

Tạp chí Lý Luận Chính Trị Và Truyền Thông

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Throughout human history, knowledge has always been the foundation of social progress. Intellectual personnel are a key force that creates and disseminates knowledge. From ancient times in Vietnam, "talent has been thought to be a nation's vital resource. It can make a country stronger or weaker and has an impact on a country's position in international arena. As such, visionary kings in the past always tended to nurture and foster talents to cultivate this vital resource." Being aware of this in his revolutionary life, President Ho Chi Minh spent a lot of time and effort building a contingent of intellectuals. He always regarded it as a pivotal task in the cause of national liberation as well as national construction and defense. He affirmed that "Knowledge is the precious capital of our nation. It's true in other countries and it's ever so true in Vietnam. This is proven in this resistance war. Vietnamese intellectuals have made an important contribution. Some people are directly involved in the resistance work, and stand side by side with the people's army. Some are enthusiastic about providing support." (1) With the thought of respecting intellectuals, Ho Chi Minh gathered around him many famous experts who wholeheartedly served the country and the people.

1. Ho Chi Minh's thought on building a contingent of intellectuals

Ho Chi Minh was born into an intellectual family. The father of President Ho Chi Minh, Mr. Nguyen Sinh Sac achieved the second rank of doctoral laureate in the examination in 1901 the year of Tan Suu, the 13th year under Thanh Thai's reign. Ho Chi Minh himself was also an intellectual. From the time he worked abroad until he returned home to lead the Vietnam's revolution, Ho Chi Minh always expressed his interest in

intellectuals and appointed them to influential positions.

Immediately after the success of the August Revolution, President Ho Chi Minh wrote an article entitled "Talent and National Construction" which was published in the National Salvation Newspaper, Vol. 91, on November 14, 1945. He penned, "National construction requires talent. Although our country's talents are not many, if we are smart in choosing, allocating, and mobilizing them, talent will grow and thrive." (2) By placing the interests of the nation first, with an open and tolerant heart, President Ho Chi Minh continued to unite the entire nation and gather a contingent of scholars into the Research Committee for National Construction Planning to help the Government make a plan to build the country. In his speech at the first meeting of the Research Committee on 10th January 1946, President Ho Chi Minh affirmed, "... as for you, you have brought your intellectual talents to foster economic and social development. You are real volunteers. I hope that you will also bring all your talents and knowledge to help the Government with national construction. You will be experienced and talented advisors to the Government." (3)

On 20th November 1946, during the critical time when the French colonialists returned to invade Vietnam again, President Ho Chi Minh issued the announcement "Finding Talented People" which was published in the National Salvation Newspaper, Vol. 411 that "The country needs to be built. Construction requires talent. Among the 20 million compatriots, there is no shortage of talented and virtuous people. That the Government is unable to hear all of them is my fault. Now, to correct that and to appoint talented people to important positions, localities must immediately investigate if there are talented people who can do things for the benefit of the country and the people and must immediately introduce them to the Government. The introduction report must clearly state the person's name, occupation, talents, aspirations and address. Within one month, local agencies must submit a comprehensive report." (4)

In a speech at the opening ceremony of the training class for Party cadres and civil servants at the central agencies on 6th February 1953, when it was expressed that

the Government did not respect intellectuals, President Ho Chi Minh clearly explained that it was a false prejudice and he thought that some intellectuals understood it incorrectly. According to him, "it is the revolutionary parties that attach great importance to intellectuals: This is because teachers are needed to develop the educational level, doctors are needed to develop people's health, and engineers are needed to develop technology, etc." (5) However, he also affirmed that respectable intellectuals must be those who "wholeheartedly serve the revolution and the people."

