

# Exploring the Essence of "Being United with the Nation, Being Devoted to the People" in the Ideology of Ho Chi Minh's Moral Teachings

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## **ABSTRACT**

*President Ho Chi Minh, the founder and leader of the Communist Party of Vietnam, dedicated his life to the liberation of the Vietnamese people and the global struggle for peace, independence, and social progress. His ethical ideology, centered on being united with the nation and devoted to the people, serves as a guiding principle for the Party and the Vietnamese society as a whole. The concept of being united with the nation emphasizes loyalty to the country and its cause, while being devoted to the people entails love, respect, and service towards the community. Ho Chi Minh's teachings highlight the importance of selflessness, patriotism, and collective responsibility, extending the traditional values of filial piety and national unity. By following these principles, individuals contribute to the development of the nation and work towards a just and harmonious society. President Ho Chi Minh's legacy continues to inspire and guide the Party and the people of Vietnam, providing a strong foundation for progress and the pursuit of a better future.*

**Keywords:** *Loyalty, Filial Piety, Being United with the Nation, Being Devoted to the People, Ethics, Exemplary Moral Conduct*

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President Ho Chi Minh, the head of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, is the founder, leader, and mentor of the Communist Party of Vietnam. He devoted his entire life to the national liberation cause of the Vietnamese people, contributing to the global struggle of all nations for peace, national independence, democracy, and social progress.

The ideology and radiant moral exemplar of Ho Chi Minh are invaluable spiritual assets that he left for our entire Party and people. Ho Chi Minh's ethical ideology inherits and develops the fine moral traditions of our nation, absorbs and selectively incorporates the essence of human culture, and is derived from practical experiences manifested through his revolutionary actions. Central to his ethical ideology is the love for the nation, compassion for the people, and the principle of being united with the nation and devoted to the people, which permeates every action.

Wherever he was and whatever task he undertook, President Ho Chi Minh always approached matters from a standpoint of serving the country and the people. His unwavering commitment to the nation and the people served as a guiding principle throughout his life. This unwavering dedication was evident in his revolutionary actions.

President Ho Chi Minh's ethical ideology is not only a guiding principle for members of the Party but also serves as a moral compass for the entire Vietnamese society. It emphasizes the importance of selflessness, patriotism, and prioritizing the collective interests over individual desires. Ho Chi Minh's exemplary leadership, based on these principles, inspires us to strive for the betterment of our nation and the well-being of our people.

President Ho Chi Minh's legacy remains an endless source of inspiration and guidance for the Party and the people of Vietnam. His moral teachings continue to be cherished, providing a strong foundation for the development of our society, the preservation of our cultural heritage, and the pursuit of a just and progressive future.

In this article, I would like to contribute to the understanding and clarification of one of the fundamental standards in the content of Ho Chi Minh's ethical ideology, which is summarized in the six words: "Being united with the nation, being devoted to the people."

1. Being united with the nation and being devoted to the people in Ho Chi Minh's ethical ideology are not new concepts, but rather ethical qualities that have long been ingrained in the traditional Eastern ethical thought in general and Vietnamese ethical traditions in particular. Confucianism and ancient Vietnamese

literature frequently mention the terms "Being united" and "Being devoted" with the educational meaning of "the path to becoming a righteous person" in the feudal regime of Vietnam. During the Vietnam War, when President Ho Chi Minh called upon officials and party members to be "United with the Nation, Devoted to the People," the content of these two words, "Being united" and "Being devoted," experienced a new breakthrough.

Confucianism has a broad conception of "Being united," but it primarily emphasizes "Being united with the ruler," which signifies loyalty and righteousness towards the monarch. For Ho Chi Minh, "Being united" means "Being united with the nation." Being united with the nation entails loyalty to the cause of establishing and safeguarding the country, based on the legacy of the previous generations, and determined to protect and build the Fatherland. Nowadays, it means remaining loyal to the revolutionary cause led by the Party for the goal of a prosperous people, a strong nation, democracy, justice, and civilization.

The concepts of "Being united with the nation" and "Being devoted to the people" reflect the core values and principles that guide the moral conduct of individuals in Vietnamese society. These principles emphasize the importance of national unity, patriotism, and a sense of collective responsibility. Furthermore, they highlight the significance of selflessness, compassion, and a genuine dedication to the well-being and progress of the people.

By adhering to these principles, individuals contribute to the nation's development and work towards the realization of a just and harmonious society. The moral teachings of Ho Chi Minh serve as a guiding light for individuals to cultivate their character and engage in actions that promote the collective welfare, reflecting the timeless wisdom embedded in Vietnamese cultural and ethical traditions.

In Eastern and Vietnamese culture, the term "Being devoted" (Hiếu) is traditionally associated with the narrower context of filial piety within the family, which means children being respectful and obedient to their parents. Ho Chi Minh's ideology of being united with the nation and devoted to the people not only inherits the values of traditional patriotism within the nation but also surpasses the limitations of those traditions.

