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- Editorial
- Resolution of the 19th congress of the CPRF
- An outline of the cult of Trotsky
- Targeted poverty alleviation
- Interview with Ahmed Navidi
- An obituary to an American Communist
- Ho Chi Minh's thought on Party Building and how it's applied in the current Context

THEORY
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Table of Contents

Editorial **3**

Extract from the Resolution of the 19th Conference of the CPRF **4**

An Outline of the Cult of Trotsky **6**

Targeted Poverty Alleviation in China **9**

Interview with Ahmad Navidi **25**

An Obituary to an American Communist **28**

Ho Chi Minh's Thought on Party Building **29**

Vale Dr Hannah Middleton

Following the publication of AMR #79, the *Australian Marxist Review* editorial board have been saddened by the passing of Hannah Middleton, former General Secretary and President of the Communist Party of Australia.

Comrade Hannah dedicated her life for the struggle for socialism, making significant contributions to social movements within Australia in her activism in the Peace movement, for Indigenous rights, and public housing. Hannah believed, in her own words that "It is not sufficient to state the aim of establishing a socialist Australia. It will not just fall into our laps – it will have to be argued for, popularised, and fought for."

For many years Hannah was a leading member of the editorial board, and editor of the AMR. We look forward to presenting a proper tribute in upcoming issues.

Editorial

Contained within this issue are a wide range of contemporary and historical subjects within the International Communist Movement. Some issues might seem to be related to previous eras. The truth of historical materialism is that we inherit the world as it is. Marx in his 1852 work '*The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte'* he observed that "Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past." The events of the past are still with us. They shape the opportunities, difficulties, and choices before communists today.

The denouncement of Stalin and the "cult of personality" in 1956 following the closing of the 20th congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union threw the International communist movement into chaos. Its consequences and validity remain the subject of debate. An editorial at the time of the overthrow of the Soviet Union in the Brisbane daily the Courier mail remarked that "Khrushchev started it Gorbachev finished it". The reality is that during the depths of the intense struggle during the cold war period, communists across the world were broad sided by some leaders of the Soviet Union that had launched a serious factional struggle.

It is timely that Russian Communists are re-examining these historical events. This responsibility rests not just with Russians; other segments of the Soviet Union do need to give an account of what happened. So many who would have been Soviet Citizens today are placed within the terrible situation amounting to a civil war of former Soviet republics. It is with this study in mind we reprint the thoughts of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF) contained within a resolution from its 19th Congress.

Much has been made about the 'cult of Stalin', but we offer a perspective on another cult figure: Leon Trotsky. The myth of Trotsky forms part of the attack on Leninism. For this the creation of a cult of Stalin as the evil tyrant is indispensable. We argue for a scientific approach to these issues and an investigation of the real counter-revolutionary role of Trotskysim.

On a contemporary study of poverty alleviation in China we reprint an article by Nana Lui and Guixian Wang first published in Science and Society Volume 88 no 2. The article gives significant insight into the role of the Communist Party of China and their cadre in leading the fight to eradicate poverty.

A constructive interview was conducted by the AMR of a comrade who has been forced into exile from Iran. This gives our readers an overview of the feelings and experiences of Ahmad Navidi. We are hopeful that this interview will broaden our understanding of comrades who have come from such experiences.

John Bachtell has shared an Obituary of a dear Comrade from the CPUSA one of the millions that make up our movement. In sharing this dear comrade's life story, we get a glimpse of the struggle of working people in the USA and pay our respects to those activists that are now struggling every day with the rise of fascistic tendencies within their country.

Building and strengthening the party is a crucial aspect of advancing the struggle for socialism. An article from Vietnam on Ho Chi Minh' thoughts on party building is reprinted from the Communist party of Vietnam theoretical journal the Communist Review, a sisterly journal of the *Australian Marxist Review*.

We hope that our readers enjoy this presentation of articles.

Extract from the Resolution of the 19th Congress of the CPRF "On Restoring Full Historical Justice with Regard to Iosef Vissarionovich Stalin

Iosif Vissarionovich Stalin occupies a special place in people's memory. His image ranks with those of the great ancestors who formed the glory and might of the Motherland and saved our people from enslavement and death. His name is forever inscribed in history side by side with that of the founder of the Soviet statehood, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin.

Today, even as the collective West and NATO are mounting an aggression against Russia, Lenin and Stalin stand together in the ranks of the fighters for the freedom and independence of our Motherland. The Soviet people have never disowned Stalin. Party members and non-members alike cherish the image of a demanding and just leader, and the victories scored under his leadership will forever remain in the history of our country.

Shortly after Stalin's death, on the initiative of N.Khruschev, a dirty campaign was launched to smear his name and belittle his contribution to the cause of Victory in the Great Patriotic War and the recovery of our country. Counting on gaining cheap popularity, N.S. Khruschev roundly criticized the results of the 30 years of Stalin's rule. His destructive activity in exposing the "personality cult" seriously undermined the international authority of the USSR and became a generous gift to the enemies of Soviet power because it prompted many questions and gave rise to differences among the friends and allies of the USSR in the world arena.

And yet the objective lack of materials besmirching Stalin's name and cause and the fact of deliberate removal of authentic documents from state archives and planting of fakes in it has been proven. The fact of "cleaning up" of archive documents under Gorbachev and Yeltsin has been established. Heavy damage was inflicted on the cause of socialism by the second wave of "destalinization" connected with the decisions of the 22nd Congress of the CPSU.

Marxism-Leninism teaches us that the only right way for the communists is the way of historical truth. It must be known, protected, and restored. The life and struggle of Stalin, like those of any historical figure, were not devoid of shortcomings and contradictions. But errors and miscalculations were in many cases rectified on his own initiative to form the basis of further strengthening of socialist legality.

Even all the abuses in the life of the party and the country taken together cannot outweigh Stalin's role in defending the Leninist course, ensuring the unity of communists, building up the industrial might of the USSR and organizing resistance to the Fascization of Europe. His contribution to the Great Victory over German Nazism and Japanese militarism is colossal. Meanwhile, cribbing setbacks to a single person, even an outstanding one, is incompatible with the party or scientific approach to history.

The leadership of the party and state was conscious of the fallacy of Khruschev's actions. As a result, he was removed from his posts. In the years when the party and country were led by L.I.Brezhnev "the personality cult" ceased to dominate the assessment of Stalin's historical role. Some important steps were afoot on the initiative of K.U. Chernenko on the eve of the 40th anniversary of the Great Victory. But full historical justice was not restored.

The election of M.S.Gorbachev as Geneal Secretary at the March 1985 Plenary session of the CCCPSU marked the starting point of a man-made crisis within the party, followed by a criminal dismantling of the USSR. The CPRF in its work more than once assessed Khruschev's "decrowning" of Stalin as politically harmful and morally wrong. True communists and our allies can subscribe to the words of the legendary Stalin Defense Minister, Marshall D.F. Ustinov: "No enemy has done as much harm to us as Khruschev through his policy toward the past of our party and state and the attitude to Stalin."

The CPRF, being an ideological heir to the RSDLP – RSDLP (B)- RCP (B)-AUCP (B)-CPSU –CPRSFSR, is consistently fighting against falsification of the history of the great Soviet era. The time has come to declare the need to restore the full historical justice with regard to Iosif Vissarionovich Stalin.

The 19th Congress of the CPRF deems it necessary:

- To assess N.S.Khruschev's report "On the Cult of Personality and its Consequences" delivered to the delegates of the 20th CPSU Congress on February 25, 1956 already after the Congress closed, as erroneous and politically biased. The text of the report contains doctored facts and false charges against I.V.Stalin, distorting the truth about his state and party activities;
- To recognize that the resolutions and decisions of the 22nd CPSU Congress concerning the assessment of the role and place of Stalin in the history of the party and the country were destructive and caused great harm to the building of socialism in the USSR and the world communist movement;
- To call on President Putin of the Russian Federation to return to the city of Volgograd and the Volgograd Oblast their heroic names Stalingrad and the Stalingrad Oblast. The decisions on renaming them were ungrounded. They do not contribute to preserving the historical memory and the solution of Russia's strategic tasks of defeating neo-Nazism, protecting the sovereignty and national security;
- that CPRF committees of all levels and the party's information services to make active use of this resolution in covering topical issues of ideological struggle to develop and introduce a relevant study course in the system of party-political instruction;
- To carry on the work to immortalize the memory of I.V. Stalin, research and propagandize his theoretical and practical legacy and actualize it in the activities of the CPRF and left-patriotic forces at the present stage.

An Outline of the Cult of Trotsky

David Matters

Those that profess support for Leon Trotsky make much ado about Stalinists and Stalin. They base their beliefs on an assertion that Trotsky was illegitimately usurped as a leader of the Russian Bolsheviks and the rightful heir of Lenin.

Their credo is built around the writings of Trotsky and the personality of the man. In theory and practice the Trotskyists lift Trotsky above a scientific examination of his works and contribution.

Leon Trotsky established his reputation as leader of “the left opposition” within the Bolshevik party in the Soviet Union. The first question is ‘Left opposition to what?’

To raise the figure of Trotsky to mythical proportions, a greater myth of betrayal of the October Socialist Revolution by an arch villain was created. This opposition is absolutist in character and Stalin, or a figure like Stalin, must fulfill this role so for the Trotsky cult to exist. Stalin must be created as the absolute ruler. This also raises why is it that the bourgeois opposition to Stalin must also create a mythology around Stalin?

This requires both lifting figures out of their historical context and the reduction of Lenin and Leninism, and the science of Marxism to a minor role. It also requires ignoring historical materialism and the very real history of the revolution in Russia the creation of the Soviet Union in 1921.

