

## Ho Chi Minh's Political Will – Invaluable Lessons for Current Staff of Cadres and Party Members

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### **Abstract**

*Political will is the quality of being unshaken in the loyalty and steadfastness in the face of all pressures in life. Political will is an extremely important quality that assists each individual to overcome tough challenges, especially ones related to the survival and loss of a nation and of human life. President Ho Chi Minh's entire life was a shining example of revolutionary ethics and political will. During his days of traveling in search of a way to save the country, spreading Marxism-Leninism, establishing the Communist Party of Vietnam and leading the struggle to defend our homeland, in the face of countless difficulties, his political will was demonstrated more clearly than ever before. Learning and building the political will for staff of cadres and party members based on Ho Chi Minh's paragon is extremely meaningful in modern times.*

**Keywords:** Political Will, Ho Chi Minh, Staff of Cadres, Party Members, Build The Political Will

## INTRODUCTION

### Ho Chi Minh Thought on Political Will

President Ho Chi Minh's political will was forged by his ardent patriotism when he witnessed his country being invaded by colonialists, many revolutionary movements accordingly appearing with an ambition to protect the fatherland, notably one led by Phan Boi Chau with the policy of relying on external assistance, mainly Japan, to fight against the French colonial empire for national independence; Phan Chau Trinh advocated using cultural reforms, raising people's intellectual standards and their spirit, developing the economy towards capitalism within a legal framework, promoting the citizens' wealth and nation's power, ultimately forcing the French colonial empire to return independence to Vietnam, among other movements. However, those patriotic ideas had not yet presented political will. Specifically, Phan Chau Trinh, with his moderate tendency, relied on the French to "improve intellectual, spiritual, and lastly living standards of the people", thereby regaining both sovereignty for the country and freedom with happiness for the people. As for Phan Boi Chau, despite his resort to armed violence, he had the idea of relying on Japan for help to fight against the French colonial empire. All of those thoughts exuded the spirit of patriotism and love for the people but could not liberate the nation. President Ho Chi Minh, with his political will, had to find another way to save our race. He left the fatherland in search of a new way to save the country on June 5, 1911. He clearly pointed out the conspiracy and cruelty of Colonialism and Imperialism under the guise of "civilization" aimed at invading colonial countries and that "To cover up the evil of an exploitative and homicidal regime, colonial capitalism always decorated its rotten badge with ideal mottos: Humanity, Equality..."<sup>4</sup>. In his work "The indictment of the French colonial regime", he detailed the terrible crimes of colonialism in colonial countries expressed in all aspects of economy, society, culture, and so on. He was determined to find a way to save the country and liberate the nation according to the path of proletarian revolution. With the view of "harnessing our strength to liberate ourselves", his standpoint was proven true in reality by the Declaration of Independence on September 2, 1945 at the historic Ba Dinh Square, from then on ending thousands of years of feudal domination and hundreds of years during which our people were deprived of the rights to life and human beings by the colonial imperialism.

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After his days of leaving the fatherland for a way to save the country, Nguyen Ai Quoc spread Marxism-Leninism to Vietnam through the working-class movement and the patriotic movement, thereby preparing ideology and guidelines, among others, to establish the Vietnamese Communist Party. Through those activities, Nguyen Ai Quoc demonstrated his stance and sharp political will towards the future of the fatherland and its people. Meanwhile, the Communist International still did not clearly recognize the role of the colonial revolution but believed that the revolution in colonial countries could only achieve success after the proletarian revolution won victory in metropolitan countries. Nguyen Ai Quoc commented that the revolution of colonial countries in Asia could proactively win victory, and not only that, they could also "help their brothers in the West with the task of gaining complete liberation". He noticed in the French colonial policy in Indochina that "Capitalism has long been like a multi-headed snake, seeing that Europe is too narrow a place to exploit and that the blood of the European proletariat is not abundant enough to satisfy its cravings, it then spread its terrible tentacles everywhere on the earth". Those assertions demonstrated his sharp political will facing the situation of our nation and the world.

Given the actual situation in colonial countries, Nguyen Ai Quoc definitely decided "to advocate conducting the bourgeois civil rights revolution and the land revolution to reach a communist society". When establishing the Communist Party of Vietnam, despite not being supported by the Communist International, Nguyen Ai Quoc still affirmed that the strategic objective was to make Vietnam completely independent, moving towards a communist society. His lofty goal when leaving the fatherland was to find a way to save the country and the residents. Therefore, the Party Central Committee and he advocated embracing all levels and classes of society in the political system to undertake the mission of national liberation. Among them, *national liberation was given top priority by Nguyen Ai Quoc*. In the context of complicated changes in the world, Ho Chi Minh guided the Party through specific ideas on policies, guidelines and giving directions to strengthen the Party's leadership and develop its forces, step by step towards the goal of national independence.

