

Study on Plight of Grassroots Party Organizations Developing New Party Members in Western Countryside and Countermeasures

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Abstract

The key for western countryside achieving the goals of economic development and social harmony is to strengthen the building of grassroots Party organizations and the development of new Party members. At present, the development of New Party members in western countryside has encountered a series of problems, such as the unclear orientation of goals and the weak initiatives, the poor ways for the development of new Party members and the imbalanced structure, the weakening function of grassroots Party organizations, and the lack of attractiveness. Therefore, the grassroots Party organizations in western countryside should change their minds actively and achieve the growth of backup candidates for new Party members by innovative means. Take the construction projects as carriers to cultivate new farmers and improve the quality of Party members. Modify the grassroots democratic system and enhance the cohesion of grassroots Party organizations. Strengthen the sense of being a Party member and increase the attractiveness of the grassroots Party organizations.

Keywords: western countryside, building of Party organizations, development of new Party members

1. Introduction

In the west of China, especially in western countryside, economy and culture are undeveloped and various social conflicts are prominent, which has become the short board of regional development. In 2012, the National Development and Reform Commission propose a new strategic plan for the development of western region from 2011 to 2015, starting a new chapter for western development. In order to achieve the "sound and rapid" development of western region, it is the personnel that is in an urgent short, especially the personnel for building of grassroots Party in countryside. To build a "highly-qualified and reasonably-structured" team of grassroots Party members, at the appropriate size and with prominent effects, in western countryside is an effective way for solving the problem of western development.

2. To Increase the Number of Party Members Is the Key for the Building of Grassroots Party Organizations in Western Countryside

Rural grassroots Party organizations are the fighting bastion for the Party leading the masses to build the new socialist countryside, and the bridge and the link for the Party connecting with the farmers and the masses, and the basis for the Party's businesses and powers in countryside. The facts prove that where the building of grassroots Party organizations is good, where the countryside is stable and the work is well done; and where the building of grassroots Party organizations is bad, where the mass incidents are more and the work is hard to be done. Therefore, strengthening the building of grassroots Party organizations in western countryside is extremely critical for the harmonious and healthy development of economy and society in western countryside.

2.1 To Strengthen the Building of Grassroots Party Organizations in Western Countryside Is the Basis for the Party Properly Handling with the Rural Party Organizational Affairs

In western countryside, the grassroots Party organizations are responsible for leading the development, integrating resources, maintaining stability, and serving farmers. The grassroots Party organizations, as the link and the bridge for the Party connecting with the masses and the fighting bastion of the Party in the countryside,

is capable of publicizing and implementing the policies and directions of the Party in countryside, carrying out the decisions and direction of superior Party organizations. “The development of agriculture, the prosperity of countryside, and the wealthy of farmers are always the primary tasks of the ‘Agriculture, Countryside, and Farmers’ mission. In different historical periods, the ‘Agriculture, Countryside, and Farmers’ mission emphasizes on different policies, goals, and focuses.” But in any cases, it needs the support and the cooperation of rural grassroots Party organizations. During the “12th Five-Year Plan” period, the grassroots Party organizations in western country side should strengthen the self-building and play the role in “promoting the development, serving the masses, unifying the people, and driving the harmony” in order to guarantee the normal and orderly progress of rural businesses.

2.2 The Rural Grassroots Party Organizations Are the Important Bodies to Repair the “Short-Board Effect” of the Western Countryside

The “12th Five-Year Plan” period is the important strategic opportunity for western rural grassroots Party organizations achieving great progresses. “The prosperity, development, and stability of western region are related to the happiness of all ethnic groups, as well as the big picture of China’s reform and opening and the building of socialist modernization, the long-term stability of the state, and the great rejuvenation of the nation.” In 2010, the net income per capita of farmers in China is 5,919 Yuan, while the net income per capita of farmers in western countries is only 4,418 Yuan, equal to 74.64% of the net income per capita of farmers in China. The gap between the west and the east is even larger. In 2011, the cash income per capita of farmers in Fujian Province, the east of China, is 8,778.60 Yuan, and the cash expenditure per capita of farmers for living consumption is 6,540.90 Yuan; while the cash income per capita of farmers in Guizhou Province, the east of China, is 4,145.35 Yuan, and the cash expenditure per capita of farmers for living consumption is 3,455.76 Yuan. The west of China needs to strengthen the development and the utilization of human resources, in particular to enhance the building of rural grassroots Party organizations, and improve the leadership, serving, mobilizing, and integrating effects of grassroots Party organizations, except for accelerating the economic development, in order to grow the “short board” and prevent the “Matthew Effect”. The western issues would not be solved only by economic development. The development of new Party members has to be settled. Therefore, the grassroots Party organizations in western countryside should seize the opportunity, “strengthen the building of grassroots Party organizations, select the right leadership for countryside, and make sure effective operations”. Help the countryside achieve the “sound and rapid” economic development. Try to improve the investment environment and the development conditions. Build the institutions for countryside, narrow the distance of regional development, and achieve the common prosperity eventually.

