The Implementation of the Principle That the Communist Party of Vietnam is Closely Associated with the People

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Abstract: *Close association with the people is a primary rule of existence and development of communist parties. In all periods, the constant consolidation of the close relationship between the Communist Party and the people has been an immutable principle of Marxism-Leninism on building the Party. Over its historical span of 90 years of construction and growth, the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) has always been deeply aware of the great role of the people and focused on building its close relationship with them. This is considered the Party's source of strength and contributed to driving the national revolutionary cause led by the Party from one victory to another. Therefore, being closely associated with the people has become one of the five current organizational and operational principles of the Communist Party of Vietnam, a mandatory requirement for all party organizations and members in their activities and work.*

Keywords: *Communist Party of Vietnam, principle, close association, the people.*

1. The formation and content of the principle that the Communist Party of Vietnam is closely associated with the people

The Communist Party of Vietnam has always been deeply aware of the role of the people and attached great importance to building a close relationship between the Party and the people. During the years of secret operations, with fierce repression before power was seized, the Party always required its cadres, party members and organizations to stick with the people and actively propagate and mobilize the masses to participate in the revolutionary forces. In 1945, in the 15th year after its establishment, the Communist Party of Vietnam with more than 5,000 members had successfully led the people to the August Revolution, and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam was born.

At the 2nd Congress in 1951, although the Party's close association with the people had not yet been affirmed as an organizational and operational principle of the Party, it was stated in the Party Charter that "the Vietnamese Labor Party considers the work of serving the people as the Party's operation line. Therefore, each party member must be in close touch with the people, understand the people's aspirations and needs in order to promptly and appropriately resolve any

problem"[1]. The Party Charter adopted at the 4th Congress in 1976 further added, "the Communist Party of Vietnam must be in close contact with the people"[2]. Under the period of national renovation, the Party Charter at the 7th, 8th, and 9th Congresses stipulated that: "the Party is closely associated with the people, shall respect the people's right to mastery and submit to the supervision of the people, unite and lead the people to carry out the revolutionary cause"[3].

Ultimately at the 10th National Congress in 2006, the CPV officially concretized this into a principle in the Party Charter stating, the Party "keeps a close contact with the people"[4] which marked a turning point, in the Party's new awareness of its relationship with the people in the new situation. This principle's expression was then amended at the 11th National Congress through the Party Charter that the Party is "closely associated with the people" [5], further affirming that this was one of the five organizational and operational principles of the Party. "The Party is closely associated with the people, shall respect and promote the people's right to mastery, shall rely on the people for Party building and submit to the supervision of the people, shall operate within the framework of the Constitution and law"[6].

At the 13th Congress in 2021, the CPV pointed out lessons learned after 35 years of national renewal (Doi Moi). "In all Party and State affairs, we must always deeply grasp the concept of "people are the root;" truly believe, respect and promote the people's right to mastery, persistently implement the motto of "people know, people discuss, people do, people monitor, people supervise, people benefit." People are the center and the subject of the cause of renewal (Doi Moi) and Fatherland construction and protection. All undertakings and policies must really come from people's life, aspirations, rights and legitimate interests. The Party must tighten a close relationship with the people, rely on the people to build the Party, consider people's happiness and well-being as a goal to strive for, consolidate and strengthen the people's trust in the Party, State and the socialist regime"[7].

It is clear that the principle of the Party being closely associated with the people plays a particularly important position and role. It is a tradition, a valuable lesson, a core quality that displays the essence and vitality of the Communist Party of Vietnam. It is one of the five organizational and operational principles drawn by the CPV while building the Party and leading the revolution. This principle contributes to ensuring that the Party is strong politically, ideologically, morally and organizationally, ensuring its cadres and organizations with high leadership capacity and combat ability. Good implementation of this principle will strengthen the close relationship between the Party and the people, guarantee the Party's invincible strength, ensure the Party's rules of existence and development, and ensure every victory of the revolution. Additionally, it plays an important role in preventing risk of bureaucracy and splitting away from the people, in maintaining and strengthening the nature of the working class, while upholding the Party's ruling role and promoting the role of the people in the cause of national construction and

defense. The objectives, tasks and contents of the Party's mass mobilization work are also stipulated through this principle.

The content of the principle that the Communist Party of Vietnam is closely associated with the people.

First, all guidelines and policies of the Party must derive from the interests, aspirations and abilities of the people, and must be agreed to and supported by the people.

Second, the Party must always pay attention to improving the people's material and spiritual life while promoting the people's mastery and relying on them for Party building.

Third, the State led by the Party must truly become a State of the people, by the people, for the people.

Fourth, socio-political organizations, economic, cultural and social organizations under the leadership of the Party must operate in accordance with their functions, tasks and regulations. They must attract a wide range of people to participate.

Fifth, the Party organizations, cadres, and members must stick together, respecting and listening to the people's opinions.

Sixth, the people believe in and follow the leadership of the Party, assisting and protecting the Party.

Seventh, the Party resolutely fights against bureaucracy, orders, autocracy, and separation from reality and from the people.