After the days of finding a way to save the country, Nguyen Ai Quoc returned to his fatherland in Ha Quang district, Cao Bang province on January 28, 1941. There, he convened and chaired the Eighth Party Central Conference (May 1941), identifying the mission of national liberation as the urgent one of our country's revolution at that time. The Party Central Committee subsequently completed the national liberation policy with the objective of gaining independence and with the spirit of putting independence, nation, and fatherland above all, demonstrating the strong political will of Nguyen Ai Quoc and the Party Central Committee. The issue of class interests was imperatively subordinated to national interests, "For this moment, the interests of sections and classes must be placed below the survival and existence of the nation and its population. At present, if we cannot resolve the issue of national liberation and cannot demand independence as well as freedom for the whole country, not only will the entire population continue to suffer from being treated like cattle, but the interests of sections and classes also cannot be reclaimed for tens of thousands of years." To fulfil that lofty mission, we would have to gather a large mass of people, direct the spearhead at the main enemy that were the Japanese and French fascists, and establish the Viet Minh Front. Regarding the important thing at that time, Nguyen Ai Quoc determined that national liberation was the sole responsibility of each nation. Preparing for an armed uprising, then moving towards winning national independence for the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, he emphasized that we must have led partial uprising, then moved on to a general one. It was his appropriate guidance that helped us gain national independence and end thousands of years of feudal domination and hundreds of years of colonial imperialism. The success of the August 1945 Revolution was the first great victory of our people since the Party led it, opening a remarkable turning point in the Vietnamese nation's history. The fact that the government power belonged to the people, coupled with the birth of Democratic Republic of Vietnam - the first worker-peasant state in Southeast Asia, effectively abolishing the feudal monarchy in Vietnam, clearly demonstrated Ho Chi Minh's political will, specifically his call for using our strength to liberate ourselves, and the motto "nothing is more precious than independence and freedom".

After the August 1945 revolution, the Vietnamese people, from the status of slaves, officially stood up to take control of their own destiny and that of the country. This made the people even more excited, confident and supportive of the new regime. Thus, it could be seen that the new government gain a lot of people's trust. However, the young independence faced countless difficulties more than ever. The political will of President

Ho Chi Minh and the Central Executive Committee proved their courage and special political sensitivity. In the situation of "hanging by a thread", there were many exciting, diverse and creative activities of President Ho Chi Minh in the face of countless economic, military, political and social difficulties after the August Revolution. It was at that important and challenging time that Ho Chi Minh's will for national independence and his political genius were demonstrated more clearly than ever before. He was sensitive and wise in choosing the right and appropriate solutions to solve urgent problems in difficult situations, calmly steering the revolutionary boat forward. Confronting famine and crop failure, he wrote to urge compatriots across the country to try to relieve famine and exhorted the people to fight famine. He considered "the fight against famine as the one against foreign invaders.

On September 23, 1945, with the assistance of the British army, the French colonialists attacked Saigon, opening the second invasion of our country. Later, the French army continued to occupy many important areas in the South and South Central regions. At this time, President Ho Chi Minh issued a call for nationwide resistance. "Any one irrespective of religion, political party, or ethnicity, as long as Vietnamese, must stand up to fight the French colonial empire to save our fatherland." The newly born Democratic Republic of Vietnam had to face countless difficulties and challenges. The Party and President Ho Chi Minh led the entire population to fight internal and external enemies, while building and firmly consolidating the people's government; they led the first General Election on January 6, 1946, built the first democratic Constitution (1946), took care of building a new regime along with a new life for the people, and fought hunger, ignorance and foreign invaders. At that time, our nation's situation was hanging by a thread, the political will of the head of state was thus once again demonstrated more than ever. That could be shown as Uncle Ho, on the one hand, had to suppress counter-revolutionary forces in the country, and on the other hand, had to implementing clever strategies: temporarily made peace with Chiang to fight the invading French colonialists at one time, conversely made peace with the French to expel Chiang at another time, and also thoroughly took advantage of the contradiction in enemy ranks. Thenceforward, he led the revolution through dangerous challenges, taking advantage of the time to strengthen its forces and prepare for the inevitable resistance war because the four-month visit to France showed him the evil intentions of the French colonialists to take over our country.