Although he highly respected and appreciated the role of intellectuals, Ho Chi Minh was a practical leader who used performance as an index to assess people by their real and specific contributions to the country, to the people, and society as a whole with their initiatives and work. In the work entitled "Correcting the Working Style", he asserted, "Intellect is knowledge. In the world there are only two kinds of knowledge: one is knowledge of the reproductive struggle. Natural science comes out of that. The second is knowledge of the national and social struggle. Hence come the social sciences. Apart from those two, there is no other knowledge. A person who finishes university can be called an intellectual. But if he does not know how to plow the field, does not know how to work, does not know how to fight against the enemy, does not know how to do many other things, in short, he has no idea of practical work, he is then a half-baked intellectual. His knowledge is a book-learned intellect, not a complete intellect. If he wants to become a fully intellectual person, he must know how to apply that knowledge in reality." (6)

President Ho Chi Minh said that if Vietnam's talents are not abundant, the country would be smart to choose, allocate, and use them well. Then the talent will grow and thrive. He also affirmed that the use of talent should not be too strict as long as it does not go against the interests of the people. To be appointed, the individual should not be unpatriotic, that is, pro-French or pro-Japanese, for example. He should be loyal to the Fatherland. He said that people with "big talent should be appointed to do big things, people with small talents are more suited to perform small jobs; people are appointed to do what they are capable of doing." (7) He also warned that there are many talented people outside the Party and we must not abandon nor distance them.

We must honestly unite them, support them, be close to them, and use their talents to serve the resistance war.

In the Government then, which was established by President Ho Chi Minh, there were many important positions held by intellectuals, namely Huynh Thuc Khang, Vu Dinh Hoe, lawyer Phan Anh, and professor Dang Thai Mai among others. The newly established provisional government had to deal with the ongoing resistance war against the French colonialists. Despite hardship and destitution, with President Ho Chi Minh's patriotism and skillful use of talent, most intellectuals at that time put their whole heart into serving their country. Following the call of patriotism and under the influence of Uncle Ho, many overseas Vietnamese intellectuals also returned to the country such as professor Ho Dac Di, Le Van Thiem, Tran Dai Nghia, Pham Ngoc Thach, and Le Qui Huan. Together with intellectuals who remained at home, they made a great contribution to the cause of national liberation and constructed a more dignified, bigger, and more beautiful Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

2. The approach of the Communist Party of Vietnam in building a contingent of intellectuals following Ho Chi Minh's thought

Following President Ho Chi Minh's Will and realizing the importance of intellectuals, from the birth of the Communist Party of Vietnam until today, the Party has issued many documents on building a contingent of intellectuals, especially during the years of Doi Moi. The Party has frequently decreed that "Vietnamese intellectuals are a particularly important creative workforce in the process of accelerating industrialization and modernization of the country amid international integration, building a knowledge-based economy and developing an advanced Vietnamese culture imbued with national identity. Building a strong intellectual pool is directly raising the intellectual level of the nation, the strength of the country, improving the Party's leadership capacity and the operational quality of the political system. Investing in building a contingent of intellectuals is an investment in sustainable development."(8)

A wide array of mechanisms and policies prioritizing the development of intellectuals have been implemented by the Party and State, showing positive results in recent years. They have established policies on the training and fostering of intellectuals; policies on facilitating a favorable environment to promote the role of intellectuals; policies on using, promoting, and honoring intellectuals; and policies on attracting overseas Vietnamese intellectuals, etc. Various national and professional awards, as well as noble scientific titles have been conferred to productive intellectuals, scientists, writers, and artists. This has proven to be a good source of encouragement for intellectuals emotionally and spiritually. Associated with those guidelines and policies, great efforts have been made to renew the management models, increase investment in education and training, science and technology, culture, and the arts. All of these endeavors have contributed to promoting the potential and internal resources of the intellectuals in practical activities.

In recent years, hundreds of students, graduate students, and PhD candidates have traveled abroad to study with scholarships by foreign governments or organizations. In 2000, the government approved project 322 "Training scientific and technical cadres at foreign establishments with the State budget." In the period 2000 - 2013, 5,833 people were recruited and sent to study abroad. 2,951 were PhD candidates, 1,603 Masters students, 260 were trainees, and 1,019 were undergraduates. With Project 165 on "Training and fostering leaders and managers abroad with the State budget" authorized by the Central Organization Committee, hundreds of billions of Vietnamese dong per year were spent on sending graduate and undergraduate students to study abroad. In the period of 2009-2013, the project organized a program to improve foreign language skills for 11,690 officials. Among the 941 persons studied postgraduate programs, 158 PhD candidates and 444 Masters students were trained abroad, and 339 Masters students took part in joint Master programs.