Regarding the concept of "Being devoted" (Hiếu), Ho Chi Minh advises people to be dutiful and respectful to their parents in the general sense: to be grateful, to show reverence, to wholeheartedly support and nurture them, and to emulate their positive qualities. However, he does not stop there. From filial piety towards parents, he expands it to "Being devoted to the People." According to Ho Chi Minh, "Being devoted to the People" encompasses the following main aspects:

Firstly, it means loving, respecting, and valuing the people, considering them as the foundation. Secondly, it involves elevating the spirit of serving the people and taking responsibility for them. Ho Chi Minh outlines three types of responsibilities for officials: primarily, the responsibility towards the people, followed by the responsibility towards their work, and lastly, the responsibility towards their superiors.

Thirdly, it entails consistently caring about the people's lives and diligently working towards improving their living conditions. Fourthly, it involves respecting and promoting the people's right to self-determination, enhancing their intellectual capacity, and enabling them to know and exercise their own rights.

By emphasizing these principles of being devoted to the people, Ho Chi Minh establishes a comprehensive ethical framework that guides the behavior and responsibilities of individuals in Vietnamese society. This framework not only emphasizes the importance of familial values but also extends them to encompass a deep sense of care, respect, and service towards the entire community and nation.

Ho Chi Minh's ethical ideology, with its emphasis on unity with the nation and devotion to the people, represents a profound synthesis of traditional Vietnamese values and revolutionary aspirations. It calls for individuals to cultivate a sense of responsibility, selflessness, and dedication in their actions, fostering a society that prioritizes the collective well-being and progress of the people.

2. Being united with the nation and devoted to the people, according to Ho Chi Minh's ethical ideology, is manifested in every revolutionary work of the Party, in every thought and specific action of each cadre, party member, and citizen. While the goals and tasks may differ in each revolutionary period, the requirements of being united and devoted remain consistent and serve as the common criteria for cadres, party members, and the entire population to study and cultivate. It entails a deep love for the country and pride in the glorious traditions of the nation, as well as the duty and responsibility of every individual to the community, the Party and the nation's cause, and the aspiration for national prosperity. It embodies the willpower and determination to overcome all difficulties and challenges, ready to sacrifice for the common goal of the revolutionary cause, and the trust and respect for the people. Therefore, throughout the process of Party building and revolutionary leadership, Uncle Ho (Ho Chi Minh) constantly emphasizes the importance of enhancing the spirit of being united and devoted in every Vietnamese citizen, in general, and in every cadre and party member, in particular, demanding that they deeply engrave the words "united with the nation, devoted to the people" in their hearts. We can clearly see this from the early days of the revolution. When opening training courses for the Party's first cadre (in Guangzhou, China), one of the first concerns of comrade Nguyen Ai Quoc (Ho Chi Minh) was to train individuals who willingly sacrifice their whole lives for the cause of national liberation, social

liberation, and human liberation; to study and understand Marxism-Leninism in order to "firmly hold onto ideology," be absolutely loyal to the great cause of the Party, and know how to unite and organize the masses effectively.

When our Party was established, Uncle Ho always reminded everyone: "Every party member, every cadre from top to bottom must understand that they join the Party to be servants of the people. Uncle emphasized: to be servants of the people, not "officials" of the people" (1). When our Party became the ruling Party, leading the entire nation in both resistance war and nation-building, no matter where or what the circumstances were, Uncle always held one belief: "Our Party is a revolutionary Party. Besides the interests of the people, our Party has no other interests," "The policy of the Party and the Government is to care for the people's livelihood to the utmost" (2)...

Therefore, Uncle always made it clear for everyone to see and understand the core principle of revolutionary ethics: Do everything that benefits the people to the utmost. Avoid anything that harms the people to the utmost.

It was precisely during that process that Uncle Ho set a shining example of being "devoted to the nation, loyal to the people." His loyalty and devotion were consistent and unwavering. From the very first days of seeking a path to save the country, aiming for independence for the Fatherland and ensuring full meals and warm clothes for our compatriots, Uncle Ho overcame numerous difficulties and challenges. In the prisons of colonialists and imperialists, his unwavering determination and unwavering loyalty to liberate the nation and provide food and warmth for our compatriots were further nurtured. When the country achieved independence, Uncle Ho "absolutely did not desire any fame or fortune," did not want to be "involved in any fame-seeking and personal gain," but only had one utmost desire: to achieve complete independence for our nation, total freedom for our people, and to ensure that everyone has enough to eat, wear, and the opportunity for education.

