

Tạp chí Lý Luận Chính Trị Và Truyền Thông

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Ho Chi Minh was an outstanding leader of the Vietnam's revolution and also a journalist with great prestige in the international communist and workers' movements. Shortly after his enlightenment on Marxism-Leninism, Nguyen Ai Quoc was well aware of the importance of the press in realizing the revolutionary path of national liberation. He was immersed in Lenin's view of the press that "In this era, without a political newspaper there is no so-called political movement," and "first of all, we need a newspaper; without it, we cannot conduct the most principled and comprehensive communication systematically".(1) "The press is the communicator, agitator, organizer and leader".(2)

President Ho Chi Minh always emphasized the critical role and significant impact of the revolutionary press. He said that "Culture is a front" and "Press officers are also revolutionary soldiers. Pen and paper are their sharp weapons".(3) In a telegram to the Association of Asian - African Journalists (1965), President Ho Chi Minh wrote, 'For journalists, the pen is a sharp weapon, the article is a revolutionary proclamation;(4) "The newspaper is just made of black ink and white paper. However, it can become an ultimatum".(5) Based on these important points, the role of the revolutionary press can be summed up on the following major contents:

First, the revolutionary press is the ideological and theoretical weapon of the Communist Party of Vietnam.

Revolutionary press is the frontline force in the ideological work, a revolutionary theoretical weapon, an effective communication media of Marxism - Leninism and

Party and State's directions, policies and laws. Based on Party's directions and viewpoints, revolutionary press has actively contributed to building scientific outlook and methodology, consolidating the ideological foundation of all classes of people. President Ho Chi Minh affirmed that "For journalists, the pen is a sharp weapon, the article is a revolutionary proclamation to encourage the mass to unite to fight against the old and new colonialism, the US-led imperialism for national independence, social progress and world peace".(6)

Nguyen Ai Quoc began his journalist career in late 1917 when he returned to France from the UK. He expressed his opinion on mass media in France to debate for his national independence and freedom. With the support of lawyer Phan Van Truong and the encouragement of Charles Louguet - Karl Marx's grandson, chief editor of *Le Populaire*, a French Socialist Party's newspaper, and Gaston Monmousseu - editor of *La vie d'ouvriers* newspaper, Nguyen Ai Quoc engaged himself in the journalist career.

At first, he wrote some short stories published in the newspaper *La vie d'ouvriers*. His first article was a polemical commentary titled *The Colonial plot*. From 1919, many newspapers in France, such as *Le Populaire*, *La vie d'ouvriers*, *Le journal du peuple*, *Le Cahiers du communisme*, *L'Humanite*, *La Correspondance Internationale*, etc., published Nguyen Ai Quoc's articles. In July 1921, Nguyen Ai Quoc and other revolutionary leaders in France's colonies established the Union of French Colonial Nations and published *Le Paria* newspaper (*The Miserable*). The first issue of *Le Paria* was published on April 1, 1922. Articles published in this newspaper consolidated Nguyen Ai Quoc's journalistic and literary talent. In early 1923, Nguyen Ai Quoc published a Vietnamese-language newspaper in France entitled *Vietnam Soul* to serve Vietnamese expatriates in France. From 1923 to 1924, while studying in the Soviet Union and China, Nguyen Ai Quoc continued to work as a press collaborator for the Soviet news agency and *CantoGazette*, the Chinese Kuomintang newspaper.

In an article entitled "The Call" (*Le Paria*, No. 1 in April 1, 1922), Ho Chi Minh pointed out the need to organize a newspaper by saying, "in the history of the indigenous

mass movement in the French colonies, there has never been a newspaper that speaks out people's shared suffering and misery, no matter what country or race they belong to".(7)

For Ho Chi Minh, the pen is always a means to honor the good and eradicate the bad. He said, "Our press needs to serve the working people, socialism, and the struggle to realize national reunification and for world peace." (Source?) On discussing the role of the Party newspaper, Ho Chi Minh wrote, "Our Party is strong because our Party's ideology is unified from top to bottom. The Party newspaper has the task of ideological unification. Party newspapers are like simple, practical and extensive training classes. They teach us many things we need to know, such as communication, organization, leadership, and work. Every day they help us to improve our political level and work productivity".(8)

