An Orientation and Solutions to Defend the Party's Ideological Foundation on Social Media in Vietnam

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Abstract: *With the advantage of high-speed information transmission and wide information coverage, the internet and social media are becoming integral to human life, bringing substantial benefits to countries and people worldwide including Vietnam. However, due to cyberspace's characteristics of openness, freedom, diversity and equality, the boundary between the physical and virtual world is often blurred. It has posed challenges in defending the Party's ideological foundation. Social media are often used by hostile and reactionary forces for propaganda activities to distort and deny Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought. Therefore, it is an urgent requirement to strengthen the protection of the Party's ideological foundation and fight against wrong and hostile viewpoints in cyberspace. The article proposes some orientations and solutions to enhance the defense of the Party's ideological foundation and to fight against wrong and hostile viewpoints on social media in Vietnam in the coming time.*

Keywords: *orientations; solutions; defending ideological foundation; Communist Party of Vietnam; social media.*

Vietnam is a country that is in the process of forming and developing an information society. Social media is a diverse online communication platform, without any geographical barrier, and offers conveniences to its users. In the digital age and integration period, it would be a big mistake if we underestimate the importance of social networks and their impact on people, agencies, organizations, localities and countries. Social media is a tool to create social capital for individuals and social groups when they directly participate in sharing and interacting on social networks as well as for agencies and organizations that have a responsibility for media management. Social media is also a communication tool with a strong ability for organizing information activities which include social communication, creating social linkages, and have a major influence on social relationships.

However, reality has demonstrated the two-sided impact of social media on people's lives. In addition to its positive effects, social media also causes negative impacts, especially in the field of ideology – creating a culture in which hostile and reactionary forces are making use of the development of social media to attack the Vietnamese revolution.

Due to the rapid spread of information on social media, where the ability to verify and control this spread is limited, a lot of bad and toxic information as well

as wrongful claims have had a negative impact on the thoughts and feelings of the masses and obstructed implementation of the Party and State's guidelines and policies causing socio-political instability. Hostile and reactionary forces even use social media to entice people conducting normal activities to distort the socialist regime in our country. This is a risk that cannot be underestimated in the current context. Therefore, defending the Party's ideological foundation and fighting against false and hostile thoughts on social media is an urgent task to promote positive impacts and limit negative influences of social media on the spiritual life of the Vietnamese people in the current period. The article proposes a number of orientations and solutions to contribute to the implementation of the above tasks.

1. Orientations to defend the Party's ideological foundation and prevent wrongful and hostile views on social media in Vietnam in the coming period.

First, orientations for the subjects that actively defend the ideological foundation of the Party and prevent wrongful and hostile views that appear on social media.

To defend the ideological foundation of the Party and fight against false and hostile views on social media in our country today, it is necessary to strongly promote proactive self-resistance, resulting in self-immunity for the entire Party, Army and people. With the Party as the leading subject, the State is the management subject, the whole Army and people are the subjects participating in this struggle. In fact, our Party and State have always actively promoted its role as leading and managing subjects in the process of defending the Party's ideological foundation as well as fighting and preventing wrongful and hostile views on all fronts, including social networks. In the face of the relentless attack of hostile and reactionary forces aimed at destroying the ideological foundation of the Party, the State, the regime, etc., our Party and State have continuously improved their effectiveness in the leadership and management at all levels of party committees, authorities from the central to local levels, and all classes of people actively participating in the struggle to defend the ideological foundation and prevent wrongful and hostile views on social media. During the past time, the Party and State have proactively issued many directives, resolutions and laws to affirm their role in leading, directing and orienting the protection of the Party's ideological foundation, while fighting to prevent wrong and hostile views on all fronts, including social media.

Defending the ideological foundation of the Party and preventing hostile views on social media is an ideological struggle taking place on a completely new front – social media. Therefore, the Party's leadership role and the State's management role are the decisive factors for the victory of this struggle as well as the promotion of all actors in the struggle to defend the ideological foundation of the Party which is to prevent wrongful and hostile views on social media.

