



HO CHI MINH'S THOUGHTS ABOUT THE INTELLIGENTSIA

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Abstract:

Ho Chi Minh's thoughts about the intelligentsia are one of the basic and significant components in the ideological system. In term of the intelligentsia, Ho Chi Minh began studying the characteristics, role and position in the revolution, construction and development of Vietnam. Ho Chi Minh said that if we desire to construct the country, we have to consider the training, appointment and development of the intelligentsia as the most crucial task. This idea does not only make contribution to the theoretical treasure about the intelligentsia in the world but also has its theoretical and practical meaning for the renewal process in Vietnam.

Keywords: thoughts, the intelligentsia, intellectual, role, position, crucial

1. Introduction

It can be said that Ho Chi Minh did not have any separate work which talked about the intelligentsia issue, but through the writings, speeches, articles, and his practical activities, which always contained the content and fundamental values about the intelligentsia, which were deeply meaningful both in term of theory and practice. In this article, we will focus on Ho Chi Minh's thoughts about the intelligentsia and their significance to the current reality.

2. Content

2.1 Overview about Ho Chi Minh

Ho Chi Minh (19/5/1890 - 2/9/1969) is a revolutionary, the founder of the Communist Party of Vietnam, one of the founders and leaders of the struggle for the independence

and territorial integrity for Vietnam in the 20th century as well as an international communist soldier. Ho Chi Minh's thoughts about the intelligentsia were developed in the following stages:

- a) The period from 1911 to 1930, Ho Chi Minh formed and initially used the thoughts which dignified and improved the intellectual standard of the people through training and dissemination of new ideas in order to meet the requirements of Vietnamese revolution.
- b) The period from 1930 to 1945, Ho Chi Minh formed the viewpoints on the revolutionary intelligentsia and the ideas about organizing, assembling and mobilizing many progressive intellectuals to join the revolution.
- c) The period from 1945 to 1954, Ho Chi Minh evidently affirmed the role and position of the intelligentsia and the intellectuals' employment in Vietnamese revolution.
- d) From 1954 to 1969, Ho Chi Minh posed high requirements about the qualifications, qualities and ability of new intellectuals in the face of the demand of socialist revolution in the North, the struggle for liberation in the South and the national unity.

The theoretical premises impacted on the formation of Ho Chi Minh's thoughts about the intelligentsia. Ho Chi Minh's thoughts about the intelligentsia not only reflected the characteristics and requirements of socio-history of Vietnam, but also the acquisition and inheritance of previous theoretical premises. In term of the national cultural traditions with the formation of Ho Chi Minh thoughts about the intelligentsia, mentioning the cultural tradition or cultural identity refers to the core values, which create the national characters and manners of a nation. They are the ardent patriotism, solidary spirit, a sense of community in uniting individual - family - the village - the homeland; compassion, tolerance, sense of honor and morals; the diligence and creativity at work; the subtlety of behavior, the simplicity in lifestyle etc.

2.2 The basic content of Ho Chi Minh's thoughts about knowledge

First, Ho Chi Minh often used the phrase "*the intelligentsia*" (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.3, p 38) or "*the intellectual circles*" (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.12, p 371), "*intellectuals*", "*an intellectual*", "*intellectual siblings*" (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.8, p 258), to talk about the intelligentsia. But later, Ho Chi Minh said that:

"Intellectuals mean understanding. In the world, there are 2 kinds of understanding: The one is understanding about the reproductive struggle, which is the root of natural science. The other is understanding about national fighting and social struggle, which are the root of social science. Besides, there is not any kind of intellectuals except these

two kinds of understanding above. When finishing a tertiary program, anyone maybe becomes an intellectual. But if they cannot plough fields, work, fight the enemy or they cannot do anything in real life, which means that they know a half. Their understanding is just bookish not an all-sided one. If they would like to become a real intellectual, they have to employ their knowledge into practice"

(Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.5, p 275)

Thus, when talking about the intelligentsia, Ho Chi Minh always attached theory to practice. Emanating from this idea, Ho Chi Minh said that the intellectual stratum was different from the other classes in the way of their brainwork, with high level of education, excellent expertise and extensive understanding "*such as teachers, doctors, engineers, scientists, artists, office staff...*" (Ho Chi Minh City 2011, vol.7, p 71).