Throughout the history of Vietnam's revolutionary journalism, it can be seen that the press has always been the voice of the Party and vigorously struggles with opposing ideological trends: political ideologies and views of imperialism, colonialism, and reactionary forces. For example:

First, in 1925 - 1945, the revolutionary press contributed to the struggle against reformed nationalism, the tendency to compromise and surrender, anti-Trotskyism, left-wing and right-wing mistakes within the Party, and revolutionary mass organizations. Through these struggles, the press propagated Marxism-Leninism, spread communist ideology into Vietnam, and raised political awareness of the mass. Right from the first publication in February 1931, the Communist Review, a political and theoretical journal of the Central Committee of Indochina Communist Party wrote in its Preface that "Our Party aims to attack wrongful, opportunist ideas, faction trends to make our Party's ideological foundation and action united".(9) The ideological and theoretical struggle on the revolutionary press, including the revolutionary press in prison in the 1930s of the 20th century made an essential contribution to ideological

and political building and consolidating for the Party's members and the mass, and at the same time divided the Vietnam Nationalist Party. Through the communists' battles of word and pen, communication, and persuasion, some members of the Vietnam Nationalist Party broke away from this party, turned from a neutral stance entirely to Marxism and the Communist Party, and became members of the Communist Party, such as Tran Huy Lieu, Tuong Dan Bao, To Hieu, Nguyen Binh, etc. That transition was full of hardship that "We have to struggle with fierce contradictions, the clash between the old and the new; the old stubbornly and persistently opposes the new, and finally the new encroaches on the old".(10) The process of joining the Communist Party was a "winding, bumpy road." (11) Some of them died before becoming the Communist Party's members, such as Pham Tuan Tai, who left a historical testament.(12)

Second, the revolutionary press is a tool for collective communication, agitation, and organization, contributing to the education of patriotism and political awareness of the mass.

Ho Chi Minh considered the press a tool of social struggle, national struggle, and class struggle, so it must protect people's interests. The press serves the people, is the voice of the people, serves the pure and noble purposes of the Party and the revolutionary cause, is a tool to arouse and praise good people and good deeds, to prevent the bad, the negative. In the article "Talking to the Communication Commissioners of the Northern Provinces," President Ho Chi Minh pointed out that "The newspapers and communication commissions should guide patriotism and strong will to achieve the complete independence of the Vietnamese people in a peaceful, calm manner, that is conducive to diplomacy. Moreover, it is necessary to explain clearly to the whole people about the moves of the Government when signing the Preliminary Accord with France".(13)

In the light of Ho Chi Minh's thought, the Vietnamese revolutionary press has created a national spirit, especially among patriotic youth who have a new political ideology of

Marxism-Leninism. However, it is also important to note that it was not until the revolutionary press that the people's patriotism was promoted and national spirit was born. Because before the revolutionary press was born, opposing and left-wing newspapers such as *Tieng Dan*, *La Cloche élée*, *L'Annam*, *Le Nha Que*, *Le Jeune Annam*, etc., had raised their voice against the colonial government and called on the mass to fight. However, thanks to the revolutionary press, the mass awareness and Vietnamese patriotism were brought to a new height, with a clear ideology and a liberation path of Marxist-Leninist ideology, under the leadership of a unified political party.

In preparing for the August Revolution in 1945, the revolutionary press was a typical form of political struggle to mobilize the mass, divide and isolate the enemy. During the 1945 revolutionary period, there were nearly 40 newspapers and magazines printed in the country, such as: *Vietnam doc lap* (Independent Vietnam), *Thanh nien* (Youth), *Co giai phong* (Liberation's Flag), *Cuu quoc* (National Salvation), *Ken goi linh* (Trumpet calling Soldiers), etc. under the leadership of the key officials of the Party Central Committee, Regional Party Committees, Inter-regional Party Committees and Provincial Party Committees, typically Ho Chi Minh, Vo Nguyen Giap, Pham Van Dong, and Truong Chinh. Notably, "*Co giai phong*" and "*Cuu quoc*" (1942-1945) were the two newspapers contributing most significantly to implementing the guidance on the August Revolution of 1945. Both newspapers prioritized the issue of national liberation and public orientation. Some newspapers began to analyze the domestic and international situation in depth, thus calling on the people to redefine the nation's main enemy.

