

After the VCP mini-conference - In Hanoi nothing has changed:  
"Marxist-Leninist Socialism" and the Cold War continues

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Translated from French

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The VCP must hold a national congress every five years to decide on policy and selection of the party's executive cadres for the next phase. But at the VIIth Congress in June 1991, it was announced that a special congress could be held in June 1993.

Since the VIIth Congress has been held with several months late, and because of serious differences concerning 'the line' to follow, in particular regarding the desirability and scope of reforms to be adopted, personal conflicts within the party included, one could think of two possibilities: 1 / Holding a special conference midway between regular conferences would be an opportunity for the Party to resolve outstanding issues and choose another way and another team, or at least, a path and team that is more reformist , or 2 / The current policy would harden under a harsher leadership.

The mini-conference held last month shows that this second interpretation is the one that must be acknowledged. The long political report submitted by Secretary Do Muoi leaves no doubt on this point, both from the internal and external policy standpoint.

Domestically, Do Muoi, on behalf of the Politbureau, reports on the party's achievements over the past two years and a half, pointing out that 'the most fundamental, the most decisive fact is that [we] strongly maintained the leadership role of the Party and the State, and rejected pluralistic and multiparty systems .....

We must creatively apply and keep developing Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh thought, particularly Leninist thought on the new policy, State capitalism ... to “safely carry the country to Socialism. ”.

That's food for thought for those who have been claiming, or dreaming that current Vietnamese Communist leaders are “open to democracy”, and that “Vietnam is on the path of capitalism.”

Regarding priorities, Do Muoi stressed that the Polithureau considers economic development as a "central duty," but consolidating and strengthening the Party is "the key task." This should be done on the basis of democratic centralism, collective leadership and individual performance, and the selection of executives on the basis of their ideological strength and unquestionable loyalty to the Party. "The party dictatorship applies to elements acting against the fatherland and against the interests of the people." According to the current Constitution, adopted in April 1992, Homeland and Socialism are synonymous. So being against Socialism is constitutionally acting against the homeland and the people. And this is in 1994, five years after the abolition of Socialism in the largest Socialist country, cradle of World Socialism- where today, it is those who defend Socialism exceptionally as Khasbulatov and Ruskoi, who are alleged to act against the Fatherland, not the reverse. In any case, it is the Party's leaders, more exactly the Polibureau's toughies, who are "supreme in judging who's against Socialism."

Regarding economic policy, references to Leninist views on the new economic policy and State Capitalism, over 70 years old, issued in a world that did not yet know intercontinental air travel, television, computer and the globalization of international trade, must give pause to those who believe that the current leaders of Vietnam “are open-minded” and that “Vietnam is moving down the road of capitalism”. The line adopted, or rather maintained by the Party is “continue to build synchronously with market structures, under the direction of the State, according to a Socialist orientation”, and “keep the transition to new economic institutions but, at the same time, boost the effectiveness of State management.” An economics student trained outside of Socialist Vietnam would struggle to make sense of it all.

Anyway, Do Muoi reports that between 1990 and 1992, the share of state enterprises in the GNP increased by 34 to 39%. In the future, this share will

increase and these companies continue to be the centerpiece, the "main engine" of the economy. Again, it is a sobering thought for those who dream of a more "capitalistic" Vietnamese economy in the coming years.

External VCP politics ought to also drive dreamers to think. Do Muoi welcomes the success of the "opening up" policy of the Party, which thwarted the isolation and intimidation of Vietnam "by chauvinist and hegemonic forces". And he presents a picture of the world that is simply a revision of an analysis made of the worst international situation during the years of the Cold War. The latter has been renamed. The new name given to the "aggressive imperialist maneuvers" is "peaceful evolution." (dien bien hoà bình).

The leaders of the PCV believe that everyone is plotting furiously to destroy Vietnam from the outside and from within. They see enemies everywhere. In their eyes, diplomatic, commercial, cultural, scientific exchanges etc ... are only perfidious forms of aggression by peaceful means to destroy the Vietnamese Socialism and especially Socialism in the world at large. And they call for vigilance and sacrifices, similar to the period of the wars against France and the United States. Consequently, the Policy Report underlines that the need to "increase political stability"- in plain language, suppress with a firm hand all domestic opposition - must be a "major task" of the Party.

With this Leninist worldview, the Party brings back tactics advocated by Lenin in Leftism: infantile disease of communism: maximize the divisions and conflicts in the enemy's camp, stand firm on principles (strategic goals), but be extremely flexible as to "forms of "struggle" (tactical maneuvers), and be prepared to do all kinds of compromises, provided they are temporary and only benefit the party. It is a policy consistently applied by Ho Chi Minh in 1945 in his relations with the American Patti and the French Sainteny, and in 1946 with the Chinese and the French; later, Le Duan will apply it to all countries, including China, the Soviet Union, ASEAN, and the USA. And the political leaders of the VCP are applying it in their international relations, particularly with China and the USA. Internally too, of course. Political scientists say that the Communist leaders need war--factual or phony--to justify their power and the sacrifices they impose on the population. Current Communist Vietnam is further evidence in validating this theory.

Lastly it remains to situate the priority given by VCP leaders in their relations with various countries. In Do Muoi's Policy Report, China ranked first in the concerns of these leaders. Next were Laos and Cambodia. ASEAN and the Pacific came in fourth, then India, Cuba, and North Korea. Russia and the former communist states

of Europe came in sixth. The Arab countries, Africa, and Latin America. Europe, Japan. Australia, New Zealand, came in eighth, then the international financial institutions.

The US, carrying a red lantern, is in 10th position, and they are mentioned only in the context of the fight against the embargo. This is something that should be pondered by sensible officials from the State Department, White House, and all those interested in international politics, especially those who are used to seeing the chancelleries of the world's great powers - Europe, Japan, China, Russia - always place the US at the forefront of their concerns. This customary standard does not apply to the Vietnam Communists.... As pointed out by some dissidents Vietnamese Communist intellectuals (like Ha Sy Phu Phuong Lû) in their writings recently smuggled out of Vietnam, in the Marxist-Leninist Vietnam, "nothing makes sense, nothing is normal, everything is reversed."

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