It also requires ignoring that the creation of the Soviet Union and the setting out to build Socialism in the Soviet Union were inspired and led by Lenin. The thesis on the New Economic policy, the national question and the growing storms in the east are also Lenin’s inspiration.

Many of the Trotskyist groups make much of the April theses. This major article published by Lenin upon his return to Russia from exile was a correction of Bolshevik policy and not the establishment of Bolshevism. The creation of Bolshevism was steeled in struggle with the revisionists of the second international and its betrayal of the working class. Within Russia this took a form of opposition to the opportunism of Menshevism.

The real role of Trotsky and Trotskyism in this struggle was of a centrist position, where he tried to act as bridge back to Menshevik opportunism. Trotsky’s major positions of this time were in opposition to Leninism, and it was Trotsky who had to revoke his support for these ideas he held before joining the Bolsheviks. It appears though that this was only a temporary withdrawal as those who have read his history of the Russian revolution note the way in which he minimises the role of Lenin and the Bolsheviks, while simultaneously he exaggerates his role.

Of interest is his loose treatment of the “sealed train” through Switzerland that Lenin had to use to get back to Russia in which Mensheviks try to assert that Lenin was a German spy. This is where he misses the differences with Marxism of our time Leninism which gathered and learnt revolutionary struggle throughout its existence. Trotsky began his “left opposition” against Lenin and sided with Lefts in the Bolshevik party he increasingly continued to block with Left and right opportunists in the Russian party. Siding with comrades Zinoviev Bukharin and Kamenev in his attempts to build factional support.

The Trotskyist view of the Soviet Revolution is that it had been

bureaucratised and had become a deformed worker's state, Zinoviev his then ally ran towards State Capitalist as he was opposing Lenin's call for the New Economic Policy. In later writings Trotsky refers to it as 'Bonapartism" and of course Stalin was the Bonapart. This is basically an assertion that a new exploiting class had come to power and that the 'bureaucracy' was the new ruling class. This disingenuous position asserts that the revolution was betrayed and socialism was destroyed before 1930 in the Soviet Union.

The over 70 years of Soviet historical experience is dismissed by this. It is an opposition to the very real position that through the Soviets and their party the CPSU a class rule of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry existed and existed until the counter-revolutionary coup by Yeltsin prepared by the creation of Pluralism by Gorbachev and his clique.
This coup was in effect the final realisation of Trotsky's call for a political revolution, it delivered not a better Socialism, but the dictatorship of the Bourgeoisie was restored. This has been the outcome of these political revolutions.

This indicates that the Trotsky cult does not serve the Proletariat but has its basis in petty bourgeois fear of proletarian revolution.

Trotskyism has been embraced by the anti-communists as a means of dressing reactionary politics in new drag, the Trotskyists took a sectarian view of the united front and popular fronts against fascism.

This was evident during the massive movement against fascism and war that culminated in the forcing of the "democratic" wing of the bourgeoisie being forced to oppose fascism. It forgets that the original struggle against the Russian revolution was joined by the united forces of imperialism which included the intervention of 19 imperialist armies in support of the counter-revolutionary whites. The defeat of this counter-revolution left the revolutionary forces drained and destroyed large chunks of the Russian economy.

This was a monumental struggle, the joining of the national liberation struggle with the proletarian victory is what raised up the Soviet Union this immense event is continuing in new forms to this day and saw the defeat of not only Nazism but the colonialism and colonial occupations which are still being defeated and opposed throughout our world. Imperialism is a predatory beast and the modern form of capitalism. Evolutions occurred and the weakened Europeans and defeated Japanese and German imperialisms were kept on life support.

Wars of national liberation have dominated our lifetime among them the successful Chinese and Vietnamese revolutions, the liberation of much of Africa and Asia. The return of the beast in new form as neo-colonialism and transnational business to inflict new exploitations on the new nations. The redrawing of spheres of influence.

It is hard to forget the monumental struggles of the peoples of southern Africa against the fascist apartheid system of white minority rule and enslavement in Angola, Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa. The former Soviet Union and European Socialist nations rendered great assistance to these struggles. Organisations supported by the Trotskyists included UNITA and other rebel groups that attempted to sap the revolutionary energy of the masses. Covertly and overtly funded by the imperialist forces to disrupt the revolutionary movement.

In its 1981 publication "To Be Born a Nation" SWAPO puts it; thus, South

Africa's aggression against the Angolan revolution collapsed in ruins but confronted by the Angolan people's solidarity with their Namibian comrades-in-arms, the occupation regime refused to abandon its aggressive designs. UNITA resistance in Central and South-east Angola did not long survive the withdrawal of its South African ally, and thousands of its troops and its supporters crossed the border into Namibia. Henceforth UNITA was to be the occupation regime's principal subversive tool against the MPLA Government in Angola. It established camps across the north of Namibia where it trained and armed UNITA mercenaries…PG 227.

All during this momentous struggle many of those inflicted with the Trotsky cult gave their support to UNITA and opposed the revolutionary forces. This is the basis of the Trotsky cult that it leads towards reaction and supports forces opposed to the Democratic movements of the people. During the Spanish civil war, the democratic forces were weakened by the activity of anarchist and Trotskyist groups. One of those that was associated with POUM was the author of such works as animal farm and 1984. The work animal farm bases itself on the Trotsky myth as a hand book it has been used to promote anti-communism and was a reader used by activists who were funded by the CIA to destabilise eastern European peoples democracies.

The Trotsky cult has the sheer brilliance of placing anti-communism under a red flag and its simplicity is that it never has to be a mass movement to carry out its work of sapping revolutionary energy. It presents an intellectual blockade to the development of Leninism. The link between anarchism, left opportunism and right opportunism is the essential feature of this cult. The opposition to actual left forces is built on opposition to the necessary compromises and united front work thus weakening action of the working class in support of its historical role.

Like most religious cults endless arguments over points of dogma form a central activity thus the multiplicity of different sects within the overlying cult. The links between the cults is their common thread of weakening the development of proletarian parties and the domination of movements that could assist to challenge the dominance of bourgeois ideology. That many genuine activists are trapped within these cults and that their development of struggle and a movement against the continued existence of capitalist dictatorship is thwarted by some basic nature of these groups who always split and subdivide if they reach too much success.

The most phenomenal characteristic of this cult is that it leads to alliances with reactionary forces there is a long history in the Australian working-class movement of such alliances. This was evident in the attack on the communist or left Labor leaderships of many unions. The Ironworker's union was one case in point that left that Union with the right leaning Laurie Short. The interesting thing is that after the damage is done these cultists move on. This alliance of Trotsky cultists with the extreme anti-communist forces is repeated again and again. In dealing with the Trotsky Cult the same methods of work are required as dealing to create unity around the interests of the working class.

The Trotsky cult is fed by left and right errors of the communist movement but is fundamentally a movement that is a "left" opposition to the development of Communism.

Targeted Poverty Alleviation in China: The Policy Perspective of the Communist Party of China

Nana Liu & Guixian Wang

Reprinted from *Science & Society*, Vol 88, No. 2, 2024, pp.250-271.

In 2021, China announced that the final 98.99 million impoverished rural residents in China had all been lifted out of poverty, and all 832 impoverished counties and 128,000 villages had been removed from the poverty list by the end of 2020 (Xinhua, 2021). Researchers and reporters focus on the achievements, risks, and challenges of the China's anti-poverty efforts from various perspectives, including economic and political, government-society relations, government-market relations, history, and reality, etc., but the CPC's role is missing from this attention. The generalized use of Chinese politics or the Chinese government as a substitute or equivalent for the CPC is not conducive to a full understanding of the current circumstance and future of contemporary China. This is true not only for poverty reduction research in China, but also for all concerns of changes, achievements, limitations, and challenges of China, as well as its past, present, and future, which require a focus on the CPC as a key variable.

China is a typical country with a dual economic structure, geo-graphically speaking, relatively developed cities and towns coexist with the underdeveloped countryside. Since the 1950s, the household registration system has strictly distinguished between agricultural and non-agricultural populations and therefore between urban and rural areas. When we talk about poverty in China, it is mainly about the poverty in China's rural areas. That doesn't mean there is no poverty in urban areas. It is just that poverty, especially, absolute poverty, is more severe in rural areas.

In section 1, we discuss how poverty is defined in China and the historical trend in the incidence of poverty. In section 2, we discuss poverty-alleviation policies over time before 2012. In section 3, we discuss targeted poverty alleviation started in 2012. In section 4, we summarize the experience of China's poverty alleviation. In section 5, we critically reflect on the nature of these policies and elaborate on challenges and the prospects of poverty alleviation in China.

1. *Poverty Criteria, Process and Development of Poverty Alleviation in China since the Market-Oriented Reform in the 1980s*

Since 1991, the World Bank has established an international poverty line in dollars and raised the poverty standard from $1.25 to $1.9 per day in 2015. If the market exchange rate is currently about 6.6 Yuan for 1 dollar, it is equivalent to an increase from 8.25 Yuan per day or 3,011 Yuan per year to 12.54 Yuan per day or 4,577 Yuan per year.