Afterwards, later campaigns were launched including: Viet Bac Campaign in Autumn-Winter (1947), Border Campaign (1950), Hoa Binh Campaign (1951), Dong Xuan Campaign (1951 - 1952), Tay Bac Campaign (1952), and historic one when the French colonialists were defeated by the across-five-continent resounding and world-shaking Dien Bien Phu Campaign on May 7, 1954. The country was temporarily at peace in the North. In the process of building socialism, he also clearly demonstrated his political will by not mechanically conforming to the stereotype of the Soviet Union since the Soviet Union's social existence was different from ours in terms of geographical location, population, culture, society, customs, and so on. He asserted, "We cannot be like the Soviet Union because it has different customs and traditions, and a different geographical history." The days of researching and studying Marxism-Leninism had helped him have those sharp judgments.

Faced with signs of weakness and fading revolutionary moral qualities of a body of cadres, in the "Letter to the People's Committees of all periods, provinces, districts and villages", dated October 17, 1945, President Ho Chi Minh frankly criticized the evils of being "Illegal", "High-handed", "Degenerate", "Personally Biased", "Divisive", "Arrogant" of cadres and party members at all levels from central to local. It was worrying that the young people's government had just been established, but those evils in the Party and State apparatus also began to arise, and had a terrible effect. President Ho Chi Minh frankly pointed out the limitations, weaknesses, and flaws that needed purifying in the public apparatus. He specified "very serious mistakes" including bad habits that needed to be condemned: high-handed, degenerate, arrogant, and divisive manners, etc., also pointed out at the same time that "Whoever committed these mistakes must try your best to fix it; otherwise, the government will not be tolerant". When promoted and elected to leadership positions, some cadres failed to maintain their conscience and dignity but fell into a lavish lifestyle. He questioned "For those who desire to eat well, wear beautiful clothes, even become more and more luxurious and romantic, where does the money for them come from? There are those even taking public money to use for private purposes, forgetting integrity and morality. A commissioner drives a car, then his wife, and even his daughters and sons also use state-owned cars. Let's wonder who has to incur those costs?". Later, when mistakes occurred in land reform, the Party

Central Committee and President Ho Chi Minh criticized themselves in front of the people and determined to correct the errors. He stated clearly: "A Party that hides its shortcomings is a broken Party. If a Party has the courage to admit its shortcomings, clearly pointed out what they are and why they exist, carefully consider the circumstances that gave rise to those shortcomings, and then seek every way to correct them, it is truly a progressive, bold, reliable and genuine Party".

Throughout the process of leaving the fatherland to find a way to save his country, experiencing countless difficulties in materials, shaping and quantifying the path to national liberation. In the book "The Revolutionary Road", he once wrote "nowadays there are many doctrines, many isms, but the truest, most certain, and most revolutionary one is Leninism". With his creative thinking and political will, he had chosen the right path of national liberation and the right method of that even though it was not supported by the Communist International. Afterwards, when spreading Marxism-Leninism to Vietnam and establishing the Party, he also encountered countless difficulties with internal and external enemies. However, with his political will, President Ho Chi Minh and the Central Executive Committee successfully led the people to overcome all challenges to bring freedom and independence back to its people, being wholeheartedly loyal to the country and filial to its people. From the thesis of Marxism-Leninism on politics, he brought new moral content into the practice of the Vietnamese revolution. He believed that revolutionary ethics must stem from the purpose of action which are for humans, for the country, for the population, and more broadly, for the advancement of humanity.