Currently, Vietnamese intellectuals have been trained in many foreign countries such as Russia, France, Japan, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the

Netherlands.(9) In recent years, the Party and State have paid special attention to attracting overseas Vietnamese intellectuals to participate in national construction. Currently, in addition to domestic intellectuals, there are more than 400,000 overseas Vietnamese intellectuals including more than 6,000 doctors and hundreds of highly disciplined intellectuals out of a total of more than four million Vietnamese living in nearly 100 countries and territories. It is estimated that there are 15,000 overseas Vietnamese scholars in the United States, 40,000 in France, 20,000 in Canada, 4,000 in Eastern Europe and the Russian Federation, and 7,000 in Australia.(10) These scholars are an important human resource of the country, and should be promoted and endowed with favorable employment, and thus contribute to building a rich and strong homeland.

However, the construction and development of intellectuals in Vietnam in recent years has not met the country's goals for renewal and international integration. Many guidelines and policies on intellectuals are not synchronized and are translated slowly into practice. The organization and construction of a contingent of intellectuals is still weak. There is a need for a basic long-term strategy in training and fostering intellectual activity. Our Party has assessed, "There is a serious shortage in the pool of creative intellectuals and leading experts, including the incoming generation. The part of Vietnamese intellectuals abroad has not been given proper attention and promotion. The bureaucratic administration and a state of stagnation, formality, and low operational efficiency in public non- business units, scientific research, and intellectual associations have been slowly overcome."(11) In order to strengthen the building of a contingent of intellectuals in the coming time, it is necessary to focus on the following content and measures.

First, awareness at all levels and sectors, especially of the leaders and people holding important positions in the Party and State apparatus should be raised to fulfill Ho Chi Minh's view of building a contingent of intellectuals and using talented people. It is important to be fully aware of and implement the Conclusion No. 52-KL/TW dated May 30, 2019 by the Secretariat on continuing to implement Resolution No. 27 NQ-TW dated August 6, 2008 of the 7th Plenum of the Party Central Committee (10th

Tenure) "on building a contingent of intellectuals in the period of accelerating industrialization and modernization of the country." It is essential to be aware of the outstanding features of the current intellectual contingent with an increasing number of intellectuals trained in capitalist countries and working in foreign private companies. These intellectuals have professional qualifications with highly efficient skills but are easily influenced by bourgeois thought and often have diverse political, human, and cultural views.

On the other hand, intellectuals always have their strong personality traits. They have high expertise, independence, creativeness, bravery, their personal opinions, high self-esteem, and are open to new ideas. Therefore, when leading them, the Party committees and authorities at all levels need to be flexible in mobilizing them to contribute to the country without going against the guidelines and views of the Party, its policies, and the laws of the State.

Second, the work of selecting, training, and fostering intellectuals to meet the requirements of revolutionary tasks should be vigorously implemented. It is essential to develop and implement strategies for searching out, discovering, and fostering young intellectuals, scholars who have made contribution in practical activities, scholars of and from ethnic minorities, and female intellectuals. This includes excellent students at all levels of education, students with high scores in national and international exams, students with high scores in university entrance exams, and students with high academic achievement throughout college. When talent is discovered, the focus needs to be prioritized in their direction. They should be selected to be sent on domestic gifted bachelor's training programs and advanced training in developed countries.

It is essential to promote international cooperation in higher and postgraduate education with the construction of universities that meet international standards.

Vietnam needs to learn the ways and means from countries and territories that have achieved success such as Korea, Singapore, China, and Taipei (China), to build for our own benefit a suitable and efficient process that quickly brings the education of the country to the next level, keeping up with advanced education systems in the world.

