The Practice of the Socialist Outlook on Human Rights with Chinese Characteristics in the Face of Coronavirus Pandemic

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Abstract. The Socialist Outlook on Human Rights with Chinese Characteristics is a scientific theory developed and summarized in the development and practice of China’s human rights cause, and “taking people as the foremost” is its most basic characteristic. During this year’s pandemic and the current post-pandemic period, the Communist Party of China (CPC) has always adhered to the people-centered mission, respected every individual life, followed a realistic and pragmatic approach to fight against the pandemic, actively maintained international public health security, and practiced the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind. This is the best interpretation of the Socialist Outlook on Human Rights with Chinese Characteristics in this new coronavirus pandemic, and a vivid practice of safeguarding human rights.

1. Introduction

The full realization of human rights is a long-term goal of the Chinese people and the Chinese government. China has been attaching great importance to the protection and realization of human rights. The coronavirus outbreak is not only a test of China’s public health and pandemic prevention capabilities, but also a test of the CPC, the socialist system with Chinese characteristics, and the Socialist Outlook on Human Rights with Chinese Characteristics. During the war against the virus, Chinese government has always put the common interests of the Chinese people and the people of the world first in the process of policy research, judgment, formulation and implementation. This is a vivid practice of the socialist outlook on human rights with Chinese characteristics, fully demonstrating the scientific nature of the Socialist Outlook on Human Rights with Chinese Characteristics.

2. The Practice of the Theory of the Socialist Outlook on Human Rights with Chinese Characteristics

2.1 What is the Socialist Outlook on Human Rights with Chinese Characteristics?

The Socialist Outlook on Human Rights with Chinese Characteristics is the sinicization of the Marxist outlook on human rights. It is a scientific theory that was generated and rooted in the development and practice of China’s human rights cause, and it is also a summary of China’s experience in sticking to the “people-centered” human rights cause.

Since the reform and opening up, especially since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, Chinese government has been persisting in developing human rights culture and promoting human rights practice under the guidance of Xi Jinping’s Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era. And the government always strives to practice the Socialist Outlook on Human Rights with Chinese Characteristics based on the country’s actual conditions. On September 22, 2019, the State Council Information Office issued a white paper entitled “Seeking Happiness for People: 70 Years of Progress on Human Rights in China”, stating that living a happy life is the primary human right. The CPC, since the day when it was born, has set the goal of
striving for happiness for the people, rejuvenation for the nation, and development for the mankind. China has continuously summarized the development experience of human society since the founding of this country. In the great practice of building socialism with Chinese characteristics, China has insisted on combining the universality of human rights with its own reality, persisting in the people-centered human rights concept, always regarded the right to subsistence and development as the primary and basic human rights, coordinated and promoted the rights of all people, and strived to promote the all-round development of people[1]. Both history and reality have proved that the CPC has successfully led the Chinese people on a road of human rights development in line with national conditions, enriching the connotation of the Socialist Outlook on Human Rights with Chinese Characteristics with Chinese practice, and the diversity of human civilization. The Socialist Outlook on Human Rights with Chinese Characteristics has always been based on the people-oriented thinking of “People is the foundation of the country, and the country will be safe if the foundation is firm.” Sticking to it is a manifestation of respect for human rights.

2.2 The Practice of the Theory of the Socialist Outlook on Human Rights with Chinese Characteristics in the Face of Coronavirus Pandemic

2.2.1 Take People as the Foremost to Fully Respect and Guarantee the Realization of Human Rights

Taking people as the foremost is the basic feature of the Socialist Outlook on Human Rights with Chinese Characteristics. During the pandemic prevention and control period, the Party Central Committee has always regarded the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the people as the highest value standard and pursuit, put the right to life and health in the first place of basic human rights, and focused on care and respect for people and their values, and respected every individual life.

Respect for life is the basis and prerequisite for taking people as the foundation. During the pandemic prevention and control period, the Party Central Committee has quickly made overall arrangements, and the State Council has held many meetings to study and deploy pandemic prevention work. Xi Jinping emphasized that life is of paramount importance, it is the CPC’s and the government’s responsibility to prevent and control the pandemic, and to save all the lives. When listening to the report on the epidemic prevention and control work, Xi Jinping also pointed out that party committees and governments at all levels must follow the decisions and deployment of the Party Central Committee, fully mobilize, deploy and strengthen their work in an all-round way, put the people’s safety and health at the very first place, and view pandemic prevention and control as the most important task at present. Based on the principle of “concentrating patients, experts, resources, and treatment”, the Party Central Committee has made overall arrangements to mobilize the nation’s people, material and financial resources to build temporary hospitals. It would be better to “leave enough beds for people” rather than “make people wait for beds to be available”. The Chinese government did its best to treat every patient so as not to abandon or give up any life. There are many selfless and dedicated heroes fight with the virus in the front-line, the Party Central Committee scientifically dispatches, coordinates, and provides them with strong logistical support from the spiritual and material levels. The protection and care of medical staff fully reflects the people-oriented humanistic care. In addition, during the pandemic, the Party Central Committee has gathered strengths to deal with important matters, mobilized all the people to build a line of defense against the epidemic, and controlled the rapid spread of the epidemic. Grassroots CPC organizations and all the CPC members have actively participated in the war against the “epidemic”, ensuring the effectiveness of prevention, control and investigation measures, bringing together the joint efforts to fight the pandemic, from individuals to families, communities to counties, cities to provinces, therefore to protect the lives and health of the people[2].
2.2.2 Seek Truth from Facts to Coordinate and Adjust Social Concerns about Human Rights Timely

Seeking truth from facts is the practical criterion of the Socialist Outlook on Human Rights with Chinese Characteristics. The Party Central Committee has always held on to the combination of the universality of human rights with the current specific national conditions in China, adjusted social concerns about human rights in a timely manner according to the momentum of development of the epidemic, actively responded to the contradictions and problems arising in our society during the pandemic, and protected the basic rights of the people.