China's poverty standard in 2016 is 3050 Yuan per person per year at current prices. In recent years, the conversion coefficient of RMB to US dollar of the World Bank poverty line has remained roughly 1:3.5–3.6, equivalent to US$847.22–871.42, with US$2.32–2.39 per person per day. Therefore, according to World Bank standards, the rural poverty line in China is higher than $1.9 per person per day. The incidence of

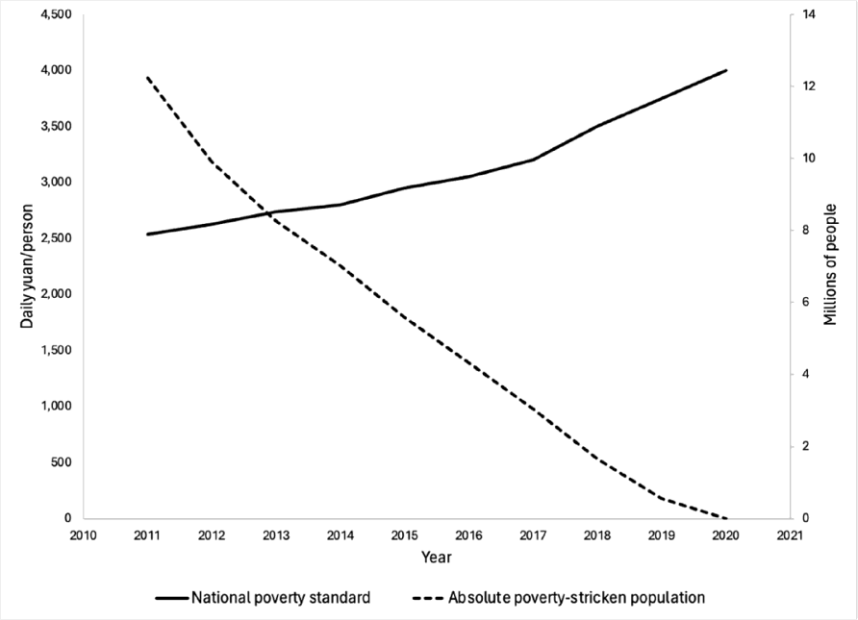

Figure 1: China's national poverty standard and absolute poverty-stricken people in rural areas

poverty in China dropped from 30.7% in 1978, when China tried to introduce its market-oriented reform, down to 0.6% in 2019 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2023).

The land reform during Mao's time enabled farmers to have land, which was unprecedented in China's history. However, because of the weak economic foundation of the new-founded country, the absolute poverty population in rural areas was 250 million. General poverty means that there is no specific poverty-stricken area, but poverty exists at the same time throughout the whole country. Poverty alleviation in this paper refers to giving support to relatively impoverished areas in terms of state behavior (policies, systems, etc.) starting with the market-oriented reform in China.

2. Poverty-Alleviation Policies Over Time

2.1 1978-1985 Poverty Reduction on Large Scale at the Stage of Institutional Reform

The "household contract and performance-based compensation and responsibility system" (HRS for short) is a landmark event in the implementation of market-oriented reform in China's rural areas. Collectively-owned land was divided among rural households, and land property rights were split into ownership and management. Ownership belongs to collective institutions such as the villages, and management rights are subcontracted by peasant households to operate independently. In addition, the government implemented policies such as raising prices for farm produce, and improving output markets and access to inputs, which promoted the agricultural boost with the HRS in the early 1980s. Meanwhile, the abolition of the People's Commune led to the subsequent long-term disorganization of rural areas in China, which in turn gradually offset the gains of de-collectivization and negatively affected poverty eradication.

In the 1980s, the absolute poverty population in rural areas dropped to 125 million, 18 poverty-stricken areas were designated nationwide for official support, and infrastructure construction in poverty-stricken areas was carried out.

2.2 1986-2000 Development-Oriented Poverty Alleviation and Poverty Alleviation by Taking the County as the Unit

In 1986, the State Council of China set up the Leading Group on Poverty Alleviation and Development; the first time a special poverty alleviation organization was set up. That year, 331 poverty-stricken counties were designated nationwide, which increased to 370 in 1988. The determination of the county as the poverty alleviation unit is mainly based on the notion that poverty at that time was concentrated and a considerable number of counties lagged behind other counties overall.

By the end of 1993, the poverty-stricken population in rural areas had dropped from 125 million in 1985 to 80 million and the incidence of poverty dropped from 14.8% to 8.7% (People's Republic of China, 2023). The remaining 80 million poverty-stricken people live mainly in remote, desert, and arid areas which makes the follow-up measures of poverty alleviation more difficult to implement. As a result, the Program of State's Storming the Fortifications in the Work of Helping the Poor was implemented by the State Council in 1994, as the first document in China to set clear goals, targets, measures, and deadlines for poverty alleviation aimed to solve the problems of food and clothing for 80 mil-lion poverty-stricken people in rural areas of China in about seven years (from 1994 to 2000). Also in the program, the State Council increased the number of poverty-stricken counties to 592. 70% of poverty alleviation funds were used in these counties. Significant achievements have been made in poverty alleviation during this period. From 1997 to 1999, 8 million people in China solved the problems of annual supply of food and clothing. By 2000, the administrative villages with electricity, radio and television, highway, postal, and telephone services had reached 95%, 95%, 89%, 69%, and 67%, respectively, indicators now close to the national average (National Working Committee on Women and Children Under State Council, 2001).

2.3 2001-2010 Poverty Alleviation by Taking the Village as the Unit

On June 13, 2001, the Central Committee of the CPC and the State Council issued the Outline of Development-Oriented Poverty Alleviation for China's Rural Areas (2001–2010) (People's Republic of China, 2001). The outline set goals for continuing to solve the food and clothing problems of the poverty-stricken population in rural areas and achieving a well-off standard of living. At this stage, poverty alleviation began to take villages as units. 148,000 poverty-stricken villages became the focus in 2001. 148,000 poverty-stricken villages are 21% of the total number of administrative villages in China distributed in 1861 counties throughout the country. Poverty alleviation by taking the village as the unit is more detailed and targeted than by county. According to the poverty alleviation standard of 1,274 Yuan in 2010, the poverty-stricken population in rural areas decreased from 94.22 million in 2000 to 26.88 million in 2010. Despite taking villages as units, there are two new features at this stage: a) non-governmental organizations and individuals are encouraged to participate in poverty alleviation. b) Combining poverty alleviation policies with solving the problems of agriculture, countryside, and farmers' policies together.

Table 1: Representative Poverty Alleviation Policies in China

Policy	Beginning Year	Supporting Object	Main measures
Resettlement	1983	Poverty-stricken counties	Voluntary relocation of poor people living in ecologically fragile areas
Welfare-to-work	1985	Poverty-stricken counties	Support infrastructure construction in poor areas
Subsidised loans	1986	Poverty-stricken areas	Preferential loans with subsidised interest for poverty-stricken people
Financial development funds	1986	Poverty-stricken areas	Government allocations for poverty alleviation
Poverty alleviation by science and technology	1986	Poverty-stricken areas	Technical training and promotion in poor areas to develop pillar industries
Non-official organisations and individuals in poverty alleviation	1986	Poverty-stricken areas	Mobilising non-official resources to participate in poverty alleviation
Compulsory education project in poverty-stricken areas	1995	West area of China	Compulsory education for poverty-stricken people
Microfinance	1996	Poverty-stricken areas	Giving small amounts of loans too low-income people to set up small enterprises
Advancing poverty alleviation for a whole village	2001	Poverty-stricken villages	Implementing comprehensive poverty alleviation projects in poor villages
Training and transfer of rural labour force	2004	Poverty-stricken counties	Increasing the rural labour force training and helping them find jobs in other places
Reduce poverty through industrial development	2004	Poverty-stricken areas	Supporting agricultural enterprise in poverty-stricken areas
Plan of Education in the West area	2004	Poverty-stricken areas	The plan to make nine-year compulsory education basically universal and to basically eliminate illiteracy among young and middle-aged adults in the western region

On December 1, 2011, the CPC promulgated the new Outline of Development-Oriented Poverty Alleviation for China's Rural Areas (2011–2020). With the remaining 592 poverty-stricken counties and 128,000 poverty-stricken villages, the outline also identified 14 contiguous areas with special poverty, mostly in the mountainous areas of the Midwest in China. At this stage, the CPC set a goal of eliminating absolute poverty in rural areas by 2020.

3. *Targeted Poverty Alleviation (2012 – 2020)*

During his visit to a poverty-stricken village, Xi stated that poverty alleviation should be realistic, tailored to local conditions, and avoid being overambitious to help the poor accurately. Then the General Office of the Central Committee of CPC issued the "Opinions on Innovating the Mechanism to Promote Poverty Alleviation and Development in Rural Areas" in which targeted poverty alleviation started to become the main concern. Subsequently, the Poverty Alleviation Office of the State Council formulated the Implementation Plan for Establishing Targeted Poverty Alleviation Mechanism and carried out targeted poverty alleviation throughout the whole country. By observing the emergence and implementation process of targeted poverty alleviation, it is possible to trace out the process of enactment of important policies in China — the Central Committee of CPC initiates one and then the State Council follows up implementing related policies and measures. We are now back to the starting point of discussion: What is targeted poverty alleviation? Targeted poverty alleviation means policies and measures aimed at the real poverty-stricken families and people; it means that the targets of poverty alleviation are specific individuals, while previous poverty alleviation policies were applied to regions, counties, and villages; it means that through targeted assistance to the poor, the various factors and obstacles leading to poverty should be fundamentally eliminated to achieve the goal of sustainable poverty eradication, not temporary poverty reduction but permanently get-ting out of poverty. Compared with previous policies that are typically uniform and general, targeted poverty alleviation aims at identifying the poor accurately, assisting them, and managing them using differentiated approaches in accordance to each poverty-stricken area and to each set of conditions of poverty-stricken people. It consists of accurate identifying and assisting poverty-stricken households, a dynamic management of poverty alleviation objects, and an accurate assessment of poverty alleviation effects.