Characteristics of Vietnamese intelligentsia in the view of Ho Chi Minh: they were patriotic forces; loved freedom and embodied the spirit of struggle for the national liberation on all fronts, "Vietnamese intelligentsia is national-minded and revolutionary-minded" (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.8, p 54). Therefore, he said:

"Learning to serve unions

Learning to serve class and the people

Learning to serve homeland and humanity"

(Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.6, p 208)

However, learning has to incorporate firmly with practice; the real truth has "*to be applied in practice, then it will become true and full knowledge*" (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.5, p 275). Thus, "*...education has to aim at serving the people sincerely*" (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.7, p 400), "*...teaching and learning are to serve the country, serve the people*" (Ho Chi Minh, 2011, vol. 10, p 185). Ho Chi Minh said that intellectuals who are well educated, has higher understanding in society, so:

"...you are intellectuals. You have the heavy and glorious responsibilities which sets an example for the people in everything. Our people have fought for independence courageously. So, the intellectuals have to sacrifice and fight for the independence more bravely to set an example for the people."

(Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.15, p 507)

Ho Chi Minh thought that "*intellectual labor should be encouraged to support and develop talent...*" (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.7, p 71). The leaders "*...do not be fearful of losing status so that they depreciate those who are more talented than them*" (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.5, p 105).

The task of the intelligentsia is to have the spirit to dare to think, dare to do and better themselves to reach the top.

Ho Chi Minh advocated that:

"Great talents should be appointed in significant positions, normal talents should be appointed in less important positions; anyone who is good at any field should be assigned a suitable job to their ability."

(Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.4, p 43)

And:

"...if leaders appoint a person basing on their love, hate, relations or compliance, they will definitely be not admired by everyone; so they may trigger problematic affair in the Party. Thus, it can be said that they are guilty to the Party and the people"

(Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.5, p 201)

If *"bringing a certain and tight framework to fit all kinds of different people"* (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.5, p 307), it would not work. Therefore, Ho Chi Minh advocated *"...anyone who is virtuous, talented and patriotic, please volunteer to submit the plans and aspiration to the Party and Government"* (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.4, p 114)

Ho Chi Minh's view on the role of the intelligentsia: Ho Chi Minh said that the intelligentsia plays an important role in our society. The task of the officials is to discover the intellectuals' talent. However, we have to: *"...see what kind of job he or she is good at. If a talented person is not employed as his or her fortes, it will be helpless"* (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.5, p 314).

Therefore:

"...before promoting officials, we have to consider the promotion carefully; not only excogitate their work, but also how their lifestyle is; both take into account how they write and talk, and whether their job is properly with their words and their articles or not; far from seeing how they behave towards their leaders, but also how they behave towards other people. We think that they are good, but we must also check whether there is a majority of our comrades also think they are good or not. We need to know their strengths, but also their weaknesses"

(Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.5, p 321)

Ho Chi Minh said that the intelligentsia are the treasure of a nation and: *"...the intellectual labor plays an important and glorious role in the cause of socialist construction"*.

(Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.10, p 226). Ho Chi Minh likened the got-talent issue as "...sometimes, talents are on display in a glassed case, or in crystal decanter, which are easily seen by eyes; but sometimes they are discreetly hidden in the trunk or box. So, our duty is to make these treasures to be put on display" (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.7, p 38).

As "the majority of intellectuals participate and support the war resistance; they are the important allies of the working class" (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.8, p 258) and "workers, peasants and the intelligentsia need to unite closely and mutually into a block" (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.10, p 376). In this allied block, the intellectual stratum should actively go ahead, "on the road towards the national unity, I suppose the intelligentsia should have taken the first step to find workers and peasants and I am sure that the workers and peasants will warmly welcome the intelligentsia" (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.10, p 377). When the intelligentsia closely unites with workers and peasants, they will have the best conditions to develop their role and their talents in purpose to serve the country and the revolution.

