

The year 1995 is approaching, and we are nearing the threshold of the 21st century. Thinking of our future is one of customs of Asian people in springtime. In Tết Festival, we used to revive old customs and traditions which have been forgotten in modern times. In this Tết Festival, I would like to refer to a good tradition which Uncle Hô used to remind us when he was living: Planting trees in Tết Festival.

Planting tree, or planting human being are all strategic investment. If these two fields are invested insufficiently, the existence of a nation, or a people, could be threatened. In teaching agricultural economy, many professors used to say: "Forests get ruined, nation gets damaged". In my opinion, we can also say: "Talent disappears, country gets destroyed".

Looking back "planting tree" and "planting human being" in the past few years, we can't but worry. The growth rate of a tree is slower than the rate of cutting it down, and the job of planting tree couldn't be industrialized or modernized as cutting it down could.

What about "planting human being"? We usually think that Vietnam has an abundant labor force of low price, but labor force is one thing while human resources are something else. Human resources could be considered as skilled and experienced labor force which can take part in economic activities. So many large expenses are needed to change a labor force to human resources. A laborer should be trained and educated before he, or she, could participate in production. The more we invest in training and education, the more profit we can get from labor efficiency.

In other words, untrained persons can't become laborers. They are only: "foodbags", or even heavy burdens to the society. Human resources aren't some kinds of natural resources which we can exploit easily, and needless to say, the natural resources should be processed in order to enhance their value before selling.

Therefore, educating and training couldn't be considered as a kind of benefit given by the government to the people. It should be considered as an act of investing which aims at enhancing value of human resources. Outlays



## MODERNIZING HUMAN RESOURCES TRAINING

by TRẦN TÔ TỬ



on education shouldn't be seen as expenditures but as investment which can make profit in the future.

"It's wise to have works done by money", as Vietnamese saying goes, so we should put our money into education and training instead of letting it be lost in corruption or other forces of evil.

On the other hand, could a low-wage labor force be seen as one of our advantages compared with other countries? Many foreign investors think that although the price of labor in Vietnam is lower than other countries in the region, but labor cost in unit cost is high because of low

output per worker.

This observation forces us to pay more attention to education and training managerial skills in order to improve the labor efficiency. It could go without saying that all of us have already known this, but why is result produced by Vietnam education so low? Why do graduates find no job? Why can't businesses find enough skilled laborers as they wanted? Why do we run short of a class of intermediaries (techno-economic experts who come between workers and executive officers)? And a lot of graduates can't do this job and they become half worker and half manager.

We can blame this situation on "lack of fund for education". If the national and personal budget are doubled or tripled, could we solve these problems of our education?

Too many philosophies of education have been talked about, but why can't we apply theories to practices. For a long time, we have supplied to students a system of highly-generalized theories and considered it as a standard. Therefore, facing the realities, one can't see what are particular cases which have been generalized. This way of teaching and learning can't help students deal with the realities and solve problems posed by the ever-changing life.

Recently, a question have been asked by many students of university of economics (and many other students): Is the pragmatist way of living bad? So why did the grown-ups blame the young generation for this? It's hard to give a persuasive answer to this question. But the way those students put such a question showed that they have tried to adapt themselves to the present life in order to fill the gap in their knowledge.

This is the basic difference between the natural and human resources. Human being will educate themselves in order to enhance their value instead of falling asleep as a mine waiting for exploitation. But if we let the people educate themselves, we never get high-quality human resources necessary for the socio-economic development in the next century. Therefore, one of the most urgent tasks at the present time (and it should be given top priority) is to modernize both planting tree and planting human being. ♣