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Analysis on Family Factor in Construction of New Socialist Countryside

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Abstract This paper analyzes the family factor in the construction of new socialist countryside. It is believed that the family plays both the positive role and negative role in new socialist countryside construction. Based on this analysis, it puts forward corresponding countermeasures, including bringing into play the effect of family in promoting production and carrying forward excellent factors of family culture.

Key words Construction of new socialist countryside, Family factor, Influence

To solve issues concerning agriculture, farmer and countryside, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China put forward the objective of rural development ("the developed production, well-off living, civilized village culture, clean village environment, and democratic management") on the basis of characteristics of current stage of socio-economic development. According to these five requirements, this time of new socialist countryside construction has different connotations compared with the past one. The purpose of new socialist countryside construction is to improve living, production and ecological environment of rural residents, and to raise farmers' welfare benefits and improve their sustainable development ability. The construction of new socialist countryside is marked with new farmers, new communities, new organizations, new facilities, new management and new features. Basic measures for construction of new socialist countryside include strengthening construction of production and living facilities, such as rural road, water, electricity and water conservancy, promoting development of rural education and hygiene, and providing basic public services for farmers to dissipate their worry. Finally, it is expected to turn the rural areas into new civilized and harmonized socialist countryside with prosperous economy, perfect facilities, and beautiful environment. Here, the family factor in the construction of new socialist countryside is analyzed, in the hope of providing reference for better construction of new socialist countryside.

1 Concept of family

For the concept of family, the academic circle offers two different definitions. Some scholars think that the family is just the clan. The typical definition of Chinese rural family goes like that "the family is a community formed on the principle of paternal relative, it is expansion of family and a community of community with family as the basic component"^[1]. Other scholars think that family and clan are different. Sun Benwen contends

that family is a big concept. In *Social Problems in Modern China*, Professor Sun describes the family as the smallest unit. Family is a the relative living together and sharing common property. Family is supplement to family members and includes relatives of father side, while clan is a supplement to family and includes relatives of father side, mother side and wife side. Family has the same last name, while clan may not have the same last name, because clan includes blood relation and relatives by affinity. For purpose of study, we consider the family and clan as the common concept. Due to violent change great development of society, the family organization is not so tight as in the past. Other elements such as nominal kinship and sworn relatives have been incorporated into family connotation. Especially along with founding of new China, the State has forbidden building ancestral halls or setting family tree. In this situation, the renewed families are evolving along with development of the times.

2 Influence of family on construction of new socialist countryside

Construction of new socialist countryside is a great mission in the course of China's modernization. The policy of "developed production, well-off living, civilized village culture, clean village environment, and democratic management" is the best interpretation of new appearance of rural areas. How to build new socialist countryside is a problem worthy of study. China is a nation with deep-rooted tradition of family. Family organization is a social organization that has the longest history and widest distribution in China. Therefore, it is extremely significant to properly apply reasonable factors in family into construction of new socialist countryside, make it integrate with harmonious society, and evade its drawbacks to the maximum extent. The construction of new socialist countryside is not only affairs of farmers, but also a long course of rural development. The available materials indicate that study gradually moves towards reality and begins to care about farmers, rather than single solution for diverse problems. Since the new socialist countryside construction is still at exploration stage, some are merely limit-

ed to interpretation from propaganda organ of the Party and government and documents of central government. In this situation, it is worth considering how to incorporate reasonable factors into new socialist countryside construction and make effort to evade its negative function.

2.1 Positive function of family in new socialist countryside construction

2.1.1 The family fills the cultural gap in the construction of new socialist countryside. China is still at the social transformation period, especially in vast rural areas, the cultural construction lags far behind, and the new culture has not been created yet. In this situation, the close tie and social characteristics of family fill this gap in self operation of rural areas. Particularly in present rural areas, with improvement of living conditions, family is not the past form any more. The advance of new socialist countryside construction constantly renews and develops the family. New family cooperation, weddings and funerals link people together, so it will be a leading social life style in rural areas in a quite long time.