The press used short, concise, simple expressions, illustrations, and verse to make it easy for readers to understand. The forms of expression were diversified, including commentaries, editorials, good people good deeds, poems, folk songs, and rhymes with strong communication content calling on people to seize power from the hand of the colonialists. There were different forms of press in communication, such as handwriting, lithographs, newspapers in the prisons, or in the countryside, etc. Their main goal was to encourage people to take the approaching world opportunity, stand

up and fight for power.

The "Co giai phong" was the Indochinese Communist Party's communication newspaper. It was replaced by the "Su that" (Truth) newspaper - a newspaper of the Marxist Research Association published on December 5, 1945, when the Indochinese Communist Party decided to operate in secret. The "Co giai phong" existed for three years (the first publication on October 10, 1942, and the last on November 18, 1945). It was the most successful revolutionary newspaper in both content and form, which focused on disseminating major lines and policies of the Party and the Viet Minh Front, such as "Q&A on Party policies" published on No. 2, August 26, 1943, and a series of articles presenting the Party's views, such as "Towards a united democratic front against Japan in Indochina," "The policy of alliance with De Gaulle" (No. 3, February 15, 1944), etc. Besides, the newspaper focused on articles exposing the malicious conspiracy of Japanese Fascists and pro- Japanese henchmen. Some notable articles included "Japanese coup in Indochina" (No. 11, dated March 25, 1945), which pointed out that "The coup was a robbery in which the initiator was the Japanese imperialists." From mid-1944, a series of articles

Focused on the preparation for the uprising such as "Let's grasp the main point" (No. 6, July 23, 1944), "Material replenishment for the uprising" (No. 7, dated September 28, 1944), "Arming self-defense teams" (No. 8, dated November 10, 1944); "What have we learned from the armed struggle in Thai Nguyen" (No. 10, January 28, 1945), "Preparing for a general uprising - choosing a base" (No. 15, July 17, 1945).

With the communication, orientation, and encouragement of the revolutionary press, political struggle movements developed widely, reaching revolutionary climax in all localities throughout the country, creating a solid foundation for the successful uprising in arms for power - the August Revolution and the Declaration of Independence of Vietnam on September 2, 1945.

After the birth of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, as State President, Ho Chi Minh further emphasized that the press played a great role in the cause of national construction and revival. He affirmed the topic of his articles in the meeting with generations of Vietnamese journalists. "All the articles that President Ho Chi Minh wrote had only one theme: anti-colonial imperialism, anti-feudal landlords; communication of national independence and socialism. Such was President Ho Chi Minh's connection with the press"(14). After that, the revolutionary press was given the mission of being a pioneer in communicating and educating the Party and State's lines and policies, reflecting the reality of national construction and defense with the consistent view: National independence is associated with socialism. This was also the goal, the criterion defining functions and tasks, and also the development environment of Vietnam's revolutionary journalism.

Third, revolutionary press is the pioneer in political struggle.

Based on the awareness that "a newspaper has a strong influence on the people," President Ho Chi Minh pointed out that the press should promote political struggle movements not only in the country but also in the war-torn countries. He said that "The press and radio on the two sides will help the two peoples move closer and closer to mutual understanding, and good feeling"(15). Under the light of Ho Chi Minh's thought, revolutionary journalistic activities took the lead in the political struggle, creating a solid foundation in the struggle in other fields such as military, diplomacy, etc.