In recent years, the institutions in charge of targeted poverty alleviation have set up records for poverty-stricken villages, households, and people. These records are used to identify the targets of poverty alleviation, incorporate those who should have been included in the past and those who have returned to poverty for now, and withdraw those who should not be included in the past and who have lifted out of poverty, to truly determine "who should be supported." The causes of poverty also need to be analyzed clearly, and assistance plans for classified policies should be formulated, support measures implemented, and the effectiveness of such support monitored. The overall goal of targeted poverty alleviation is to achieve "two no worries, three guarantees," i.e., no worries about food or clothing, and guarantees of compulsory education, basic medical care, and housing security. When it comes to specific poverty-stricken families and individuals, the content of targeted poverty alleviation goals is very clear and practical. For example, it is stipulated that no worries about food include both food supply and drinking water. More specifically, poverty-stricken people should not only have enough to eat but also eat healthily and nutritiously. According to the eating habits of the residents, their demand for rations and supplement certain meat, eggs, bean products, and other necessary nutrients should be met by self-production or self-

purchase. To have consistent access to drinking water and the quality of drinking water should be qualified, including mountain spring water, ponds, reservoirs, and pools without feeding fish; the daily water supply per capita is not less than 35 liters; the round trip time of tap water or simple water pipe or manual water carrying is not more than 30 minutes; the vertical water taking distance is not more than 100 meters; the seasonal water shortage through-out the year is less than 15 days. “No worrying about clothes” means that according to the living environment, poverty-stricken people can afford to buy their clothes, so that they can change their clothes according to the four seasons and wash their clothes daily.
Consider the case of Gansu Province to explore the effectiveness as well as problems of targeted poverty alleviation. Gansu Province is in the western part of China and is one of the typical poverty-stricken provinces. There are 58 concentrated poverty-stricken counties out of 86 counties in the whole province. It is in inland China, with many mountains and deep ditches, and the unfavorable terrain leads to traffic congestion. In most areas, drought and lack of rain, barren land, and difficult vegetation growth have affected the development of agriculture and aquaculture for a long time.
There are 17 specific tasks to implement targeted poverty alleviation in Gansu Province — drinking-water safety, power supply, basic road construction in poverty-stricken villages, renovation of dangerous housing for poverty-stricken households, moving poverty-stricken people to another place with better living conditions, eco-environmental improvement, cultivation of industrial projects related to poverty alleviation, support of e-commerce to sell agricultural and sideline products, education, construction of cultural sites, social assistance, microfinance poverty alleviation program, workforce training, poverty alleviation cadre training, integration and management of village-based poverty alleviation task force and examination of party and government leading cadres in poverty-stricken counties. Among the 17 tasks, the construction of infrastructure such as roads, drinking water, and electricity supply is the focus based on Gansu’s situation. At the end of 2016, Gansu Province completed the task of rural drinking water supply one year ahead of schedule which solved the problem of drinking water for 118,000 people. The precondition of all other work related to targeted poverty alleviation is the precise identification of poverty-stricken people. In Gansu Province, unitary standards of the poverty-stricken population include:

1. All households whose annual income per capita is less than 2,952 Yuan are registered in the poverty alleviation records.
2. All households whose average annual income per capita is higher than 2,952 Yuan but lower than 3,500 Yuan with one of the following cases are also registered in the poverty alleviation records:
   a. Those who drop out of school due to poverty at the stage of compulsory education, from first to ninth grade (except those who drop out due to intellectual and physical disability).
   b. Major residential housing is identified as high-level dangerous.
   c. Family members who suffer from incurable serious illnesses or suffer from long-term chronic illnesses with high expenditure.

3. All households whose annual income per capita is more than 3,500 Yuan but fail to meet the standard of the “three guarantees” (compulsory education, basic medical care, and housing) are no longer registered in

the poverty alleviation records. They can get help according to what they lack.

It is of great significance to primarily achieve the goal of the "two no worries, three guarantees." However, there is still a serious risk of occurrence/recurrence of poverty because of the absence of a free and universal public healthcare system.

4. China's Experiences of Poverty Alleviation

China made an enormous contribution to poverty reduction worldwide. According to the UN Millennium Development Goals Report 2015, the world's most populous countries, China and India, played a central role in the global reduction of poverty. The extreme poverty rate in Eastern Asia has dropped from 61% in 1990 to 4% in 2015 mainly because of China's poverty alleviation. The report also shows that the number of citizens China has raised from poverty accounts for 70% of the world's total.

China's achievements in poverty alleviation and reduction are obvious. It is necessary to summarize as well as rethink the experience of it. The most significant and special characteristic is that the CPC plays an *absolute leading role* in poverty alleviation. Apart from playing a leading role in allocating funding and formulating policies, the establishment of poverty alleviation agencies and the allocation of resources are all decided by the Central Committee of the CPC. In China, the political factor takes precedence over the economic in poverty alleviation. In other words, it uses political power to allocate economic resources to solve the poverty problem. So, the most significant feature of poverty alleviation in China is that using the government's institutional authority to reduce poverty can play such a role based on the leadership of the CPC.

4.1 Mobilization on a National Scale to Organize Pair-Up Support for Poverty-Stricken Areas

Pair-up support for poverty-stricken areas concludes point-to-point poverty alleviation, East-West cooperation, and poverty alleviation by the army.

Point-to-point poverty alleviation involves departments under the Party's Central Committee, government agencies, a state-owned enterprise, and institutions to help one or more poverty-stricken counties. For example, the Ministry of Railways helps the Xihe County in the Gansu Province, the Supreme People's Court helps the Sui County and Ningling County in the Henan Province, and the Central Publicity Department helps the Yaozhou County in the Shanxi Province, etc. From 2012 to 2016, all 89 departments under the Party's Central Committee coordinated and invested about 6.7 billion Yuan in aid funds and required staff to their designated poverty alleviation counties. During the same period, the central government of China allocated 228.6 billion Yuan to poverty alleviation (National Rural Revitalization Administration, 2017).

East-West cooperation involves relatively developed provinces and cities in eastern China helping 14 provinces in Western China. Deep poverty areas in China are mainly located in the southwest and northwest regions, as well as the inland mountainous and border areas. These areas have poor living conditions, frequent natural disasters, remote geographical locations, vast areas of sparsely populated, and limited resources. East-West poverty alleviation cooperation has been implemented for more than 20 years echoing Deng Xiaoping's proposal of "some to get rich first, others brought along and ultimately achieving common prosperity." Eastern Provinces provide aid funds, cadres as poverty alleviation staff, and scientific and technological personnel to the West, guided local enterprises to invest in western provinces, set up labor export training pro-grams and hire workers from the west to the eastern provinces. Based on China's thousands of years of the historical tradition of "Inequality rather than want is the cause of trouble" and the CPC's decades of socialist education to achieve common prosperity, the fact that the funds which could have been used for the development of the eastern region were spent on the western provinces did not cause dissatisfaction and concern among the people in the eastern region, and the people's collective awareness of the country as a whole was far higher than

that of the provinces, As the CPC calls it, "to coordinate all the activities of the nation like moves in a game of chess" under the leadership of the CPC, that is, the central government unified leadership to plan and manage all regions of the country, which is the unique context for understanding modern China's politics.

Poverty alleviation by the army represents a unique approach to poverty alleviation in China. It is a unique feature of China's system that the army is under the leadership of the CPC. Just as in *Opinions on Army's Participation in Winning the Fight Against Poverty* which is jointly issued by the Political Work Department of the Central Military Commission and the Office of the Leading Group on Poverty Alleviation and Development of the State Council said, "As the people's army under the absolute leadership of the Party, it is an important task entrusted by the Party and the people to participate in the fight against poverty." In China, the army has been involved in poverty alleviation for more than 20 years. By 2016, the army has helped 2,000 villages out of poverty, and brigade-level units stationed in poverty-stricken areas have generally implemented 1 to 2 poverty alleviation projects.

4.2 Mobilization in the Private Sector

In addition to the above three ways, there is another perspective to understand the significance of the CPC's policy authority for poverty alleviation: the mobilization of all the large private enterprises and NGOs.

Since China started its market-oriented reform, private enterprises have developed rapidly and become a main part of China's market economy. Since the implementation of targeted poverty alleviation, poverty alleviation has gained social consensus, which means the people in the whole country know the determination of the CPC to solve absolute poverty. So do all the large private enterprises in China. The State Council issued a special document to mobilize and appeal to private enterprises, non-governmental organizations, and individuals to participate in targeted poverty alleviation. Therefore, large-scale private enterprises actively participate in response to the requirements of the authority. For example, large e-commerce enterprises take the initiative to sign strategic cooperation agreements with the Poverty Alleviation Office of the State Council and collect farm products to sell via the Internet. Evergrande Real Estate Group, one of China's largest real estate companies, helps Bijie City, Guizhou Province, to build two large bases in southwest China, one is the largest vegetable and fruit base, and the other is the largest beef cattle breeding base. Active participation in poverty alleviation is seen as a manifestation of obedience to authority, which seems more like a political task than an economic one, although the CPC and the government have never used any coercive means or hints thereof.