Besides the Party and the State, the entire people and society also have the responsibility to defend the Party's ideological foundation. These are forces that

directly participate in the struggle to defend the ideological foundation of the Party and prevent wrongful and hostile views on social media. Among them, the most important ones are those who do the work of education, training, and political theory research for the cause of ideological work.

Thus, the subjects defending the Party's ideological foundation and fighting against wrongful and hostile views on social media are the entire Party, people and army, the entire political system. Each subject must actively resist, thereby creating immunity against bad and toxic information.

Second, for goals of defending the Party's ideological foundation, and fighting against wrongful and hostile views on social media.

The primary objective for determining the orientation towards the object of defending the Party's ideological foundation and the struggle to prevent wrongful and hostile views on social media is to identify groups of opponents which are propagating false and hostile views on social media in our country today and expose their purposes.

Enemies who are opposing the Party's ideological foundation on all fronts, including social media, can be divided into three main groups. 1) There are those who have a contrasting ideology. While our Party holds the proletariat ideology, the followers of the bourgeois ideology and other remnant ideologies are also fiercely opposed to us. 2) There are those who are politically hostile forces against the socialist regime, including reactionary opponents and political opportunists. 3) There are those who are members of the Communist Party but have degraded in political ideology, morality and lifestyle, following the path of "self-evolution" and "selftransformation." These are enemies that we need to focus on in the cause of defending the Party's ideological foundation and fighting to prevent wrongful and hostile views on social media.

By clearly identifying these target groups and their goals, the assigned purpose in defending the Party's ideological foundation which is fighting to prevent wrongful and hostile views on social media defends the Party, the State, the people, the socialist regime, the continuing road to socialism, and the interests of the nation, and finally the entire Vietnamese people.

Third, for the various methods of defending the Party's ideological foundation, preventing wrongful and hostile views on social media.

The content of defending the Party's ideological foundation and preventing wrongful and hostile views on social media is rich and diverse and covers many issues, including the following main goals. The first is to defend Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought – the ideological foundation of our Party. The second is to defend the Party's credo and guidelines, the State's policies and laws, to protect the nation's history, the history of the Party, the history of the revolution, as well as the prestige and honor of the Communist Party of Vietnam's members, comrades,

and leaders in dealing with wrongful information about their background and private life. Third, the process of defending the Party's ideological foundation, preventing wrongful and hostile views on social media must be associated with the struggle against degradation in terms of political ideology, morality, and lifestyle such as "self-evolution" and "self-transformation" in a large number of cadres and party members in our country today.

Thus, the content of defending the Party's ideological foundation, preventing wrongful and hostile views on social media needs to be renewed towards a more diversified, inclusive and comprehensive way to improve the quality of life, suitable for the struggle in the new situation, especially the struggle in cyberspace – a completely new front for the ideological struggle of our country.

Fourth, for method of defending the Party's ideological foundation, preventing wrongful and hostile views on social media.

Methods to defend the Party's ideological foundation and prevent wrongful and hostile views on social media must be based on two points. First, it is necessary to make a clear distinction between what is right and what is wrongful and hostile and second, it is necessary to clearly define the methods of attacking the Party's ideological foundation used by hostile forces on social media.

Social media is the new frontline of defense which can be used to defend the Party's ideological foundation, preventing wrongful and hostile views. It should be renewed in new and diverse ways and methods, expressing initiative, timeliness and resoluteness in the struggle. Specifically: 1) Create official accounts on social media to propagate Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh Thought, the Party's guidelines, and the State's policies and laws. 2) Build a transparent information environment on social media by eliminating distorted and wrongful views of hostile forces. 3) Actively grasp the situation for early detection of activities by hostile forces on social media. 4) Investigate thoroughly and handle those who spread and assist in spreading fake news on social media.

Fifth, to establish the conditions to ensure defending the Party's ideological foundation, preventing wrongful and hostile views on social media.