2.3 To Strengthen the Building of Grassroots Party Organizations in Western Countryside Should focus on the Quantity, Quality, and Structure of Party Members

The special circumstances in western countryside objectively determine that strengthening the building of grassroots Party organizations in western countryside is urgent and hard. Therefore, the grassroots Party organizations in western countryside should not only pay attention to the increase of the number of Party members, but also the improvement of the quality of Party members, and the optimization of the structure of Party members. During the “12th Five-Year Plan” period, the grassroots Party organizations in western countryside should seize the strategic opportunity, explore the appropriate size of the Party organizations, strive to improve the quality of Party members, and optimize the structure of Party members, achieving the transition from the small size to the right scale to the quality-efficiency type, comprehensively improving the quality of Party members, and enhancing the cohesion, the attractiveness, and the fighting powers of Party organizations.

3. The Plight of Grassroots Party Organizations Developing New Party Members in Western Countryside

During the “11th Five-Year Plan” period, western economy and society have already achieved great progresses, but there is still a big distance from the eastern development and the distance keeps widening. The “Agriculture, Countryside, and Farmers” issue is till the essential problem restricting the western economic and social development. In order to make changes, rural grassroots Party members must take the responsibility of acting like models and pioneers. Although the number of Party members in the state has exceeded 80 million, towards a positive development tendency, the grassroots Party organizations in western countryside face lots of difficulties in development more Party members.

3.1 The Development of New Party Members has Unclear Orientations of Goals and Poor Initiatives

(1) The rural grassroots Party organizations wait for work passively, with poor initiatives for developing new Party members. Under the new historical conditions, with changes of rural social structure, the spaces for the development of rural grassroots Party organizations have been narrowed down and the functions have been

weakened, because of the growth of various grassroots economic organizations and social organizations and their increasing prominent influences. Therefore, it is easy for the building of grassroots Party organizations losing the initiatives. Due to the “abstractness” of the building of grassroots Party organizations, some rural grassroots Party organizations regard the building of Party as “virtual task” or “soft task”. They pursue for no mistakes instead of achievements. They develop new Party members negatively, with no changes of work patterns or contents. They just wait for the appearance of qualified candidates for new Party members, with total passive attitudes. (2) The farmers do not develop a clear understanding of being Party members and they are not enthusiastic about joining the Party. On one hand, some rural grassroots Party organizations make terrible propaganda. They do nothing but write the Party policies and rules on the paper, put them on the wall, or talk about them. The local dominate media fail to play the role of a propaganda front properly. All TV channels are full of vulgar advertising for some magic pills. The masses do not know much about the Party organizations or the Party members. On the other hand, the masses have no clear recognition to being Party members. They are not enthusiastic for being one of Party members. Plus, the number of rural migrant workers is increasing annually. They work outside of the countryside. As a result, Party organizations could not find qualified candidates for Party members easily.

(3) The grassroots Party organizations in western countryside fail to build sufficient “footholds” for Party members. Using “footholds” to develop the area and highlighting the directions by examples are the effective approaches and important methods for Party building, and the successful experiences for the vitality of Party building. However, the grassroots Party organizations in western countryside pay less attention to the development of new Party members. They focus on the “footholds” insufficiently, ignore the self-building of Party members, and provide weak guidance, supervision, or support for individuals, which weaken the consciousness of the role of being Party members. Party members fail to play the roles of being advanced representatives and their influences on the masses tend to be weaker. Although the grassroots Party organizations organize a series of activities, such as “the demonstration footholds for Party members becoming rich”, “the demonstration footholds for excellent Party branches”, and “the demonstration footholds for city-countryside associated cooperation”, they may only focus on the titles of the activities but ignore the directions, cultivations, and publicity. Once the activity gets the approval from the superior, the activity is done, which make it impossible to play a leading and exemplary role in the masses. The Party organizational activities, especially the development of new Party members, are hard to make a progress.

3.2 The Approach for the Development of New Party Members Is Simple and Single and the Structure Is in Imbalance

(1) The representation of the farmer class is not strong and the foundation of the masses is weak. In recent years, the development of new Party members in western countryside takes the economy and the politics as the basic conditions. The candidates of new Party members are mainly from rich farmers and grads-turned village officials, which purposely narrows the sources for potential Party members. Rich farmers in villages invest most energy in their businesses. They cannot think about the Party obligations and they are not helpful in perspective of politics. Since the “grads-turned village officials” program started comprehensively in 2008, each village has employed one grads-turned village official. To develop new Party members from the grads-turned village officials seems to be right, but the number is too small. It is very difficult for grads-turned village officials gaining significant progresses. They seldom make great achievements so that farmers feel impressive. Plus, farmers usually treat them as “officials” from a traditional point of view. Since farmers do not regard the grads-turned village officials as the same kind of people, the influences and exemplary effects of grads-turned village officials would be limited. Meanwhile, the duration of employment for grads-turned village officials is usually 2 or 3 years. After the employment, they seldom choose to continue their contracts. Most of them would rather take the entrance examinations for postgraduates or national civil servants. What they can do for villagers is very thin. In 2011 the “Development Report for Grads-Turned Village Officials in China” pointed out that: “56.1% of grads-turned village officials became national civil servants or took positions as in public institutions.” “77% of grads-turned village officials have been transferred to work in the towns sometimes, in which 23% of them have been transferred to work in towns permanently.” To develop new Party members from rich farmers and grads-turned village officials means single channel, weak foundation of the masses, and poor representation of the farmer class.