NGOs have gradually become an important subject of public welfare donations in China in recent years. According to statistics, the total amount of social donations in China in 2015 was 61.2 billion Yuan, of which social organizations received 52.5 billion Yuan, accounting for 85.8% of the total. More and more NGOs focus on poverty alleviation. According to research by the NGO Institute of Tsinghua University, poverty alleviation organizations account for 18.8% of all kinds of NGOs (Wang, 2016). However, most of these NGOs on poverty alleviation have all kinds of connections with governments at different levels and need to cooperate with them. In the social donation field, NGOs' active performance reflects the government's

failure. The official donation agencies broke out several corruption news more than ten years ago, leading to the public's distrust of the official donation agencies. Therefore, NGOs have played an irreplaceable role in social donations for poverty alleviation. How-ever, in terms of poverty alleviation, the influence of NGOs is very limited. In a word, all such poverty alleviation work taken by private organizations and individuals needs support or at least permission of the authority and, if they want to expand or promote their work or influence, they have to obtain support from the government at different levels.

For a long time, many NGOs have been established by government departments or transformed from government agencies, with a strong administrative function. A certain cross between the government and NGOs in functions, residences, personnel, finance, etc., has become the main cause of corruption in NGOs. The anti-corruption movement vigorously promoted by the CPC in recent years is not limited to the Party's organizations and government agencies but also includes NGOs. Corruption in the official donation agencies can also directly affect the legitimacy of the CPC, not just the related government agencies. How do the Party and government exercise control over private organizations, without limiting their autonomy and initiative? For the Party, this is a question that requires further exploration.

4.2 Mobilization Within the Whole Party

The leading and decisive role of the CPC is the key to under-standing China's poverty alleviation, both its achievements and challenges. Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, like all other work in China now, adhering to the Party's leadership is at the core of poverty alleviation. Strengthening the CPC's leadership is President Xi's most explicit and powerful move. As Xi said in the report of the 19th National Congress of the CPC: "The Party is the highest force of political leadership". The performance appraisal and future promotion of all the CPC members who are related to the targeted poverty alleviation are directly linked to their achievements in poverty alleviation. This one-way administrative accountability system is carried out along the hierarchical chain within the CPC, with the ultimate goal of achieving poverty alleviation. It puts enormous pressure on grassroots poverty alleviation personnel. To complete the assessment of their superiors, it produces a lot of "poverty alleviation only on numbers", that is, false data produced by indicators to cope with the assessment. Therefore, the CPC had to establish specialized disciplinary inspection and supervision working groups to supervise and investigate such forms of bureaucratic formalism in the campaign.

Poverty alleviation as a movement of the CPC. In recent years, the CPC has sent more than 3 million public officials to villages to set up a total of 255,000 village-based working groups. Members of the village-based working groups work and live in these villages every day and they are directly responsible for poverty alleviation until the task is completed. These cadres are generally younger and highly educated. Party organizations at all levels order poverty-alleviating cadres to plan suitable anti-poverty measures for each household and adopt targeted assistance measures. Both party documents and Xi's speech refer to targeted poverty alleviation as a battle that must be won, with the Party mobilizing all necessary personnel and resources in the form of a movement.

The model of “five-level secretaries responsible for poverty alleviation”. The CPC has created a model of “five-level secretaries responsible for poverty alleviation”. The hierarchical structure of the CPC is composed of five levels: province, city, county, township, and village. Party organization leaders are the secretaries at each corresponding level. After the launch of targeted poverty alleviation, the CPC gradually worked out this model, with secretaries of five levels from the provincial, municipal, county, and township, to the village having corresponding responsibilities and authority. These responsibilities are written and published in formal documents. Of course, these responsibilities are often based on the instructions of the Central Committee and each province’s own conditions to formulate corresponding measures and goals for targeted poverty alleviation. If a secretary fails to complete the task, it will be for her/him to remain in office.

Secretaries of provincial Party committees and governors of 22 provinces in central and western China signed the responsibility letter for poverty alleviation to the Central Committee. Signing the responsibility letter means that the leaders of these provinces promised to the Central Committee that they would complete the task of poverty alleviation as scheduled, and if they failed, they would be punished (For example, losing the opportunity for promotion or transferring from the current position). This is the only project since the Eighteenth National Congress in which the Party and government leaders have established responsibility letters to the Central Committee. Besides, the Central Committee of the CPC conducts onsite inspections on poverty alleviation which is the only special inspection focused on a separate work by the Central Committee of CPC has made so far — generally, onsite inspections by the Central Committee supervise the work of the Party and the government comprehensively. During the period of poverty alleviation, the Party and government leaders in poverty-stricken counties are stable in their position to make sure the work of poverty alleviation is consistent. The two measures mentioned above express China’s firm determination and confidence to fight against poverty and show that fighting against poverty is a hard task that must be accomplished

One of the positive effects of targeted poverty alleviation: the improvement of the relationship between the cadres and the masses. The implementation of targeted poverty alleviation creates a closer relationship between the cadres and the masses, village-based working groups innovative grass-roots governance mechanisms, relocation of living promotes the process of urbanization, and ecological compensation promotes the protection of the eco-logical environment, etc. Such policies and measures have not only improved the production and living conditions of people in poverty-stricken areas but also had a variety of positive effects, especially the improvement of the relationship between the cadres and the masses.

It is necessary to give a brief review of three continuing but different stages of the governance model in China’s rural areas which we summarize as “forced control mode”, “management model,” and “service governance model.” During the period of implementing the agricultural tax, especially during the period of implementing the family planning policy (1982-2005), cadres in villages oversee collecting taxes from farmers on behalf of the state. Farmers’ dissatisfaction with

paying taxes was often vented to the cadres. In the meantime, cadres oversee all the powers of rural governance. Rural cadres mainly control rural public affairs through control and coercive means, forming a “forced control mode” of rural governance. China abolished the agricultural tax in 2006, as a result, tax collection, which previously accounted for a large proportion of the daily work of rural cadres and led to contradictions between the cadres and the masses, no longer exists. Since then, cadres have been mainly com-mitted to improving the level of rural governance and promoting rural social development, forming a “management model” of rural governance. Since the implementation of targeted poverty alleviation, by effectively institutionalizing the subjects, methods, and results of poverty alleviation, the responsibilities of the “first secretary” in charge of poverty alleviation mainly include strengthening grass-roots organizations, promoting targeted poverty alleviation, serving the people, and improving governance. The Party has achieved full coverage of poverty-stricken areas, especially villages with weak and lax Party organizations. Transferring selection, appointment, assessment, and reward of members of village-based working groups to local cadres has enabled skilled party members to devote themselves to poverty alleviation. Therefore, the interaction between cadres and the masses, the construction of rural Party organizations, and the Party’s work style have been significantly improved, forming a “service governance model” of rural governance in contemporary China. By the end of 2020, a total of 255,000 village-based working groups and more than 3 million village-based secretaries and cadres have been selected and dispatched nationwide to jointly undertake poverty alleviation work with local cadres. The village-based working groups, especially village-based secretaries are usually selected by young reserve cadres from various units of the CPC. They are qualified in terms of knowledge, management experience, organization, and coordination ability. Most of the village-based working groups usually take the form of party-organized meetings to effectively resolve the conflicts between members of village branches, village cadres, and villagers. The arrival of the village-based working groups, which were originally designed to alleviate poverty, has changed governance methods in rural China. Various methods such as village assistance, assessment, and evaluation have promoted the trans-formation of the cadres’ work style, and formalism and bureaucracy have been suppressed to a certain extent. For example, the identification of poverty-stricken households requires in-depth investigation by village-based cadres. The identified poverty-stricken persons not only need to be posted on the village’s bulletin board but also undergo evaluation and review by different departments and institutions at higher levels so that the villagers’ right to know and democratic decision-making rights can be realized at this point. The input of poverty alleviation resources also needs to be made public and institutionalized. Under the guidance of village-based working groups, villagers have some rights and opportunities to participate in supervision.

Targeted poverty alleviation has improved the governance mode of Party members and cadres. At the same time, another problem has arisen in the process of practice: poverty alleviation cadres “work too hard,” which means they take all the work to finish their tasks to avoid punishment and fail to realize the full mobilization and participation of villagers. As a result, the inertia of a certain number of villagers in poverty waiting for help is

stronger than the enthusiasm for active work. This is a microcosm of the challenges of poverty alleviation to be addressed later

5. *Challenges and Prospect of Poverty Alleviation in China*

5.1 *Party Politics Context: A Neglected Perspective on Poverty Alleviation in China*

The organizational resource is the basis of a ruling party's sustainable governance, and its elements include power mechanism, party members, organizational form, and so on. Lenin once stated that "the proletariat can, and inevitably will, become an invincible force only through its ideological unification on the principles of Marxism being reinforced by the material unity of organization, which welds millions of toilers into an army of the working class." (Lenin, 1964, 160) If poverty alleviation is considered merely an economic issue, obviously, it is not the circumstance in China. In China, solving the problem of poverty is primarily a political category, then an economic one. The existence, persistence, and aggravation of poverty are regarded as major risk factor that directly affects the ruling foundation of the CPC. Therefore, the problem of poverty must be solved. Therefore, in China, to get rid of poverty, there is not only the input of economic resources but also the continuous and large-scale input of organizational resources of the CPC ignored by many researchers. In the case of a relatively insufficient input of economic resources, the organizational resources of the CPC always dominate and can make up for the lack of economic resources. Whether at the macro level, the overall framework of the Party Central Committee's ordered implementation of poverty alleviation, or at the micro level, party organizations at every level share specific poverty alleviation tasks, or at the micro level, the work performance of individual party members who undertake poverty alleviation task is directly related to the effectiveness of targeted poverty alleviation. Examples are every-where such as party members and cadres engaged in targeted poverty alleviation greatly reducing their personal resting time to complete the task, the grassroots government cutting salaries of public officials who are party members and turning this money into poverty alleviation funds, not to mention the fact that more than 1800 cadres died during targeted poverty alleviation.[1] It is the organizational resources of the CPC that make them happen. Under the framework of the CPC's rule and mobilization of the whole country, the political mobilization of the party organization is the driving force of China's poverty alleviation.

