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"Emperor's Power Far Away from the Countryside" and "Town in Charge of Village Affairs": The Extreme Grass-roots Management System is Not Conducive to the Healthy Development of the Countryside

Xiang CHEN

Beijing Center for Quality and Safety of Agricultural Products, Beijing 100029, China

Abstract This paper compares the two different rural management methods of "emperor's power far away from the countryside" and "town in charge of village affairs", which shows that the extreme grass-roots management system is not conducive to rural development. This paper also points out that rural development needs to find a road of sustainable development in line with its own characteristics, which is the fundamental shortcut to change poverty and become rich for a long time.

Key words "Emperor's power far away from the countryside", "Town in charge of village affairs", Grass-roots management, Rural management

1 Introduction

The Beijing Municipal Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Areas recently launched a three-year special campaign to "enter the village and go to the farmers' houses", select and send young cadres and workers of the bureau to the countryside to understand the real situation of agriculture, rural areas and farmers, and to maintain and carry forward the fine tradition and down-to-earth work style. It has been found that many villages around Beijing are still implementing the "town in charge of village affairs" system. The emergence of the "town in charge of village affairs" system has a lot of restraining effects on the sustainable development of the countryside and hinders the development of the countryside. "Emperor's power far away from the countryside" is a common management system for the rulers of the feudal society to manage the grass-roots level. "Town in charge of village affairs" and "emperor's power far away from the countryside" are two grass-roots management policies of different times, in which "town in charge of village affairs" is decentralization, and "emperor's power far away from the countryside" is centralization. The two grass-roots management policies are very "extreme", so in comparison, the two are similar.

2 Reasons, advantages and disadvantages of the system of "emperor's power far away from the countryside"

Throughout the five thousand years of China, the management of grass-roots villages has been the most important, difficult and annoying for the rulers of all previous dynasties, because the stability at the grass-roots level is related to the stability of the re-

gime, and it is restricted by the inefficient contact methods in ancient times. The cost for the government to maintain stability at the grass-roots level is too great, and the feedback on many problems lags behind seriously, but there is no way to change the status quo, which is really frustrating. The reason for the annoyance is that the ancient rulers were unable to exercise strict control over the rural grass-roots level, and it was often some aristocratic great clans who were really influential at the local level. These great families also put the children of their own families in the county government as various officials.

The county magistrate is a local official, and his term of office is usually three years. During his term of office, as long as he can ensure that taxes are in place and there is no unrest, he can get promoted and then be transferred to other places. Therefore, the common practice of county magistrates is to be slack in work and transfer part of the public power to some subordinates, while he retreats behind the scenes, so there is a folk saying of "iron-beaten officials, flowing county magistrates".

"Emperor's power far away from the countryside" does not mean that the imperial power does not want to "penetrate into the countryside", but that the imperial power still "cannot reach to the countryside". Therefore, the rulers of successive dynasties acquiesced to the "hidden rule" of "emperor's power far away from the countryside". The advantage of adopting this policy is that it reduces the cost for the rulers to manage the grass-roots level, and gives the local great clans some rights of "autonomy" in exchange for their support for the imperial power. The disadvantage is that over time, the grass-roots people's recognition of the local great clans far exceeds that of the magistrates sent by the imperial court, and the dominance of the country cannot be effectively extended to the grass-roots level, and even the magistrates sent by the imperial court need to submit to the local great clans in order to hold their own post safely and steadily, otherwise they are very likely to be undermined by local forces.

3 Reasons, advantages and disadvantages of the system of "town in charge of village affairs"

In comparison, the emergence of the "town in charge of village affairs" system can be well understood. In the initial stage of national development, the "town in charge of village affairs" system can operate the limited resources at the grass-roots level more reasonably and efficiently, which has indeed played a role in promoting the development of the country. First, the phenomenon of random use of official seals at the grass-roots level has been effectively controlled; second, the "town in charge of village affairs" system can integrate the limited resources in rural areas and "concentrate efforts" to do great things. Although the "town in charge of village affairs" only stays under the unwritten rules, everyone has acquiesced to this "hidden rule". However, with the development of the country and the progress of society, "town in charge of village affairs" has begun to expose potential problems. First of all, although the phenomenon of random use of official seals at the grass-roots level has been brought under control, the problem of abuse of village seals has emerged among senior officials. Secondly, the "town in charge of village affairs" virtually weakens the village committee, deprives the village committee of some legal rights, and deprives the village of the right to independent development. Thirdly, the "town in charge of village affairs" has caused difficulties for the villagers to get their documents sealed. In addition to the cumbersome procedures, the villagers have to go back and forth between villages and towns many times, affecting their rights and interests. It can be said that the "hidden rule" of "town in charge of village affairs" has been unable to keep up with the pace of the times, and its disadvantages are becoming increasingly prominent.

4 The extreme grass-roots management system is not conducive to the healthy development of the countryside

From "emperor's power far away from the countryside" to "town in charge of village affairs", it is not difficult to see that extreme management methods may be effective at the beginning, but with the passage of time, it is bound to expose its own defects. In the spirit of borrowlism, extreme measures can be used to "solve" problems that are difficult to solve, but they should never be normalized. The ancients had no choice because of the limitations of science, technology and economy; at the beginning of reform and opening up, the country was poor and the resources were limited, so there was no choice but to implement "town in charge of village affairs". "Emperor's power far away from the countryside" and "town in charge of village affairs" are grass-roots management systems chosen according to the changes of the times. As industry begins to feed agriculture, there will be more and more rural resources, and the era of rural development has come. In this era, each village should "adjust measures to local conditions" according to the characteristics of the village, combined with the advantages of the village resources to develop the village economy. At this time, the village committee and villagers are the groups who

know best about the needs of the village and the advantages and disadvantages of the village. "Town in charge of village affairs" is tantamount to binding the hands and feet of rural self-development and restricting the road of rural self-development.

The problem of misuse of official seals by grass-roots cadres must not be ignored. The fundamental way to solve the problem is to strengthen supervision and increase punishment. The main body of supervision over the misuse of official seals and corruption of village cadres should be the villagers rather than the town government. We should guide the villagers to exercise the right of supervision and prosecution, and increase the punishment imposed by the town government on the illegal cadres, to thoroughly solve the problem of misuse of official seals from the legal system, rather than directly use the simple and rough "town in charge of village affairs" system.

"Emperor's power far away from the countryside" in ancient times seems to solve the problem of the ruler's management of the rural grass-roots level, but it has sown the seed of the future unrest, while the current "town in charge of village affairs" seems to solve the problem of the misuse of official seals by grass-roots cadres, but in fact, the problem is transferred to the top. Therefore, the extreme grass-roots management methods seem to solve the current problems, but in fact they shift the contradictions to other aspects. The restraining effect of "town in charge of village affairs" on the current rural development is obviously greater than the promoting effect, which is not conducive to the healthy development of the countryside. Keeping pace with the times should not be only a slogan, and it should be implemented in action, and some "outdated" systems or policies should be abandoned or changed.

5 Conclusion

To teach others the way of fishing is far better than to present them fish. This paper believes that instead of letting the town government take charge of the village seals to lead the poverty alleviation and blind investment attraction, it is better to let the rural areas find a path of sustainable development in line with their own characteristics, which is the fundamental shortcut to change poverty and become rich for a long time.

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