Third, the policies to attract, mobilize, treat and honor intellectuals to serve the current national development process should be reviewed and renewed. Sets of standards, criteria, and conditions for recruitment must be built to attract intellectuals with professional qualifications in the fields and industries that are in need of talents; policies and methods for recruiting and attracting intellectuals should be renewed: Direct offers to work in science and technology organizations should be given preference to valedictorian graduates at domestic training institutes and to top tier graduates from prestigious universities abroad who have met the requirements of the relevant job position.

A favorable work environment should be created for the intellectuals to work and live, including transportation, sophisticated work equipment, comfortable living accommodations, and pay appropriate to leading scientists in their industry. At the same time, special attention needs to be paid to intellectuals working in specific industries, in mountainous areas, and areas with difficult living conditions. Salary scale should be renovated, based on work assignment while autonomy should be given to organizations and agencies in terms of remuneration, with bonuses and salaries for intellectuals they have attracted to work. At the same time brain drain or loss of talent in State organizations needs to be minimized.

Up until now, there have been policies extending the retirement age for highly qualified intellectuals in some universities for professors, associate professors, and PhD holders. In fact, many scholars, who have a limited academic degree or professional title but are capable of producing at a high professional capacity, can still devote their talent and wisdom to the country. Examples of this might include doctors

and engineers. They retire when they reach the age mandated by law. Some of them work for private business. With the right legal and financial backing, this contingent can continue making meaningful contributions to the people and the country. Regulations honoring intellectuals should be instituted. Competence should be evaluated based on work output with appropriate forms of honor and reward which show and honor these talented individuals while avoiding undue formality.

Fourth, initiative and a positive contribution from the intellectuals themselves should be supported to meet the requirements of national development. The rapid development of human progress requires intellectuals to have a sense of lifelong learning, to constantly search and adopt new scientific findings, while updating and upgrading their own skill sets. If intellectuals are passive and dependent, they certainly cannot be a pioneering force in national construction. If intellectuals do not use their knowledge and intelligence to benefit the community, they become ineffective individuals. A true intellectual must be one who knows how to use his knowledge and position to contribute to helping the community better distinguish right from wrong, right from left, truth from fiction, good from evil, and ultimately good from bad. A valuable contributor should use his knowledge to spread the spirit, ideas, and views that he believes necessary to contribute to the progress of society. In order for the creations and contributions of each individual to have a positive impact on the country and the people, their contributions need to be organized and led by agencies and organizations such as the Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Associations, the Alliance of Arts and Literature Associations of Vietnam, the Journalists' Association, the Association of Architects and so on. These are major professional and socio-political organizations that gather the highest expertise in each scientific field. When associations are tightly organized and have an effective mode of operation, the voice of outstanding intellectuals will quickly reach the Party and the State.

Fifth, mechanisms should be continuously renewed and financial incentives should be made available to invest and build material and technical facilities to meet the requirements of professional activities. A vibrant and open work environment and

atmosphere should be built to share information, initiatives and knowledge. In addition, the State needs to develop democratic regulations in activities focused on science and technology, education and training, health care, culture, and the arts so that intellectuals can constantly improve their creativity. Mechanisms and policies should be developed to create favorable conditions for intellectuals and their families to work, while bringing all their talents to serve, so that they are respected by society and are promoted because of their professional activities. Along with the application of scientific and technical advances to exploit the potential strengths of each locality throughout the country, it is necessary to link scientific research with industrial production and application, thereby expanding exchanges of information in science and technology, education and training, culture and the arts both regionally and internationally.

Tài liệu tham khảo

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(2), (3), (4), (7) Ho Chi Minh, Complete Works (2011), ibid, vol.4, p.43, 114, 175, 504. (5) Ho Chi Minh, Complete Works (2011), ibid, vol.8, p.53.

(6) Ho Chi Minh, Complete Works (2011), ibid, vol.6, p.275.

(8) Resolution 27-NQ/TW dated August 6, 2008 of the 7th Plenum of the 10th -

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