5.2 *Inherent Autonomy: An Organic Integration of Poverty-Vulnerable People into Social-Economic Production*

After the declaration of victory in the fight against poverty, the CPC immediately announced the promotion of the Rural Revitalization Strategy. This means that the CPC's focus on poverty issues has shifted from addressing absolute poverty to addressing relative poverty (in recent years, the CPC began to re-mention common prosperity and repeatedly stressed publicly the relationship between common prosperity and the foundation of CPC's rule). Obviously, it is a serious challenge to promote the effective connection between comprehensive poverty alleviation and rural revitalization, which includes integrating poverty alleviation into the Rural Revitalization Strategy as a whole and establishing an institutional mechanism that combines long-term and short-term policies and efforts.

For a long time, China's rural areas have been playing the role of providing resources to the country with inexpensive materials and labor for the country's

[1] They were all poverty alleviation cadres from the CCP, most of whom died in traffic accidents or overwork. Traffic accidents occur because there are usually no shaped roads in poverty areas, as mentioned at the beginning of this paper.

industrialization and urban development. However, these areas do not have access to the same benefits as urban and urban residents. Since the tax and fee reform in 2006 (as mentioned in section 2), the country has formally reduced its access to resources from rural areas. But, at the same time, it has also lost the link between state power and farmers. Therefore, in many rural areas, there has been a state power vacuum and weak grassroots party organizations; Since China implemented its market-oriented reform, poverty-stricken rural areas and farmers who did not receive the reform dividend have fallen into deep poverty.

The decline of rural governance resonates with the decline of the rural population. This also experienced a gradual process. With the rapid advancement of industrialization and urbanization, more and more farmers, especially young farmers, are migrating to cities. By the end of 2022, the urbanization rate of China's permanent population has reached 65.22% (National Bureau of Statistics, 2023). In the 1980s, the government encouraged farmers to establish enterprises, and a huge amount of township enterprises began to emerge and at that time, farmers could get employment nearby. In the 1990s, the boost of the market economy in coastal areas required massive labor forces which drove farmers flowing to big cities in coastal areas with the promotion of relaxing household registration controls. In the past two decades, due to the greater imbalance in public resources such as medical and educational resources between urban and rural areas, more and more young farmers have migrated to cities, becoming "new urbanites" burdened with high housing loans but without access to all urban social resources. The aging level of the rural population in China is much higher than in cities. From 2010 to 2020, the rural population in China decreased from around 800 million to around 500 million. This means that the problems in rural areas will increasingly be translated into urban issues.

With the completion of targeted poverty alleviation, it is uncertain whether the rural areas can maintain and consolidate the results of poverty alleviation after the withdrawal of the village-based working group. Obviously, the ambition of the CPC is more than poverty alleviation. The dialectics of targeted poverty alleviation and "Rural Revitalization" are central. Targeting is essential at an early stage to get the project moving, but it must give way to the organic integration of poverty-vulnerable people into social-economic reproduction if a secure foundation for the alleviation of poverty is to be laid. In other words, poverty is to be uprooted, and not merely "alleviated".

The implementation of targeted poverty alleviation truly improved the ecology of grass-roots governance, and a good grass-roots governance ecology can lay the foundation for the implementation of the Party's next strategy.

It remains uncertain whether there can be an effective combination of the Party's political mobilization and farmers' autonomy. The effective combination means that, on the one hand, the CPC's leadership is increasingly strengthened rather than weakened in rural governance; On the other hand, the Party's leading role is not supposed to replace the inherited autonomy of farmers which is the real, dominant driving force of farmers' social-economic reproduction. From the good experience of targeted poverty alleviation, strong and well-functioning grass-roots organizations are the prerequisite for mobilizing the masses. Rural Revitalization is a more challenging task than poverty alleviation. The grass-roots organizations of the CPC are facing greater difficulties, and greater

efforts are needed to mobilize the masses to fulfill the goal of eradicating poverty. The model of "five-level secretaries responsible for poverty alleviation" is effective. However, many of the village-based secretaries of poverty alleviation who were driven by performance appraisal took all the work to complete the indicators, and ignored the organization, mobilization, and education of the farmers, which are at the core of poverty alleviation, and failed to truly practice the "mass line" the CPC has insisted on since Mao Zedong. Marx and Engels pointed out in The Holy Family: "With the thoroughness of the historical action, the size of the mass whose action it is will therefore increase." (Marx and Engels, 1975, 110) In this sense, to achieve the goal of Rural Revitalization, the CPC needs to be more diversified than targeted poverty alleviation and pay more attention to the cultivation of inherent autonomy of the rural, to fundamentally boost the inner driving force of China's rural development.

Throughout all the documents and policies of the CPC, narratives of solving poverty, equality, and development are constantly present. However, one cannot be able to solve the problem in practice through narratives no matter how comprehensive and emphasized these narratives are. In response to the many risks and problems arising from the increasing gap between the rich and the poor, the destruction of the ecological environment, the unbalanced development of regions, and farmers entering a new type of poverty when being involved in cities (Xu, 2018, 76) is a formidable challenge for the CPC. By stimulating farmers' inherent autonomy, CPC's policy formulation and implementation should give farmers more trust to have the ability to (re) organize. Given the historical experience of the Chinese Revolution, a high degree of organization (the absolute leadership of CPC) and a high degree of democracy (the inherent autonomy of farmers) can be organically combined and function well. "The Chinese Revolution took the form of a protracted military campaign (the Long March), in which there was a high degree of organization and mobilization, including economic production in the liberated areas, but still organized along the lines of military authority" (Laibman, 2020, 196).

In conclusion, we believe that the poverty alleviation program cannot be secured just by commitment in the words of leading documents, or in the securing of central state funding, but — fundamentally — in making the goal and the theory the inherent possession of masses of people and to be active at the base.

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含光門

Interview with Ahmad Navidi

Thank you for agreeing to this interview.

AMR: Ahmad, could you tell us when you came to Australia?

Hi comrade. I came to Australia 22nd March, 1984.

AMR: Could you describe your experience as a migrant to Australia?

It was hard in the beginning. Looking after a Job, I could hardly understand the Aussie accent...

AMR: When did you join the Communist Party of Australia?

A. I joint Young Socialist League (YSL) of the Socialist Party of Australia(SPA) in 1984-85.

Prior to that, the late comrade Alan Miller came to my place together with an Iranian comrade who had been living in Australia for a while. I didn't have any furniture, and comrades sat on the ground. I didn't have any furniture, and comrades sat on ground.

AMR: Did you join the SPA? If so, how did you distinguish between other organisations that were in existence at the time?

A. As an internationalist, I joined SPA, a fraternal party.

AMR: Before leaving for Australia you were in Iran?

A. No comrade. I came from the Philippines, where I studied a five-year course, Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering- BSME.

AMR: Could you describe what Life was like in Iran?

A. Life was good for the rich and wealthy people , and of course miserable for the low-income earners and the poor**.** That was one of the reasons people rose against the lackey regime of the Shah.

AMR: Were you a member of any organisations in Iran?

A. No comrade. At that time, there wasn't any legal left- communist/Socialist party in Iran. There were few underground leftwing groups with Guerrilla activities.

AMR: For those of our readers who may not be familiar could you give some brief explanations of political developments in Iran?

A. There is a clergy regime at the moment, under the guise of the Islamic Republic, which is Islamic, but not a Republic. Because just like Monarchy, one person, the supreme leader called Valeye Faghih instead of the King (Shah) is ruling the country. And the president is just formality! Everyone must obey the ruling clergy. There is no opposition party/organisation in Iran. All the leftist organisations were illegal, and banned almost about two years after the 1979 Revolution. The leftists were eliminated one by one. Those who could escape, saved their lives, others who got arrested, were executed by hanging.

ANR: Iran had a special history in the Communist Movement as there was a social democratic organisation that developed at the same time as the Bolsheviks in Russia and worked with the Bolsheviks in the Second International. Do you have any familiarity with this history?

A. Those Iranian migrant workers who went to Baku- Azerbaijan were attracted to the Russian Revolution, and became members of the Russian Social Democratic Party(Bolsheviks). Some of them return to Iran, and establish the communist Party of Iran. But later on the Communist party was banned by the

Monarch regime, its members known as group of 53 were arrested, Its leader Taghi Arani was killed in prison.

AMR: The Tudeh party has a long and proud history in our movement? Could you provide our readers with some highlights of this party's history.

A. Tudeh party was established by some members of the group of 53 who survived imprisonment and were released after the first Monarchy was removed by the end of the second world war by the British for being pro-Hitler of Germany.

AMR: The Movement against the Shah of Iran had a multi-faceted approach. Can you give us some details of how it came into existence?

A. It started with ordinary protests for pay rise, then demanding free political prisoners, and finally overthrow of the lackey Regime. The regime declared Martial law, killing on spot anyone after curfew, and when the Shah's regime killed demonstrators, the rallies and protests got momentum. Gradually, the oil and refinery workers joined the demonstrators. When the daily newspaper insulted Khomeini, the clergymen joined the demonstrations. While the people were watching a movie in Abadan City, the Cinema was locked and 800 people inside the Cinema were burnt to death by fire. Because of the cruelty of SAVAK(the security intelligence), people blamed SAVAK for that incident. After almost one year of rallies, demonstrations, sit-ins, Shah changed his loyal prime-minister with another loyal one, but people continued to oppose Shah and its administration totally, demanding the overthrow of the monarch, and Shah was ordered to leave the country by those who brought him and his father to power after two coups. At that time I was studying in the Philippines. I left Iran October 1978.