2.1.2 Family culture promotes rural socio-economic development. Family culture still retains virtues that suitable for socialist culture, such as respecting the old and loving the young, mutual aid and care, *etc.* After all, the construction of new socialist countryside is the development of farmers themselves. If we merely grasp economic construction and ignore special environment of rural areas, it will certainly lead to unbalanced development. Therefore, at the same time of developing production, we should also actively explore new ideas of rural development. Only through this, may it promote local economic and social development.

2.2 Negative function of family in new socialist countryside construction

2.2.1 Family factor may be not unfavorable to implementation of policies. Due to objective restriction of closeness, narrow-mindedness, and blood relationship, the family organization has a narrow awareness of its benefit, which to a great extent determines attitude of family organization to rural policies^[2]. The policy of supporting agriculture and benefiting farmers in new socialist countryside construction faces entire masses, so it is inevitable that benefits of some families may be harmed. In this situation, family organizations will resist implementation of related policies using their own forces, even cliquism occurs. If the government compromises, it will lead to a series of bad reactions, even cause other people to imitate, so it is not favorable to improvement of farmers' quality and cultivation of modern farmers' awareness.

2.2.2 Family factor may not be unfavorable to smooth development of villager autonomy. The implementation of villager autonomy is impeded by family power. The election results of village committee have a direct influence on distribution of political rights and economic resource of the village. To maintain their own benefits, family powers will actively participate in the election, or even achieve their goal through bribery, which will impair the equal right of villages in the election. To effectively bring into play its functions, village committee has to seek sup-

port of families. Decisions made by village committee have to consider benefits of families. Under intervention of family powers, the principle of " democratic election, decision-making, democratic supervision and democratic management" followed during villager autonomy will be greatly impaired, consequently it will weaken central leading position and fighting capacity of rural grassroots Party organizations.

3 Countermeasures and suggestions

Since family has played its due role in different periods, its existence must be rational. Professor Lin Xiuguo explained the rationality of family using the theory of " Limited Rationality" , and analyzed the positive dimension of family culture from aspects of maintaining social stability, developing rural economy and being used as rural cultural resource^[3]. In reality, any imperative stipulation will not make the family disappear. On contrary, it will show powerful penetrating capability in all rural aspects. In view of this, it is required to take full advantage of influence power of family, bring into play its positive functions and evade its negative functions.

In the first place, it is proposed to continue bringing into play the effect of family in promoting production. Rather than merely in agricultural technology, it should be oriented towards industry and aquaculture. As Lai Yang'en said, the rejuvenation of family will strengthen benefit power and acceptance power in power structure of organizations^[4]. Therefore, we can introduce unity factor of family into construction of new socialist countryside, to make appropriate villages develop industry and service sector, and bring the rural economic development into a diversified road.

In the second place, it is proposed to carry forward excellent factors of family culture, such as respecting the old and loving the young, mutual aid and care, and in pursuit of harmony, *etc.* However, it should be noted that there are also negative factors in family culture, such as feudalistic superstition, regarding men as superior to women, *etc.* Rural social development is oriented towards modernization. The blood relationship, closeness and hierarchy of family organization run counter to the contractual, open and democratic modern society. For this reason, in the long run, family will gradually decline and die out with advance of modernization drive. However, at present, family will exist for a long time. Thus, we should cautiously treat development of family culture, carry on its quintessence and realize its smooth evolution in new period^[5]. Developing rural education undertaking and strengthening construction of spiritual civilization in rural areas are proper approaches to improving farmers' ideological and cultural quality and transforming farmers' ideology. To develop rural education undertaking and strengthen rural spiritual civilization construction, we should not only impart cultural knowledge to farmers, but also introduce modern ideas and spirit of rule of law, and foster farmers' awareness of upholding science, pursuing democracy and respecting laws.

In the third place, rural grass-roots management system is always a segment valued by Chinese government. Good village
(To page 75)

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(From page 52)

leaders can lead village to bright future, like Wu Renbao, the former branch secretary of Huaxi Village. Those who intervene with grass-roots election, break laws or violate discipline should be strictly punished in compliance with laws and discipline.

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