### **Building Political Will for Current Staff Of Cadres And Party Members**

Will is a person's capability and steadfastness in the face of all circumstances. The political will of each cadre and party member is demonstrated in their leadership and ability to overcome all difficulties and challenges in their work, and to be steadfast in the face of arduous tasks entrusted to them by the party and the people. Political will prevents cadres and party members from being agitated and materialistic, partial to reputation and fortune, and greedy for vanity or wealth, but just mindful of mutual interests of the community and our nation. In the current period, the staff of cadres and party members' political will is one of the key factors aiding our party and people to overcome the nation's difficult times, in war as well as peace. It is the cadres and party members' strong political will that has helped them overcome material temptations, particularly in the face of negative impacts from the downside of the market mechanism, open integration and the plots and tricks of hostile forces who use many tricks, including material temptations with the aim of degrading the ideology and deforming the nature of cadres and party members. Among them, though, there were still a number of cadres and party members, who could not resist the temptations of materials, fame, and wealth, fell into the enemy's trap. Currently, many cadres and party members do not cultivate morality, and practice their political will as well as class stance. Therefore, he was caught in jail, indirectly lowering people's trust in the Party. The political will of cadres and party members is the class character and political stance, so in every situation and with every temptation, they must always clearly distinguish right from wrong, maintain their stance, be wholeheartedly loyal to the country and filial to the people. That is: "must be determined to serve the Party and the people all your lives. That is the noble quality of a revolutionary. That is revolutionary morality, Party character, and class character. It ensures the victory of the Party, the class, and the people". When our party became the ruling party, no matter where he was or what we did, Uncle Ho always kept in mind and taught the cadres and party members that *Our Party is a revolutionary party that has no other interests other than the people's*. In addition, he also advised: to do with all your might whatever is beneficial to the people, avoid as much as possible whatever is harmful to them. The duty cadres and party members is to be loyal servants of the people, to serve the people with all their heart and soul, and to be diligent, thrifty, honest, and righteous. We build a staff of party members who are truly pioneering, exemplary, close to the people, and highly responsible at work, have revolutionary moral qualities, a sense of discipline and the capability to fulfil tasks, stay steadfast in the face of all difficulties and challenges, striving for the Party's goals and ideals. President Ho Chi Minh himself is a shining example for cadres and party members in terms of political will. He is a person who absolutely does not desire vanity and wealth, but has only one ultimate ambition which is to make our country independent, make our people completely free, and provide everyone enough food, clothing, and education. Away from his example, right now somewhere, some cadres and party members are still deeply involved in fighting for fame and wealth. Humans, most of them, have to live with many temptations, including fame and wealth. The higher a person's

position is in society, the more and stronger the temptations, which surround them every day and every hour, become. We definitely master ourselves and know how to win ourselves in order to achieve the virtues like Ho Chi Minh's "absolutely no desire for fame or wealth at all" and "no involvement in the circle of fame and wealth." When studying political will for staff of cadres and party members, President Ho Chi Minh also affirmed, "A revolutionary must pay attention to and take care of three relationships, with themselves, with others and with their work. As for themselves, diligence, thrift, integrity, righteousness are obligatory; do not be greedy for fame or arrogant, do what you say, and keep your ideology strong; sacrifice and hardly have any material desires and secrets. When communicating with others, he or she must be tolerant; when working in a corporation, one must be strict, supportive of others, straightforward but not reckless, and so on. When dealing with work, one must consider carefully, be decisive, courageous and obedient to the corporation". Training political will for cadres and party members plays an indispensable role in the context of the country's innovation and extensive international integration, especially when a large number of cadres and party members, including cadres and party members holding leadership and management positions, degrade in political ideology, ethics, and lifestyle, with signs of fading revolutionary ideals, falling into individualism, chasing after fame, fortune, status, embezzlement, corruption, and seeking negative group benefits, etc. After nearly 40 years of innovation, the country has had many changes. The combined nation-state strength, including strength of the material and the spiritual, tradition and modernity, economy, politics, culture, society, defense, security, and foreign affairs, are constantly being improved; moreover, the country's position and power are raised to a new level. The socialist regime is maintained and strengthened, along with its superiority increasingly promoted. The strength of great national unity is consolidated; in addition, the Party's leadership and ruling role continued and improved. Recognizing the importance of political will for cadres and party members, the Document of the 12th National Congress of Delegates emphasized the task of improving political will, intelligence, as well as fighting spirit of the entire Party and of each cadre and party member, first of all leading cadres and key administrators at all levels; do not waver in any situation. Each cadre and party member must be a shining example of practicing political will with themselves, with others and with their work as taught by President Ho Chi Minh. The 13th National Congress generally assessed the results of implementing the Resolution of the 12th National Congress and looked back on more than 35 years of innovation and 10 years of implementing the Platform for national construction during the transition period to socialism (1991) and Socio-Economic Development Strategy in the 2011-2020 period. In the assessment of the results of implementing the Resolution of the 12th Congress, the Documents of the 13th Congress emphasized that, in the context of the world and regional situation changing very rapidly, complicatedly and unpredictably, many new problems arose to be solved, that cadres, party members, and people had high expectations for the Party's right and strong policies to develop the country in a faster and more sustainable direction. The 13th Party Congress was a great success, with new tasks, in the new situation of the nation, required even higher quality, while the effectiveness in training political will for cadres and party members are becoming more necessary and important. The 13th Congress emphasized reinforcing the Party building in terms of politics with fundamental content: "...Enhance the stance, political will, qualifications, intelligence, and fighting spirit of executive committees, party organizations, and each cadre and party member, first of all leading cadres and key administrators at all levels, strategic-level cadres; Practice democracy within the Party while strengthening discipline, rules and regulations within the Party". The work of preventing and combating corruption and negativity received attention at Congresses, demonstrating the Party's stance, political will and determination in the new situation. Document of the 13th National Congress affirmed that promoting the fight against corruption and bureaucracy and purifying staff of party members is an *important content of the work of building and rectifying the Party*. After nearly 40 years of innovation, we have realized more clearly that this is "a particularly important task in the work of building and rectifying the Party, building and consolidating a pure and strong political system, and reinforcing the great national unity bloc". Besides, it is also necessary to maintain the working-class nature of the Party, improve the bravery and ability to forecast and plan guidelines and policies that must be suitable for both Vietnam and the world. "Vietnam's progression in women's empowerment is evident, though specific areas necessitate further attention.etc. Education, culture, empowerment, and women's rights form the focal points of this exploration, revealing pathways to enhance women's status".