3. After The General Offensive and Uprising of spring 1975, the entire nation joined forces to rebuild the country. The heavy consequences of the war and profound changes in the global situation led to prolonged economic and social crises, causing difficulties in people's lives. We engraved in our minds the teachings of President Ho Chi Minh regarding the Party's mission to lead the masses in overcoming poverty and backwardness, building a prosperous and happy life for the people. Once again, the spirit of being "devoted to the nation, loyal to the people" was elevated to its highest level among the revolutionary forces in the endeavor of building and safeguarding the Fatherland.

Being devoted to the nation and loyal to the people in the present stage, first and foremost, means remaining faithful to the revolutionary path chosen by our Party and Uncle Ho, being loyal to the cause of national renovation for the goals of a prosperous people, a strong nation, a just and democratic society, and a civilized society. It is the manifestation of conscience and responsibility of each individual in the industrialization and modernization of the country, in the construction and firm protection of the Fatherland. To achieve these goals, in my opinion, the following tasks need to be carried out effectively:

Firstly, to educate the entire population regularly and extensively, ensuring that each individual has a deep and comprehensive understanding of the nation's loyal and filial traditions, of the great sacrifices made by our ancestors for the present day. Through this, we can elevate the spirit of patriotism, instill pride in the heroic traditions of our people, and consider it the conscience and responsibility of every Vietnamese who loves their country.

Secondly, to organize and lead the whole nation in promoting the spirit of great national unity, following the ideology of Ho Chi Minh, respecting and promoting the collective self-determination of the people, creating consensus throughout society so that every citizen can contribute their efforts to the common cause of our Party and our country, building a strong national unity bloc as solid as the "Great Solidarity" of the Fatherland. At the same time, it is important to properly handle the relationships between individuals, families, collectives, and society, between obligations and rights.

Thirdly, to promote the movement of patriotic emulation, aiming to enhance the sense of responsibility and professional ethics of each individual in their respective work, to excel in fulfilling assigned tasks, and to contribute to the industrialization, modernization, and the construction of our country to be "more orderly and more beautiful," as Bác Hồ always desired, and to lead our nation to the pinnacle of glory, standing shoulder to shoulder with powerful nations on all continents.

By accomplishing the above-mentioned key issues, regardless of how volatile and complex the world situation may be, no matter the negative impacts of globalization and the market economy, we will always stand strong, proactively integrate and develop. That is how we truly practice the principles of being "devoted" and "loyal" that Uncle Ho taught us.

3. After the Great Victory in the Spring of 1975, the Vietnamese people joined forces to rebuild the country. The heavy aftermath of the war in Vietnam and the profound changes in the global economic and political situation led to a prolonged economic and social crisis, and the people of Vietnam faced many difficulties in their lives. Following the teachings of President Ho Chi Minh on the mission of the Party to lead the people in overcoming

poverty and backwardness and building a prosperous and happy life for the people, once again, the spirit of "loyalty to the nation, filial piety to the people" of the Communist Party of Vietnam was highly upheld in the cause of constructing and protecting the homeland.

Being loyal to the nation and filial to the people in the present stage, first and foremost, means being faithful to the revolutionary path chosen by the Communist Party of Vietnam and Uncle Ho, being faithful to the national renewal cause for the goals of a wealthy people, a strong country, a just society, democracy, and civilization. It is the embodiment of conscience and responsibility of each individual in the industrialization and modernization of the country, in the cause of building and firmly defending the homeland. To achieve the above goals, in my opinion, the following tasks should be well implemented:

Firstly, it is necessary to educate the entire people regularly and extensively so that each person deeply understands and fully appreciates the patriotic and filial traditions of the nation, the great sacrifices of previous generations that have granted us independence and freedom today. Through this, we can enhance the spirit of patriotism and pride in the heroic traditions of the nation, considering it as the conscience and responsibility of every Vietnamese person who loves their country.

Secondly, Vietnam needs to organize and lead the whole nation to promote the spirit of great national unity according to the ideology of Ho Chi Minh, respecting and promoting the collective self-determination of the people, creating consensus in society so that every citizen can contribute their efforts to the common cause of the Communist Party of Vietnam, the country of Vietnam, and building a solid national unity bloc. At the same time, we need to effectively address the proper relationships between individuals, families, collectives, and society, between obligations and rights.

Thirdly, the Communist Party of Vietnam needs to promote the patriotic movement to awaken the sense of responsibility and professional ethics of every individual in their respective work, to excellently fulfill the assigned tasks, and contribute to the industrialization, modernization, and construction of our country to make it "more orderly and beautiful", bringing our nation to the pinnacle of glory and standing shoulder to shoulder with powerful nations across the five continents, as Uncle Ho always desired.

By addressing the above-mentioned key issues well, regardless of how turbulent and complex the global situation may be, no matter the extent of the negative impacts of the trends of globalization and the market economy, we will always stand firm and proactively seize the initiative to integrate and develop. That is precisely how we have fulfilled the values of "loyalty to the nation, filial piety to the people" taught by Uncle Ho.

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