2. Issues on implementing the principle that the Communist Party of Vietnam is closely associated with the people

First, the alienation of the ruling power and the risk of bureaucracy, split away from the people of the ruling Communist Party.

Bureaucracy and splitting away from the people is a constant danger of any state apparatus or ruling party, of which the Communist Party of Vietnam is no exception. Therefore, whether or not the Party can have a close association with the people, maintain the people's trust and guarantee its ruling role all depend on the Party itself and its contingent of cadres.

Second, the responsibility of the Communist Party of Vietnam in building a contingent of cadres as "servants" of the people.

The Communist Party of Vietnam is the ruling party and takes charge of the whole society and the people, therefore, cadres and party members play a very important role. If cadres and party members can deeply understand and implement the Party's principle of being closely associated with the people, the people's trust in the Party will then be strengthened and consolidated.

Third, the interests and issues of "exemplary" cadres and Party members in the context of developing socialist-oriented market economy and opening up international integration.

At present, although the majority of cadres and party members still maintain good qualities, a part of them have shown degeneration in their political ideology, morality and lifestyle. The conflict of interest among a part of cadres, party members and the people has weakened the close attachment between the Party and the people and hostile forces have taken advantage of this to inflate and propagate against the Party.

Fourth, the belief of the people in the Party in the new context.

The people's trust in the Party is facing many challenges under the current context. If the contingent of cadres and party members, especially those with high positions are exemplary in morality, lifestyle, practice what they preach, high sense of responsibility and work efficiency, the trust of the people will be strengthened, and nothing can separate the close relationship between the Party and the people.

Fifth, the specification and implementation of the mechanism of the Party's leadership, the State's management and the People's mastery.

At present, the tendency of bureaucracy and separation from the people by the public apparatus as well as the issue of over-administration and civilizing the Fatherland Front and socio-political organizations have affected the representative democracy of the people. Social democracy in some places is just a mere formality. Therefore, importance should be attached to designing a solution to ensure the people's real mastery, to overcome the abuse of power occurring in many cadres as well as the over-administration of activities of the Fatherland Front and socio-political organizations.

3. Solutions to properly implement the principle that the Communist Party of Vietnam is closely associated with the people in the new situation

In response to the requirements of building and defending the socialist Vietnamese Fatherland in the new situation, building and rectifying the Party, improving the Party's ruling capacity and fighting strength, it is necessary to synchronously adopt the following solutions to properly implement the principle of the Party's close association with the people.

First, raising the whole Party's awareness and responsibility for implementing the principle of the Party's close association with the people.

In order to ensure that cadres and party members are deeply aware of the role, contents and methods of implementing the principle, the quality of propaganda and education must be to be pushed ahead, specifically, the education of ideology, morality and mass mobilization methods for cadres and party members, encouraging them to follow President Hồ Chí Minh's example of dedication to the people. It needs to innovate the content and modes of information about implementing the principle of the Party's close association with the people. Additionally, the role of mass media propaganda and the power of public opinion should also be promoted to support the State's management measures and the Fatherland Front and mass organizations' propaganda, education and advocacy measures. The Party must

resolutely combat against distorting and hostile viewpoints that disunite the Party and the people. It is critical to promote propaganda to encourage and replicate advanced examples of good people and good deeds among cadres and party members in serving and being close to the people in all fields. At the same time, it is necessary to promote patriotism, practice democracy, and create a revolutionary action movement among the people so as to enthusiastically and successfully carry out the implementation of the national renovation. The Party should also foster mass mobilization skills for reputable people in the community, creating conditions for them to participate in propagating the Party's guidelines and the State's policies and laws.

Second, strengthening the work of Party building and rectification, preventing and repelling degradation in political ideology, morality, lifestyle, and manifestations of "self-evolution" and "self-transformation" from within.

Party committees at all levels must effectively implement the task of Party building and rectification in the spirit of the Resolutions of the 4th Plenum of both the 11th and 12th Central Committees. To do that, it is necessary to enhance the direction, scrutinization and supervision of the Party committees on implementing the Party's resolutions in daily life. A power control mechanism must be built so as to lead state agencies to strictly and effectively enforce the law. The quality of grassroots organizations where the party is closest to the people must be constantly improved and supervision over leaders of branches and levels must be enhanced to give timely warning and correct any wrongdoing. Along with that, the planning, training and use of the Party cadres and members must be paid due attention. It is important to prevent and repel any degradation of political ideology, morality, lifestyle and the expressions "self-evolution" and "self-transformation" from within. The party cadres and members must be exemplary and dedicated to their work and practice what they preach to gain the people's trust.

Third, promoting the building of a Vietnamese socialist law - governed state that is truly of the people, by the people and for the people; strictly implementing the ordinance on democracy and the regulation of democracy at the grassroots level.

It should be a priority to build and improve the *Vietnamese socialist law - governed state* of the people, by the people and for the people led by the Party and improve the capacity and operational efficiency of the State. It is required to develop a complete, timely, synchronous, uniform, feasible, public, transparent, and stable legal system while focusing on the legitimate rights and interests of the people and businesses in order to spur reform and innovation meeting the requirement of a rapid and sustainable development of the country. At the same time, it is an urgent need to build a democracy, based on ruleoflaw, a professional, modern, strong, public and transparent state administration serving the people. For that purpose, there must be a contingent of cadres and civil servants with sufficient quality, capacity and prestige to serve the people and the development of the country.