To strengthen the protection of the Party's ideological foundation and fight against wrongful and hostile views on social media, it is necessary to ensure the following basic conditions. First, in any circumstance and in any case, we must be steadfast in Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought – the ideological foundation that determines the scientific and revolutionary nature of the Party. Second, maintaining the Party's leadership role and enhancing the State's management role is the most basic condition for defending the Party's ideological foundation and preventing wrongful and hostile views on social media. Third, it is necessary to promote the initiative and activity of all classes of people in the cause of defending the Party's ideological foundation and thereby prevent wrongful and

hostile views on social media. Fourth, strengthen the material and technical base for the work of defending the Party's ideological foundation. Fifth, the leadership must establish international cooperation in defending the Party's ideological foundation and thereby prevent wrongful and hostile views on social media.

2. Solutions to strengthen the cause of defending the Party's ideological foundation and prevent wrongful and hostile views being made on social media in Vietnam in the coming time.

To implement the above objectives and contribute to firmly defending the Party's ideological foundation and thereby prevent wrongful and hostile views on social media, the following solutions are proposed.

First, building and perfecting institutions and policies for leaders, managers and users of social media.

In the coming time, in order to firmly defend the Party's ideological foundation and prevent wrongful and hostile views on social media, the Party and State need to continue amending and perfecting the Party's regulations and the State's laws in the following directions. First, it is necessary to focus on building and perfecting the Party's regulations to raise the responsibility of cadres and party members to fight against hostile forces' conspiracies and provide cadres the means of countermeasures. Second, it is imperative to build a mechanism to protect participants in the struggle. In fact, there are cases of people who participate in the struggle against wrongful and hostile views, and the deterioration of cadres and party members, of being attacked by hostile forces, without any protective mechanism or voice to defend for them. Due to this situation, it is not encouraging to participate in the struggle. Third, there should be regulations to distinguish between constructive ideas and the wrongful views of hostile forces. This is a critical issue to promote democracy, strengthen exchanges, dialogues and criticisms to build and perfect guidelines and policies for national development. Fourth, continue to improve regulations on setting an example among cadres and party members, especially senior party officials and members who participate in the struggle to oppose wrongful and hostile views. We must consider this as a key indicator in the reviewing task completion. In the cases of party members including senior officials and former senior leaders who have violations expressing wrongful views but do not recognize their mistakes and shortcomings we need to resolutely implement Party discipline ranging from warning to dismissal, expulsion, or even criminal punishment according to the law if serious violations are committed.

Second, building and renovating content and methods of defending the Party's ideological foundation, thereby preventing wrongful and hostile views on social media.

The content to defend the Party's ideological foundation, prevent wrongful and hostile views on social media must ensure a combination of "construction"

and "resistance." Construction is to be core and long-term. Resistance is to be immediate, drastic and effective. Renovating the programs to defend the ideological foundation of the Party needs to observe the wrongful views and arguments of hostile forces to make arguments to refute them.

In the coming time, it is essential to strengthen the construction and expansion of content and diversity in the form of information pages sponsored by Party and State agencies, as well as socio-political organizations on the internet to dominate cyberspace. It is essential to actively post positive information on social media, including the basic contents of Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought; values of virtues and traditions of the nation; the successes of the great resistance wars; great achievements of the country's renovation; the creative application of Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought into the reality of Vietnam's revolution; the heroic culture and history of the Vietnamese; as well as the image of the homeland, the country, and the people of Vietnam.

This work must focus on theoretical and practical arguments as a basis for the struggle and opposition. This should include enhanced dialogue and persuasion; promotion of democracy in theoretical research; capitalize on the opinions of prestigious people in society, intellectuals of science and technology, artists and writers, village elders, village chiefs, and religious dignitaries.

Likewise, it must focus on propagating and spreading information about defending the Party's ideological foundation on social media to the country's youth, especially students. They are a high-quality human resource of the country, who will spread patriotism to the whole society. In political theory training at both schools and Party schools, students can participate in propaganda activities to defend the Party's ideological foundation and prevent wrongful views of hostile forces on social media. Tasks, such as "like," "share," writing propaganda articles, etc. can be done through local Youth Unions to defend the Party's ideological foundation on social media.

