage journalists, and press agencies which create high-quality products. Over the years, we have organized the National Press Awards, Golden Hammer and Sickle Awards, Journalism Awards on Anti-corruption, and many other activities, which have timely honored the merits of Vietnamese revolutionary journalists.

However, press policies need to be paid more attention and investment in resources, especially for socio-political press agencies, key press units so that press agencies, journalists can promote effectiveness in defending the Party's ideological foundation and fighting against false and hostile views.

Sixth, more attention should be paid to recruiting, employing, training and fostering the contingent of truly professional Vietnamese revolutionary journalists, on par with regional and international standard. In fact, journalists who are well-trained from reputable training institutions often possess good political qualities, high professional qualifications, skills and ethics. They are the human resources to create high-quality journalistic works and products, and maintain the reputation of the revolutionary press. If journalists participate in protecting the Party's ideological foundation, fighting against false and hostile views, those who are "amateur", untrained on journalism (such as full-time training, long-term, short-term training), and unscrupulous can cause crisis and harms to society and "self evolution", "self-transformation" within the revolutionary press contingents.

To have professional journalist teams that meet the important political tasks assigned by the Party, State and people, journalism training institutions must be paid much attention to and need more investment in all aspects. Furthermore, journalism training institutions and lecturers need to update their knowledge and skills of modern journalism in vivid realities to innovate and improve curricular, training and retraining programs. The Academy of Journalism and Communication—a leading and well-known journalist training institution—needs more investment, restructuring, innovation in the curricular, training programs, lectures as well as improving the qualifications of the teaching staff to meet training requirements in the new context. Moreover, the Academy should integrate knowledge and skills to

fight against and refute wrong and hostile views when teaching creative journalistic contents so that journalists who write and follow in-depth about the issue can produce high quality works.

In conclusion, defending the Party's ideological foundation and fighting against wrong and hostile views requires various "troops" to join, including the press. The Vietnamese revolutionary press is the press of the Party, State and people of Vietnam, striving to serve the interests of the country and the people. Therefore, with the role of a spearhead force on the ideological-cultural front, the press must increasingly promote its strength in all fields of information and communication. In particular, the press needs to demonstrate more strongly its roles, functions, tasks and operational principles in order to participate and coordinate with other forces in the work of protecting the Party's ideological foundation, fighting against the wrong and hostile views, especially in the context of the boom of media and social networks./.

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