AMR: The Shah's rule was an Extreme dictatorship and had a notorious system of informers and repression. Have you had direct experience of this?

A. I didn't go through what the revolutionaries experienced. But, when I was serving two years of compulsory military duty, I encountered the Army intelligence twice, but because I was doing my military service properly, without any absentees, I skipped the penalties and imprisonment ...

AMR: The Tudeh party worked with the Islamists in the revolution against the Shah. Can you describe how this came about and what it entailed?

I have to mention that I was not neither a Tudeh member, nor supporter. But working with Tudeh supporters in common interests of the left movement here in Australia. The Tudeh Party was in exile for 25 years, but there were some underground Tudeh activists during the revolution. After the 1979 revolution, when the leadership returned to Iran, the Tudeh Party supported the Islamic regime unconditionally for its anti-imperialist stands, despite knowing that one day it would pay the price for its cooperation with the regime, but still persisted in its policy. There were two views (Reformists, and hardliners) of approaching the new regime, and the view for cooperation with the new regime got the upper hand, but the outcome of this shows the reformist were right!

AMR: The Tudeh party suffered a massive repression by the Islamic state. Could you describe what happened?

While the Tudeh Party was supporting the Islamic regime for a couple of years after the revolution, other leftist were arrested, imprisoned and executed for being against the regime's crackdown. That is why those leftists who survived the purge of the regime and escaped abroad, condemn the Tudeh Party's policies. In fact, the Tudeh Party continued supporting the Islamic regime, until more

or less its leadership and cadres were arrested, imprisoned and at least hundred of them were executed by hanging. Only a handful of the Tudeh leadership survive due to outcry /demands of the international objections of the Communist and Socialist fraternal organisations and parties, as well as Amnesty International.

AMR: The contradiction between anti-imperialism and vicious anti-communism is hard for us to grasp. Can you help us to understand this contradiction?

A. The outcome of Tudeh party support of the Islamic regime's anti-imperialist position proves that being anti-imperialist doesn't necessarily mean being progressive. Throughout history, we have seen several leaders who have been anti-imperialist, but simultaneously being anti-communists as well. Jamal Abdul Naser of Egypt, and leaders of the Islamic regime of Iran are two examples of being Anti-imperialist, while being anti-communists too.

AMR: Can you describe the workers movement in Iran?

A. Under the Islamic regime, independent workers/labour organisations (Trade Unions/ Syndicates) are banned, instead there are government affiliated organisations. However, despite crackdown some independent Unions/Syndicates exist, but their leaders are either jailed or are in exile. In recent years the strikes and sit-ins, demonstrations have increased for wage increases, late payments…

AMR: Since coming to Australia what occupation have you followed?

My first job was in Ford Motor Company(in Parramatta road, Homebush) as an assembler. I have worked as a process worker/packer in a Carton division of Leigh Mar-don Company. I have worked part-time in the Post Office for sorting and delivering letters. My last job was in the Railway as a shunter until I got injured at work, I had three spinal operations including fusion, and retired medically.

AMR: Can you describe cultural differences and even some political approaches that might differ between Iran and Australia? Can we make improvements in how our movement relates to those forced into exile?

A. Australia is a multicultural country, her people are migrants or their background are migrants. Migrants come here for a better life, work hard to buy a car to go to work, buy a unit / house to live, and must pay a mortgage for at least 30 years. Therefore, most of the migrants are not interested in politics. When speaking with some workers about being exploited, they reply that he has a job, car, house.unit, even a boat for fishing , expend time with his/her family … and wouldn't show interest in any political activities. Some even don't join the Trade Union. Therefore, the communists in Australia must work harder in order to attract workers.

Iran is an ancient country with a population of about 90 millions, who mostly are workers and toilers. Despite being a rich country in everything, its people are suffering under the dictatorship of clerics for the last 46 years. Since the 1979 revolution, Iran has been sanctioned by the western countries, namely the US. Sanctions have affected people's lives, inflation is too high, and some people have more than one job to survive the expenses. Therefore, in such situation, workers are angry at government and they are ready for strikes and demonstration despite knowing that might be arrested, jailed and torture, but they struggle, because they have nothing to lose except their chains.

AMR: How do we improve the culture in our party? Can we find ways to bring the different cultural and political perspectives that come from working in a different political environment?

A. I can recall that when I joined SPA, there were several nationalities who were affiliated with SPA, including Arab communities from Iraq, Lebanon …, as well as Turkish, Italian, Greek …

I believe that CPA comrades must attract migrants more and more. In this regard, CPA comrades must attend different migrant functions, and show their solidarity and internationalism in action. Invite Migrants to CPA functions, rallies for peace, seminars...

We must remember that as communists we are a minority and must work harder if we want to win people's support. Our enemy (capitalist) is strong and it has all the power to impose its will upon people, communities, and organisations. But if we win people's hearts, and minds, and they trust us and find out that we are fighting for their rights, then no capitalist minded government can ban Communist Party, arrest and jail its members. As the capitalist economy is declining, inflation, and unemployment rises, the cost of food, goods, Medicare and electricity increases, people need to be organised and demand their righteous rights. If the communists do not represent people, then just like Europe the ultra-right wing and Fascist will have the upper hand.

I believe the CPA youth must be presented in All rallies that concern communities, whether it is for Peace and against the imperialist and Zionist invasions and wars and meddling in West Asia, Lebanon, Palestine- Gaza, Yemen, Iraq, Afghanistan … to the Latin America, namely Cuba, Venezuela, Nicaragua, El Salvador, or in Australian affairs! Giving position to the Youth and intellectuals is what Trotsky had in mind, but comrade Joseph Stalin followed comrade Line's path and believed the workers and peasants must join Bolshevik Party and lead themselves, rather than the intellectuals.

I believe that the CPA youth must sell or give away Guardians in rallies, demonstrations or any gathering that concerns workers and communities. Instead of throwing Guardians to the recycle bins, the youth should take bundles to the railway stations, hand them over to the people, or at least leave them there for people to take and read while travelling with trains.

An Obituary to an American Communist

Bruce Bostick

Amid this epic battle against fascism and in the wake of Oct. 18, the largest protest in US history, I wanted to take a moment to remember and celebrate the life of a friend and comrade who died recently - Bruce Bostick.

My deepest condolences go out to Bruce's family. Others have written about him, and I'm sure his family, friends, and comrades will continue to share memories.

I got to know Bruce right out of college when I joined the CPUSA and was a community organizer in Cleveland, Ohio. Bruce, a Midwesterner through and through, was radicalized by his involvement in the anti-Vietnam War movement. In the early 1970s, he was already a young, experienced trade union activist at USS Steel in Lorain, OH, and one of the leaders of the growing rank and file movement that was trying to transform the United Steelworkers of America into a fighting union. That movement played an important role in changing the USWA and the AFL-CIO.

Bruce became a rank-and-file leader and a shop steward and honed his writing skills as a correspondent for the rank-and-file newsletter. After the mill closed, Bruce fought with other steelworkers to get their pensions, which the company had stolen, helped organize labor-community coalitions through Jobs with Justice, became a leader of the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees, and ultimately became a leader of retired trade unionists in the Columbus region. Bruce understood clearly what was at stake in the fight against right-wing extremism and MAGA fascism.

He was active in every single election, legislative, and referendum fight in Ohio, especially mobilizing labor's vote. Bruce knew and was respected by state and local elected officials and labor leaders, which was evident with the accolades delivered at his 75th birthday celebration organized by People’s World.

Bruce was a working-class intellectual, a historian, especially interested in the Civil War and abolitionism, an avid reader, and a lover of music and culture. He became an excellent writer, writing clearly about strategy and tactics and sharing countless experiences from his own activism, the mass democratic movements, and US history. Bruce was an avid sports fan and was fanatical about all the Ohio teams, especially the Browns (he was deeply versed in Browns history and a leader of the movement to regain an NFL franchise), Guardians, and Cavaliers. Nothing made him happier than when his beloved Ohio State Buckeyes won the National Championship last year, and nothing frustrated him more than the losing ways of the Cleveland Browns.

It's no secret Bruce had a challenging personality, was argumentative and hot-tempered, but underneath, he had a heart of gold. And in his later years, Bruce suffered terribly from the aftereffects of a spinal infection, which required surgery and the removal of discs, leaving him unable to walk without crutches.
He also suffered lifelong mental health struggles, which sent him into a pessimistic tailspin. But he was a battler and rebounded to fight another day.

Bruce made his mark in this world. His body may have given out, but his fighting spirit was never vanquished. He leaves behind an extraordinary legacy for the rest of us to draw inspiration and sustenance. He would counsel us never to give up. Victory over MAGA fascism and its billionaire backers lies in broad, multi-racial, multi-gender unity. Bruce Bostick lives!

Ho Chi Minh's thought on Party Building and how it's applied in the current context

Assoc Prof Dr Lam Quic Tuan & Dr. Dinh Quang Tranh.