From a viewpoint "an illiterate nation is a weak nation" (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.4, p 7), Ho Chi Minh dignified the nurture and education for the intelligentsia. Ho Chi Minh said that the education and training have to meet the requirements of the revolutionary career. "In the education and learning, all the aspects need focusing, such as revolutionary morals, socialist enlightenment, culture, techniques, labor and production" (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.12, p 647). Thus, "...one of the task to be done urgently is improving people's intellectual standard" (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.4, p 40), since "...every Vietnamese has to understand their rights and obligations; must have knowledge to be able to participate in the construction of our country; and at first we need to know how to read and write Vietnamese language." (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.4, p 40).

Ho Chi Minh affirmed that "...in order to build our country, we need more and more qualified intellectuals. The Party and the Government both have to help the generation of intellectuals to be increasingly progressive, and try their best to train new intellectuals" (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.10, p 378). If we desire to liberate the country, we must develop all the fields, which the human development is the most significant issue. "If we would like to use machines which are more and more sophisticated day by day, workers must also have a really high level of techniques comparing with engineers and know how to figure out any problems in their work" (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.10, p 388). To train the intellectuals who are both virtuous and talented, Ho Chi Minh emphasized the educational methods. Ho Chi Minh advocated that "...schools must be attached to the reality of our country, the lives of the people" (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.10, p 185). Therefore, "Learning means studying at schools, in books, mutually and the people; not learning the people is a huge shortcoming" (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.6, p 361).

To develop our country, Ho Chi Minh laid down using and promoting the role of the intelligentsia as a policy. In his career, Ho Chi Minh gave his mind and paid special attention to the intelligentsia as well as created favorable conditions for the intelligentsia who could ply their energies and intelligence in their researches. He affirmed that: "...the war resistance must be accompanied with the national construction. If the war resistance wins, the national construction will be successful. The national construction is surely successful; the war resistance will quickly win. And the national construction demands talents" (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol. 4, p 114). In the difficult conditions of our country, "...if we have smart choices, clever distribution, strategic use of talents, the talents will grow more and more" (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol. 4, p 114).

Basing on that viewpoint, Ho Chi Minh advocated that "all provinces must immediately investigate where there are people who are virtuous, talented and can do beneficial things for the country and the people; they must be reported straightaway to the Government". He limited one month for doing this command, after that all the provinces had to report their results. He said "...in term of the use of talents, we should not base on some strict conditions. As long as they are not contrary to the public interests, not the unpatriotic Vietnamese, pro-French or pro-Japanese..." (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.4, p 43). "Experience tells us: every time reviewing the talents, on the one hand, we can find new talents; on the other hand, those who corrupt will protrude" (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.5, p 314). He also warned that "If the promotion was not careful, it is not avoidable to bring the people who are only talkative and they do nothing but talk into the leadership position, which will be greatly harmful" (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.5, p 314). He emphasized that if we would like to have the best choice, we have to appreciate a person comprehensively.

2.3. The meanings of Ho Chi Minh's thoughts about the intelligentsia to the current condition

From the study of the basic content of Ho Chi Minh's thoughts about the intelligentsia, we would like to draw some following implications:

The first meaning is for the construction of the intelligentsia for the country. Ho Chi Minh said that the intelligentsia plays a very important role in the process of national construction as being proven by the historical reality. In the current integration process, the intelligentsia becomes a special resource to make up the strength of the country. To promote that spirit, today Vietnam lays down as a policy development of the team of powerful intelligentsia, which is directly raising the intellectual level of our nation, the strength of the country, improving the Party's leadership capability and the quality of the operation of the political system. Therefore, building up the intelligentsia is now urgently requisite in order to carry out the goal of the integration process. To enhance

the development of knowledge economy, international integration and the adaptation to the trend of globalization, the intelligentsia's role becomes more important than ever. Therefore, building up the intelligentsia is the investment for the sustainable development of society.