The country must strengthen the effectiveness of political theory education through new media channels and in the national education system. This includes application of information technology in training and nurturing political theory. This process will strengthen forms of propaganda and education via social media, political theory elearning, etc.

This work requires the promotion of the pioneering role of lecturers, experts and students at the Party school system in defending the Party's ideological foundation. It will strengthen the responsibility of officials, lecturers, students at Party schools, and political theory lecturers of training institutions when using social media. It will clearly define the responsibilities of each cadre, lecturer, student at the Party school system, and political theory lecturer of training institutions to be a pioneer soldier in the Party's revolutionary cause. The result will be a proactive defense

of the Party's ideological foundation, preventing wrongful and hostile views on social media. By sharing and widely disseminating research on political theory, updating content and methods to protect the ideological foundation of the Party these actions will prevent wrongful and hostile views on social media.

It is essential to further promote the role of press and media agencies in participating in forums on social media which are participating directly in the struggle to defend the Party's ideological foundation, prevent wrongful and hostile views. Press and media agencies need to actively spread official and correct information about events and policies of the Party and the State to orient public opinion and contribute to repelling bad and toxic information on social media. This path will increase the awareness and responsibility of journalists, reporters, and editors on social media.

Third, enhance training and fostering of core cadres to defend the Party's ideological foundation, to prevent wrongful and hostile views on social media.

To promote the role of citizens in defending the Party's ideological foundation, while preventing wrongful and hostile views on social media, it is necessary to focus on the training and fostering of core cadres in this struggle. First, researching the needs and developing the strategies for training and fostering core cadres to strengthen defense of the Party's ideological foundation and prevent wrongful and hostile views on social media. Especially for cadres doing ideological and theoretical work on Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought, it is necessary to improve the quality and quantity of this cadre to ensure the Party's ideological foundation is protected and developed in the new context. To do so, we need to have a long-term strategy to train political cadres at the university master, and doctoral levels, those who have skills in foreign languages and information technology that have the potential to become good theorists in this field. In addition, it is necessary to have enrollment policies directed toward creating conditions to attract students and improve the quality of training in political theory majors. Specifically, there should be a policy of exempting tuition fees or granting scholarships according to a specific number of quotas. Likewise, arranging jobs after training such as police and military training schools for the teaching professions in political theory will overcome difficulties in attracting students with these majors. On the other hand, it is necessary to further improve the quality of training in political theory disciplines through standardized curricula, strengthening of scientific research and systematizing professional requirements of lecturers in these disciplines. Second, we must clearly define the objectives, programs and contents of training and fostering the core staff. Third, we must train and foster students methodically to ensure uniformity, consistent with the training objectives for students involved in the training and fostering process. Fourth, this process must strongly innovate methods and forms of training to foster growth of the core staff. Fifth, we must

continue to build and perfect the material and technical foundation for training and fostering the core staff.

For the above solutions to be effectively implemented, it is necessary to create a favorable mechanism to organize courses as a second degree for the following majors of political theory lecturers, journalism-media, ideological work-culture to supplement the core force to defend the Party's ideological foundation and prevent wrongful and hostile views in ministries, sectors and localities. The history of the Vietnamese revolution shows that, in tough times, it is necessary to maximize the front lines' strength, hence our Party attaches great importance to training cadres doing ideological work, journalism and media. There were times when there were more than a dozen Party schools and Central Propaganda schools performing the task of training ideological cadres for the Party in all regions of the country. However, in the later stages, the training of full-time cadres doing ideological, theoretical, press-communication work has not been given due attention. Therefore, in this tough, fierce and complicated struggle, we need to pay more attention to the training and fostering of cadres doing ideological and theoretical work. It is necessary to focus on intensive training for the core cadres, especially those in the press and media agencies to enhance the position and role of the media in the fight against wrongful and hostile views. They will contribute to handling false and distorted information in the fields of ideology, theory, literature and art. In addition, solutions are needed to strengthen international cooperation in training and development for lecturers, experts and those with specialized training institutions in this field.

Fourth, increase investment of resources and construct models to defend the Party's ideological foundation to prevent wrongful and hostile views on social media.