## **CONCLUSION**

President Ho Chi Minh's entire life was a shining example of moral training and political will. Throughout his life, Uncle Ho absolutely did not desire fame and wealth at all, and had no involvement in its circle. He had to assume the presidency due to his people's entrusting. Uncle Ho always wholeheartedly and devotedly served the country, served the revolution, and served the people all his life.

In the current period, with the unfavorable impacts of the world and domestic situation, the political will of cadres and party members is facing many challenges. The political will of cadres and party members does not come naturally. It must be gradually accumulated in quantity, through education, study and practice in actuality so as not to fall into the desire for vanity and wealth that damages the property and reputation of the party as well as of the organization, and to waver in any situation. During the period of building and defending the fatherland, especially since implementing the Party's reform policy, our country has attained great achievements of historical significance. Thereby, "The political will, qualifications, intelligence, and fighting spirit of the entire Party and of each cadre and party member, first of all the leading cadres and key administrators at all levels, have gradually been raised.". Faced with the negative impacts of the downside of the market economy, the deterioration of political ideology, ethics, and lifestyle of a part of cadres and party members, corruption and waste have not been pushed back, some of which have complicated developments. "a part of cadres and party members have faded their ideals, lost their will, are afraid of difficulties and hardship, have degraded in ideology, politics, ethics, and lifestyle, and developed "self-evolution" and "self-transformation", All of these things have reduced the people's confidence, also contrasted with the Party's goals and ideals and the interests of the state and nation. Therefore, it is necessary to educate to raise awareness of Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh's thought because it is the ideological foundation and guideline for the actions of the Party and that of the revolution. In addition, it is also essential to strengthen theoretical research, summarize practice, and continue to clarify the theory of socialism and the path to it in our country because only through summarizing can we see, regarding "theoretical work", what we has and hasn't done, where there are shortcomings and problems we need remedy for, and ultimately promote education to improve the quality and revolutionary ethics of cadres and party members. According to President Ho Chi Minh, revolutionary morality is loyalty to the Party, the fatherland and the people, and the practice of "diligence, thrift, integrity, righteousness", "public-spiritedness and selflessness". According to him, morality is the "root" of revolutionaries. When the "roots" are shaken, political will could no longer be maintained. President Ho Chi Minh always cared about and gave his mind to the interests and happiness of the people, so throughout his revolutionary life, he had only one purpose: for the people's sake. He affirmed, "we must do our best whatever is beneficial to the people, and avoid as much as possible whatever is harmful to the people. Besides, it is also required to innovate the evaluation and classification of cadres and party members to ensure true nature. It is also critical to promote, innovate, and improve the quality and effectiveness of political and ideological education. There is a demand for the diversification into forms and methods of political and ideological education so that they are suitable for each subject, linked to the practical situation of each period, each industry, field and locality. With criteria for dealing with oneself, others and work, conduct screening and be ready to take unworthy people out of the party, bringing reliability to the people. Ho Chi Minh affirmed that our state belongs to the people, so it is obligatory to empower and exercise the people's authority, and to build a state owned by the people. All power belongs to the people, hence the people wield their power through the State, the National Assembly and the People's Council. Accordingly, it is imperative to listen to the people, accept criticism from the people, and consequently, the government, corporations and cadres are loyal servants of the people./.

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