The viewpoint as "*an illiterate nation is a weak nation*" (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.4, p 7) is invaluablely meaningful for all the times since the way forward the socialism in Vietnam must be attached to the role of education, training, science, technology and intellectual economy. In every age, the intelligentsia is always the foundation of social progress; the intelligentsia is the key and creative force in spreading knowledge. Nowadays, together with the rapid development of the scientific revolution and modern technology, the intelligentsia becomes an especially important force who makes up the strength of each country in developing strategies. In order to bring our country to break out of the status of an underdeveloped country, we must promote all resources and the intellectual potential of our nation to the utmost; especially, the creative capability of the intelligentsia. Building and development of the intelligentsia are important contents in human strategy and contribute to achieve the goal of wealthy people and powerful country. The building-up of the intelligentsia has to rely on the synergy of the whole society and political system, which is building up the intelligentsia to be sufficient in quantity, strong in quality in order to meet the requirements of the development of the country. However, the intelligentsia also needs to determine their honor and responsibilities towards the country and the nation.

The second meaning is towards the recruitment and employment of the intelligentsia: Facing to the signs relations priorities, capability condescension "...in term of recruitment and employment of the current personnel", Ho Chi Minh warned: "If the promotion was not careful, it is not avoidable to bring the people who are only talkative and they do nothing but talk into the leadership position, which will be greatly harmful " is still certainly meaningful.

Appointing intellectuals to any important position on the basis of exact assessment about their qualities, capability and dedication result is extremely necessary. In order to appoint and employ the genuine intellectuals, the mechanisms and policies should be improved in the aim at promoting the intellectuals' potential effectively. In the process of employing intellectuals, leaders should avoid ill-treating the intellectuals due to their fear of being usurped the position by the intellectuals but have to treat them with leaders' heart; have to abrogate the idea of "*bad-treating the talented people*"; "*in the Party, they do not know to promote qualified people due to their fear of being usurped; outside the Party, they may be disdainful of everyone, and think that everyone is not as revolutionary and smart as them. Therefore, they do not know how to contact and cooperate with people who are virtuous and talented outside the Party. So, those people maybe turn frustrated and lonely...*" (Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.5, p 296).

Leaders need to properly assess the capability and create advantageous condition for capability being promoted to the utmost; break down the insular prejudices about the intellectuals; create an environment of tolerance, liberality, democracy and without prejudices to the intellectuals. When thoughts are released, the intellectual circles will strive to emulate talent, be free to present scientific and creative ideas and be able to maximize their ability.

The third meaning is about treating the intelligentsia. When Ho Chi Minh was alive, he gave a counsel which was when the financial background is strong, the Government must think of teachers. If we would like the intelligentsia dedicate all their lives to the country, we need to have some treatment policies to the intelligentsia, which are adequate to the intelligentsia and in accordance with the stages of the country's history. To achieve that goal, the Party and State have to pay special attention to improve the material and spirit life and of the intelligentsia. The guidelines and policies can create a good and conducive environment for helping the intellectuals promote their roles. There must be strict, explicit reward and punishment policies to ensure the fairness and avoid the trend which *"factions can cause disunity. Anyone who gets along with leaders is all good even they are deficient; a flawed job is considered good; and leaders and their inferiors conceal their faults mutually. Anyone who is not in harmony with leaders is all bad even they are smart; a good job is considered bad; and leaders try to decry, defame and depreciate those people"*(Ho Chi Minh 2011, vol.5, p 297). The treatment policy must be based on the viewpoint as *"fame goes with real work"* and avoid the thought which considers everything as the same.

3. Conclusion

On the basis of inheriting the cultural values of our nation and cultural essence of the humanity, Ho Chi Minh launched a comprehensive perspective of the intelligentsia in his ideological system. He specified the characteristics, the role of the intelligentsia from the war resistance to the process of building and developing the country. From the enhancement of intellectuals' role, Ho Chi Minh would like to emphasize the importance of the training and employment of the intellectuals to Vietnamese revolution. Until now his thoughts has been meaningful to the building-up of the intelligentsia who can meet the demands of integration.

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