To raise resources, design and develop models to protect the Party's ideological foundation, and fight against wrongful and hostile views on social media, we need to fulfill the following requirements. First, we must invest in human resources, especially in political bravery, political theory, methods and skills. Second, there should be increased investment in material and technical foundations to ensure conditions in a modern direction. Third, we must construct a model for a specialized core force. Fourth, construction of a model is needed for coordination between forces to promote the role, synergy and superiority of all forces, from the central to the grassroots, in all fields in defending the Party's ideological foundation.

Fifth, utilize the synergy of the whole political system and social organizations to defend the Party's ideological foundation, preventing wrongful and hostile views on social media.

To promote the synergy between the political system and social organizations in defending the Party's ideological foundation, we need to implement the following. First, agencies in the political system must regularly follow the directions,

orientations and instructions of the Central Committee, the Politburo, and the Secretariat of the Party Central Committee on defending the Party's ideological foundation, preventing wrongful and hostile views on social media. Second, agencies in the political system, depending on their functions and tasks, need to develop annual plans, programs and solutions to carry out the content of fighting against wrongful and hostile views, defending the ideological foundation of the Party. Third, we must strengthen leadership, direction and review to proactively grasp the situation and attain an early detection of activities of adversaries that oppose and distort. One obvious method would be to regularly review and detect blogs, Facebook pages, websites and forums that often publish false and distorted information that oppose the ideological foundation of the Party. Fourth, it is imperative to promote the role of party committees, party organizations, leaders, and propaganda boards at all levels. This includes Steering Committee 35 and functional agencies at all levels, especially in light of their role and responsibility of setting an example to cadres and party members. Fifth, Party committees and authorities at all levels should actively communicate and strengthen dialogue with the people while actively and flexibly participating in specific social issues. This includes regularly maintaining and effectively implementing coordination with the authorities. Another orientation is to bring into play the role of the press agencies, creating a wide and tight posture in the fight against wrongful and hostile views, while defending the ideological foundation of the Party. Sixth, integration of activities to defend the ideological foundation of the Party is mandatory in preventing wrongful and hostile views on social media in activities of the Party Committee. This will strengthen the organization of activities for specialized topics at branches. Seventh, this work will require strengthening of management and control activities for social networking sites and actively use technical measures to effectively prevent access to malicious websites. All of these activities are building to raise awareness and vigilance to the manifestations of opportunism, pragmatism and revisionism on social media and even among cadres and party members of the political system and social organizations. In this way the country is building a force of the whole people to fight in defending the Party's ideological foundation and preventing wrongful and hostile views on social media.

Sixth, strengthen the application of science and technology in defending the Party's ideological foundation, preventing wrongful and hostile views on social media.

To defend the ideological foundation of the Party and effectively fight against wrongful and hostile views on social media, it is necessary to focus on the application of science and technology in this activity. First, this can be done by promoting the application of information technology and artificial intelligence, while paying attention to investing in facilities and electronic equipment. Second, perfect the legal system on using the internet and social media while ensuring a

fair and transparent legal environment and creating a legal framework to deter and handle individuals and organizations that spread fake information on the internet and social media. Third, make a resolute fight against false, hostile views put forth by political opportunists in cyberspace in general, and on Facebook in particular. Fourth, increase investment for the cyber security specialized force, especially the scientific, technological, technical and professional level to proactively and promptly prevent and disable cyber activities infringing on national security. Fifth, we need to strengthen international cooperation in the field of cybersecurity protection.

In conclusion, in the context of Industrial Revolution 4.0, there is a potential but also challenging digital world opening for each individual and the Vietnamese nation. We need to take advantage of opportunities while overcoming and preventing risks and challenges for the cause of building socialism. Conducting research on orientations and solutions to defend the Party's ideological foundation, thereby preventing wrongful and hostile views on social media is to contribute to that purpose. Hopefully, the synchronous implementation of the above solutions will make a significant contribution to the cause of protecting the ideological foundation of the Party, effectively fighting and preventing hostile and wrongful views on the social network environment and contribute to the successful construction of socialism in our country.

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