Human rights are concrete and realistic. During the pandemic outbreak, the Party Central Committee adhered to the principle of combining the universality and particularity of human rights, and the coordination of individual rights and collective rights, starting from actual human needs, making timely overall adjustments, making decisions, and safeguarding the vital interests of the people. Since the outbreak of the pandemic, in order to effectively curb the rapid spread of the disease, the Party Central Committee has made precise research and judgments, putting the lives and health of the people in the most important position at present, and has adopted a series of prevention and control measures. World Health Organization spoke highly of the Chinese government’s strong leadership and organizational power in this global public health emergency, saying that the epidemic prevention measures adopted by China are the "bravest, the most active, and the most flexible” in history. At the beginning of the epidemic, the Committee bravely made the decision to “lock down Wuhan City”. Wuhan City, a thoroughfare of nine provinces, instantly pressed the “pause button”. Subsequently, nearly 30 provinces across the country successively initiated primary response to major public health emergencies.

In the process of fighting the epidemic with all its strength, the Committee actively responded to various difficulties, flexibly adjusted the strategy of “fighting against the pandemic”, strengthened the ability of nucleic acid detection in the shortest time to complete a large-scale investigation, and deployed medical teams and medical supplies to support Hubei. Tens of thousands of beds have been added to solve the problem of difficult admission and treatment of patients and avoid running on medical resources. At the same time, the government has formulated relevant policies and regulations in time to maintain social order during the epidemic prevention and control period. For example, the General Administration of Market Supervision has formulated relevant policies to strengthen and regulate illegal behaviors that drive up prices to protect the market prices of basic livelihood commodities; the Ministry of Finance and the Medical Insurance Bureau jointly have issued a notice that the state should cover the medical expenses of patients and stipulated that the staff infected during the work period can be identified as work-related injuries and enjoy work-related injury insurance benefits and other benefits. In addition, in the current post-pandemic era, the fight against the pandemic has become the new normal. The Chinese government has actively taken measures to prevent the pandemic from rebounding, promote economic recovery, always care about the well-being of the people, and respond to the real needs of the people in time, which reflects the realistic goals of the Socialist Outlook on Human Rights with Chinese characteristics.

2.2.3 Jointly Fight against the Pandemic to Promote Cooperation and Development in the Human Rights Cause in the World

Advancing the common development of mankind is the value pursuit of the Socialist Outlook on Human Rights with Chinese Characteristics. During the global fight against the pandemic, China has actively carried out international joint prevention and control, played its role in international organizations, and maintained international public health security, becoming the backbone of the global fight against the pandemic.

There are no borders during war for the pandemic is the common enemy of mankind. During the anti-pandemic period, the Chinese government has demonstrated to the world the demeanor and responsibility of a major country with practical actions, and vividly implemented the concept of building a community with a shared future for mankind. Building a community with a shared future for mankind is the “Chinese plan” and “Chinese wisdom” of the Chinese government to contribute
to the development of the world’s human rights cause. In 2013, Xi Jinping first proposed the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind in a speech at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations. The Chinese government has always persisted in the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind and has taken into consideration the legitimate concerns of other countries when pursuing its own interests. On the evening of March 26, 2020, President Xi Jinping mentioned the concept of “a community with a shared future for mankind” again and gave a “Chinese plan” for the global fight against the epidemic when attending the special summit of the leaders of the G20 on COVID-19. He said, “China adheres to the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind, and is willing to share beneficial prevention and control practices with other countries, conduct joint research and development of drugs and vaccines, and provide assistance within its capacity to countries where the epidemic has spread.” The domestic pandemic situation is getting better while the global epidemic situation is getting worse. Under the circumstances, China did not just take care of itself, but stood up and took its responsibilities, donated money to the World Health Organization for international cooperation in the fight against the pandemic, shared the results of virus research with the international community, publicly and transparently reported the status of the pandemic, Chinese government did its best to provide support of medical supplies and medical personnel to countries in need of assistance, imparted experience in pandemic prevention and control. China’s actions and responsibilities in the global fight against the pandemic have shown the great charm of Chinese cultural genes of “harmony is the most precious”. This is another vivid practice of the concept of building a community with a shared future for mankind. China has contributed in its own way to the cooperation and development of human rights cause in the world.

3. Conclusion

“Human rights” are the basic rights that all people should enjoy. No country in the world rejects human rights, but human rights are specific and realistic, which leads to the different focus of human rights in different countries and at different times. During the special period of the epidemic, the people’s right to life and safety should be the top priority of all countries to protect human rights. Without life and safety, human rights are just castles in the air. The important measures taken by the Chinese government during the pandemic have been centered on the people and put the lives and health of the Chinese people and the people of the world first. This is the respect and protection of basic rights of the Chinese people and the people of the world, it is a vivid practice of the Socialist Outlook on Human Rights with Chinese Characteristics, and has won the understanding and support of the Chinese people and the people of the world.

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