All levels and branches must continue to concretize and perfect the institution of democratic practice in the spirit of the Platform on National Construction in the period of transition to socialism (amended and developed, 2011) as well as the 2013 Constitution, ensuring that all state powers belong to the people; to properly and efficiently materialize direct democracy and representative democracy, particularly democracy at the grassroots. In addition, it is essential to effectively implement the motto "the people know, the people discuss, the people do, the people check, the people oversee and the people benefit"[8], effectively encouraging the people's participation in monitoring and evaluating the performance of organizations within the political system as well as the quality and capacity of the contingent of Party cadres and members. Regulations on grassroots democracy must also be thoroughly implemented.

Fourth, continuing to renovate the Party's leadership in mass mobilization work and strengthen the government's work in mass mobilization while renovating the content and method of operation of the Vietnam Fatherland Front and other socio-political organizations.

There must be drastic changes in awareness and actions of party committees at all levels and political systems on mass mobilization work. Importance should be attached to innovating the contents and methods of information, mobilization and the effective use of mass media and social network along the line of practicality, invigorated consensus, consolidated confidence of the people in the Party, the State and the socialist system. It is necessary to build and strengthen the process of organizing, planning, training and selecting cadres with sufficient quality, capacity, experience and prestige, who are mature from the practice of party and government work and from prestigious mass movements. These cadres should be properly structured and assigned to work in agencies and organizations of the Fatherland Front, socio-political organizations and mass associations.

It is necessary to strengthen and innovate the mass mobilization work of state agencies. The Party's views and policies on mass mobilization must be institutionalized into legal documents for implementation by all levels of government, officials, party members, civil servants, public employees and people of all strata. Cadres, civil servants and public employees must bear the responsibility to mobilize the people. At the same time, due consideration must be given to building and implementing the method to "respect the people, be close to the people, understand the people, learn from the people and be responsible to the people…" "listen to the people, speak to the people, make people understand and believe." Cadres should occasionally go on a mission to the grassroots. State agencies, especially those with direct relations with the people, need to publicize regulations specifying cadres and civil servants' responsibilities and attitudes in serving the people so that the people can be aware of, supervise and inspect the cadres' performance. Renovation of administrative procedures is needed for the

working styles and the attitude of cadres, civil servants and public employees in serving the people. There must be regulations that key officials at all levels must work closely with the grassroots level, with dialogues and direct contact with the people. This includes handling letters of complaint, listening to people's opinions, and promptly responding to their legitimate proposals.

Fifth, leaders pay attention to caring for the people's life, protecting the legitimate interests of the people, focusing on solving the burning issues of the people, and creating a mechanism for people to truly participate in building the Party and State.

All levels, branches, localities and units need to focus on solving the pressing concerns and legitimate aspirations of the people, especially those directly related to the people's life by means of researching and renovating the communication and process of solutions with the people. In addition, it is needed to pay attention to ensuring social security, enhancing policies for the poor and disabled people and creating policies on economic, cultural and social development in ethnic minority areas so that all the ethnicities in Vietnam are equal, united, respected and can assist one another for mutual development. To do that, it is important to raise the people's intellectual standard and perfect the democratic mechanism. Reality shows that the political awareness and intellectual standard in Vietnam are still low, especially in remote areas. Therefore, in order to thoroughly implement the principle that the Party is closely associated with the people, the Party and State must conduct policies to improve people's knowledge, utilize talents and perfect the democratic mechanism. Furthermore, the information work must be well-performed to ensure the people's access to information, and there must be innovation in receiving feedback and proposals from the people.

Sixth, enhancing the leadership, direction, scrutinization and supervision of the implementation of the principle of being closely associated with the people over party organizations and party members; regularly summarizing and drawing lessons from the implementation of the principles.

Party committees at all levels must regularly direct the scrutinization and supervision of implementing the Party's principles, resolutions and charter, following strict adherence to Party discipline, the task performance as well as the moral quality of Party cadres and members. During the scrutinization, it is necessary to listen to the opinions of the people, receive the opinions, comments and criticism on Party cadres and members of the Fatherland Front and the people's organizations. In order to detect and promptly handle violations of the principle, more effort should be put into innovating and ramp up the scrutinization and supervision process of the implementation of the principle so that the Party remains closely associated with the people among the party organizations and their members. Any people who are indifferent, insensitive, irresponsible, bureaucratic, bossy, authoritarian, corrupt, and lose the people's trust must be strictly criticized and promptly replaced.

Conclusion

The Party's principle of being closely associated with the people is one of the five organizational and operational principles of the Communist Party of Vietnam. It plays an important role in maintaining and strengthening the close – knit relations between the Party and the people, ensuring the Party's invincible strength as well as maintaining the ruling role and position of the Communist Party of Vietnam under the one-party system. In the current context, it must be a priority to continue to carefully implement the principles and contribute to improving the leadership capacity and combat strength of the Communist Party of Vietnam thereby strengthening Vietnam's international position./.

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