At the age of 15, the CPV led Viet Nam to the successful August 1945 Revolution. Afterwards, the CPV became the only ruling party in Viet Nam. However, inside the Party, there begun to be bureaucracy, adultery, embezzlement, waste, etc., Seriously, individualism could be seen in some "revolutionary mandarins". In this situation, President Ho Chi Minh promptly proposed important policies. One month after the Declaration of Independence, on September 17, 1945, he wrote to cadres in Nghe An; pointing out the shortcomings of local cadres, party members and authorities as well as proposing proper measures. On October 17, 1945, he sent another letter to the People's Committee of all regions, provinces, districts and villages, emphasizing six serious mistakes of officials: illegality, superiority, nepotism, separation and arrogance. On January 18, 1949, at the end of the Sixth Party cadres Conference, he put an emphasis on the "bottom-up reorganization of the government", "reorganization of mass organizations" and "reorganization inside the Party"[2].

In October 1947, President Ho Chi Minh, under the pseudonym X.Y.Z., wrote "Modifying Working Styles" to strengthen the party and transparentize the government. The book fosters courage and political faith among cadres and party members; cultivates revolutionary moral qualities; raises the willpower against individualism and "diseases" arising from individualism. Furthermore, it disseminates leadership methods close to people, respecting people, loving people, wholeheartedly devoting to people's happiness, which encourage cadres to strive to become a true revolutionary soldier. In his will, President Ho Chi Minh advised our Party: "As soon as we win the resistant war against America, *rectify the Party*"[3].

With its meaningful content, Ho Chi Minh's thought on Party building has precious directional value, profound effects, and various significant lessons that can be applied to the current construction and rectification of the party. These lessons are:

Firstly,the construction and rectification of the party is a regular and continuous task of the CPV.

The leadership of the Party plays an indispensable and decisive part in Viet Nam's revolutionary victories. The Party's role and revolutionary missions give rise to a need to build the Party in order to maintain and promote the leadership role.

President Ho Chi Minh understood that revolutions revolve around increasingly higher requirements and more demanding tasks. As a result, it is of paramount importance to build a party that does not fall behind those changes. In practice, once a party loses its revolutionary nature, political, ideological, organizational stability, morality and public support, it cannot survive and drive the country forward. Therefore, Party building and rectification is an important and regular task of the CPV. Noticeably, at the turning points of revolutions, the self-correction and self-renewal of the Party could be a matter of life and dead. Moreover, party building and rectification is a must for the self-improvement of the Party, thus being a mission of every cadre and party member. As an answer to the question "Why correction?" President Ho Chi Minh pointed out: our cadres did not have a firm stance and deep knowledge. Consequently, they do not understand the national-democratic revolutionary policy and the long-term policy of resistance and self-reliance. On an international, national and individual scale, they could not differentiate between enemies and friends. Thus, they went down with various "diseases". Among them is

[2] Ho Chi Minh: *Complete Works,* National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, vol. 6, p 15.

[3] Ibid. Vol 15, p. 616.

individualism – prioritize individual and family interests over national interests. This major disease gave birth to various others, such as self-interest, fear of difficulties, fear of suffering, workplace anxiety, thirst for power, luxury, embezzlement and bureaucracy, etc.[4]

Secondly, Party construction and rectification must be carried out on all aspects as the responsibility of the whole political system.

According to President Ho Chi Minh, Party building and rectification need to be carried out on all four aspects: politics, ideology, organization and morality. Those four categories work hand in glove. Among them, morality plays the key role.

In this light, the moral aspect of Party building must be comprehensive, reflected in all activities on all fields of the Party's work. Besides, the Party's morality is manifested specifically, truthfully and clearly in the morality of each cadre and party member. Therefore, the moral construction of the Party is, first and foremost, building revolutionary moral standards for cadres, party members and party organizations. Standards for cadres and party members are the absolute loyalty to the country, filial piety to the people, steadfastness in the Party's ideals, which are "Diligence, thrift, integrity, righteousness, impartiality"; benevolence, compassion, pure proletarian international spirit, bravery to fight against individualism, etc.

President Ho Chi Minh also stated that, for the effectiveness of Party construction and rectification, the role of the whole political system, especially the State, the Fatherland Front and socio-political organizations, should be fully played. To this end, regular political and ideological education is needed to raise awareness of cadres and party members. Moreover, the Party should mobilize people to participate in Party construction and rectification. He stated: "Be close with people and always listen to people, that is the foundation of the Party's strength and victories. Therefore, separating from people is the key to failure".[5]

Thirdly, Party construction and rectification must be strictly carried out in line with Marxism-Leninism principles of new-style party building.

To become a coherent, unified, strong and genuine Marxist party, the CPV should conform to principles of the new-style party of the working class. President Ho Chi Minh did not only fully understand and creatively apply democratic centralism in building a new-style Marxist-Leninist party, but also supplemented, developed, and clearly showed the nature of its elements and their close link in Viet Nam's case. According to Ho Chi Minh, the CPV is strictly organized in line with 5 basic principles:

1- Democratic centralism;

2- Collective leadership and individual in charge;

3- Self-criticism and criticism;

4- Strict discipline and self-discipline;

5- Unity in the Party.

President Ho Chi Minh considered democratic centralism the Party's organizational principle, as "the Party is organized in line with the principle of *centralized democracy*. To be more specific, the Party has its unified chapter, discipline and leadership. Individuals must conform to groups, minority must conform to majority, subordinates must conform to superiors, localities must conform to central organizations".[6] This principle guarantees that despite its large number of members, when operating, the whole Party unifies as just one person. Centralization and democracy do not present opposite approaches. In contrary, they are closely related. Specifically, centralization operates on the foundation of democracy and democracy is under centralized direction. Without centralization, democracy turns into disorganization. Without democracy, centralization becomes authoritarianism and autocracy.

President Ho Chi Minh appreciated self-criticism and criticism as *the best medicine* and the development law of the Party. To be really effective, he said, self-criticism and criticism must be carried out

[4] Ibid, vol.5, p.156

[5] Ibid. Vol 5, p.326.

[6] Ibid, vol. 8, p.275.

as regularly and seriously as daily face-washing. It is of great importance that criticism should be a good will instead of a means to undermine other people. Moreover, it is the deeds that need criticizing, not people. In this process, democracy should be maintained, both bottom-up and top-down. He attached great importance to leaders, managerial cadres and party members being brilliant role models, as "an example is worth a hundred speeches".[7] Aiming at solidarity, self-criticism and criticism should be done *righteously* and *cleverly*.

Fourthly, the CPV has inherited and applied Ho Chi Minh's thought on Party building for over 35 years of renovation.

Thanks for President Ho Chi Minh's thought on Party building, over the past 92 years, since its birth, the CPV has always focused on Party building, thus maintaining its position and role. The CPV has led people through numerous difficulties and challenges, and gained great achievements of historical significance.

The leadership of the Party is the key to the successful construction and defense of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. However, the CPV is facing several intertwined opportunities and challenges. Therefore, to improve the position and role of the Party, since the 6th Congress, the Party Central Committee has issued 9 resolutions, the Politburo has issued 6 topic-related resolutions on Party building. Resolution No. 12-NQ/TW on January 16, 2012 of the 4th Plenum of the 11th Central Committee about "some currently urgent issues in Party building" stated that some cadres and party members had degraded in political thought, morality, lifestyle, which could be seen in the fading ideals, selfish individualism, opportunism, pragmatism, the seek for fame and fortune, power jealousy, partiality, corruption, luxury and arbitrariness. This situation causes discontent and anxiety among citizens and decreases their trust in the Party, thus being a direct threat to the survival of the Party and the regime. Therefore, the construction and rectification of the Party is currently an urgent issue. After 30 years of renovation, the Party continued to "build a transparent and strong Party, improve the Party's leadership capacity and combativeness, and build a strong political system".[8]

In light of President Ho' thought, at the 12th Party Congress, moral Party building was brought out, along with politics, ideology and organization, to be among four categories of Party building. Implementing the Resolution of the 12th Party Congress and the working program, the Central Committee issued Resolution No. 04/NQ-TW on October 30, 2016 "on strengthening Party construction and rectification; preventing the deterioration of political ideology, morality, lifestyle, and internal "self-evolution" and "self-transformation". This resolution shows the Party's great political willpower and determination in Party construction and rectification under new circumstances.

Thanks for the experience in Party building during the previous term as well as during the Party's development process, the documents of the 13th Party Congress gives new insights into Party construction and rectification, representing a new development in the awareness of Party building. The theme of the 13th Party Congress demonstrates the understanding of comprehensively building the Party in terms of politics, ideology, morality, organization and cadres; of the close relation between Party construction and rectification.

Party construction and rectification should be carried out together and synchronously. Construction is a regular and central task, while rectification focuses on important and urgent issues. Construction going hand in hand with rectification means building a solid foundation while solving difficult, complex and sensitive problems; timely correct mistakes and deviations. Therefore, the CPV can keep its orientation, which is "to be moral, civilized", the representative of the nation's conscience, honor and wisdom, as President Ho expected.

Outstanding achievements in Party construction and rectification during our renovation stem from the proper

[7] Ibid, vol. 1, p.284.

[8] *Document of the 12th National Congress*, Office of the CPV Central Committee, Hanoi 2016, p. 76.

understanding and application of Ho Chi Minh's thought on the ruling party. Appreciating President Ho Chi Minh's thought and fully understanding practical requirements, the 13th Party Congress brought out core issues and new breakthrough measures in Party building. On the basis of this great political will power, each cadre and Party member, especially those of leading positions, needs to fully grasp and implement the Party's guidelines, the State's policies and laws in work, daily life and relations with citizens. As a result, the CPV can fully put President Ho Chi Minh's thought into practice as well as affirm, apply creatively and fully develop the ideological foundation of the Party to meet the current revolutionary requirements.

"You can become a Communist only when you enrich your mind with a knowledge of all the treasures created by mankind."

- VI Lenin (The Tasks of the Youth Leagues - 1920)

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