In June 1925, the Vietnam Revolutionary Youth Union, the first patriotic organization following the path of the proletarian revolution, was born and published the Youth Newspaper as its voice. On June 21, 1925, its first issue was published. In 1929, four newspapers were set up (Hammer and Sickle newspaper, Labor newspaper, Red Union magazine, and Red newspaper) and became the official communication newspapers of revolutionary organizations - precursors of the Communist Party. On August 5, 1930, the Party Central Committee published Red Magazine, which was the

first magazine of the Party and the first one in the Party's press system after the Communist Party of Vietnam came into being. Only 10 days later, the Struggle newspaper was established, serving as the voice of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam. In 1931, the Party published the Proletarian Flag Newspaper and Communist Review. The press during this period played an important role in launching the revolutionary movement against colonialism and feudalism, and the peak was the Soviet Nghe Tinh movement in 1930-1931.

During 1936 - 1939, the international situation witnessed many changes: people's anti-fascist front was formed in many countries. In Vietnam, the Party encouraged the press to operate openly. Many French language newspapers were published in Hanoi and Saigon, notably The People, the voice of the Party Central Committee. The press served actively for Party building, propagated Marxism-Leninism and the Party's revolutionary line of civil rights, resolutely opposed imperialism, feudalism, and reformism of the bourgeoisie and national capitalism of Vietnam Nationalist Party, prepared conditions for another peak of revolution's movement.

In early 1941, leader Nguyen Ai Quoc returned to Vietnam to directly lead the Vietnam's revolutionary movement. He established the Viet Minh Front, and founded the Independent Vietnam Newspaper (August 1, 1941). Then, a series of newspapers were published, including National Salvation (January 1942) and Liberation Flags (October 1942), the two newspapers with the most significant contribution to the revolutionary peak, and the successful August Revolution in 1945.

During the early years of the revolutionary government, the press actively protected the nascent government. Cuu Quoc newspaper was the biggest daily newspaper in the country beside the Voice of Vietnam and the Vietnam News Agency. In 1945, the Truth newspaper was born (predecessor of the People's newspaper). During the period of national resistance, the central and local press focused on propagating and publishing Party documents, speeches, and writings of President Ho Chi Minh and the Party leaders. The most active ones were the People's Daily, Communist Review,

Internal Affairs Magazines, People's Army Newspaper, etc.

During the resistance war against the French colonialists, the press adhered to reality and promptly served the tasks of the resistance. The resistance war against French colonialists ended successfully in 1954; our country was temporarily divided into two regions with two different revolutionary strategic tasks. Accordingly, the press was tasked with propagating the construction of socialism in the North and fighting against the American imperialists and their henchmen in the South to unify the country.

After national unification, the press has developed rapidly in quantity and quality, diversified in forms, such as news, press, radio, and television. Information content of the press has been increasingly rich and influential. In the doi moi process, the press has contributed greatly to the successful implementation of the country's political tasks of successfully implementing the Party's renewal direction. The press agencies have continued to propagate Marxism - Leninism, Ho Chi Minh's thought; directions and policies of the Party, laws of the State; reflected the people's sentiment and aspirations; promoted new elements, advanced examples, and achievements of the renewal; participated in the fight against corruption, wastefulness, negative phenomena, sabotage plots of hostile forces, etc.

In short, President Ho Chi Minh's view on the role of the revolutionary press set the basis for the Communist Party of Vietnam to determine the importance of the press to the revolutionary cause, making an essential contribution to the cause of the revolution. Our Party plans the press policy for each revolutionary period and directs revolutionary press activities, actively contributing to the victory of the cause of the revolution and the nation.

In the current context of national renewal, socialist-oriented market economy and international integration, it can be seen that President Ho Chi Minh's view on the role of the revolutionary press still remains valid and has profound practical significance. The press is a tool for mass communication, agitation, and organization. The press

needs to protect and propagate Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh's thought, the Party's guidelines and viewpoints, and the State's policies and laws. The press should praise good people, good deeds, criticize the bad and negative phenomena; fight against wrongful arguments, lavish and debauchery lifestyle, distancing from national cultural traditions, acts of embezzlement, wastefulness, bureaucracy, and so on. The press can be the organizer of practical movements, such as paying the debt of gratitude, charity, and socio-political programs that greatly influence the mass. However, the press is not only a "sharp ideological tool" of the Party but also a "trusted forum of the people." Therefore, the press should know how to provide information in a diverse and multi-dimensional way to increase their attractiveness and effectiveness.

Tài liệu tham khảo

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