(2) The women in villages do not play the role properly and the sex structure is unreasonable. On one hand, because of the lagged-behind economy and society in the west of China, some traditional opinions, such as “men for the outside, women for the inside”, and “never leaving the hometown”, are still popular. Most women prefer to stay in home and keep the house and seldom work outside. A survey shows that 66.3% of migrant workers are

men, and 33.7% are women. A lot of women live in villages, including some outstanding persons. However, the grassroots Party organizations usually neglect these women and exclude them from the potential candidates for new Party members. On the other hand, rural women hold quite different attitudes toward politics from rural men do. Rural women are not interest in politics. Even if the village is holding a meeting, most women at the meeting are busy with their needlework or “private conversations”. The men show great interests in politics. They would inquire about the candidates and the specific arrangements about the election if there is an election coming. Then, the Party branches may develop the impression of women that they do not care about the politics or personal progresses and they have no motives for joining the Party. Based on the different opinions toward women and men, the Party organizations may neglect the existence of women when look for potential candidates for new Party members. At last, the proportion of women and men in Party organizations is in imbalance. Furthermore, it may cause the shortage of human sources for new Party members, making the development of new Party members lag behind.

(3) The age structure of Party members is like an “inverted triangle”. There are more old Party members, some mid-aged Party members, and less young Party members. The main reasons for the present conditions are mainly: on one hand, some Party branches would not like to select new Party members from the youth. They are afraid of “training the youth but lose positions” because the youth are not easy to be controlled. Therefore, they suppress the talented young men in purpose, instead of guiding, educating, or training them. On the other hand, because of the influences of market economy, the vast majority of rural young men would rather pay more attention to businesses and lack of the enthusiasm for joining the Party. A survey about the migrant workers from four counties and eight villages of Chongqing, Sichuan shows that “the average age of migrant workers is 25.6. 73.5% of migrant workers are at the age of 17-30, 23.5% are at the age of 31-40, and 3% are above 40.” The data in the survey indicate that most of young people under the age of 40 choose to be migrant workers, which objectively cause difficulties for grassroots Party organizations developing new Party members in western countryside.

3.3 The Grassroots Party Organizations in Western Countryside have Weakening Functions and Lack of Attractiveness

(1) The grassroots Party organizations in western countryside have no prominent influences. Firstly, some Party organizations are criticized because of the bad services and terrible attitudes. “The administrative methods cannot be used, the economic approaches do not work well, the legal ways are inappropriate, and the educational tools are useless.” Secondly, some officials of Party branches in the villages lack of professionalism and responsibility due to the low pays. They could not think about the masses from the bottom of the heart. They do not treat their work seriously and may involve in political conflicts, causing extremely bad influences on the masses. Some Party members cannot participate in the Party activities and fail to pay the membership in time, showing a serious distance from the Party. Thirdly, the Party management system is imperfect and the management is ineffective. Some Party members bring the bad habits, such as gambling or superstition, into the Party branches, which seriously affect the advancement and the purity of the Party. Fourthly, a strange “three-circle” phenomenon appears in the development of new Party organizations, namely the circle of friends, the circle of families, and the circle of neighbors. This phenomenon reveals the serious problems in developing new Party members, which significantly damages the masses’ enthusiasm for joining in the Party.

(2) The independency of farmers is increasing and the dependency of farmers on Party organizations is weakening. After the household contract responsibility system and the rural taxation reform, most of rural collective economies fell into collapse. The household production becomes the dominating pattern in countryside. The relationship of individual farmers and agricultural organizations changes from the dependent type into the equivalent type. Plus, rural grassroots Party organizations function badly and lag behind the rural economic and social development. The capability of grassroots Party organizations mobilizing and organizing Party members and the capability of connecting with and serving the masses are decreasing. Their influences on the farmers are declining. With the improving social welfare and protection system in countryside, rural Party organizations are gradually replaced with social communities. The functional innovations of Party organizations generally lag behind the rural economic and social development, which damages the capability of Party organizations mobilizing and organizing the Party members, and affects the capability of unifying the masses and integrating the social forces. At the same time, under the impacts of market economy, farmers focus on economic benefits. Most farmers take the amount of wealthy as a measure of value. Under this circumstance, Party members are not as respectful as before in the eyes of farmers, which make the development of new Party members more difficult.

4. The Solutions for the Problem of Grassroots Party Organizations Developing New Party Members in Western Countryside

4.1 Update the Opinions and Use Innovative Means to Achieve the Rise of Backup People for Grassroots Party Organizations

(1) “Focus on the two sides and the middle” and achieve the growth of the number of Party members. In order to break through the plight of insufficient candidates for new Party members in western countryside, the Party organizations should stick to the principles of “adhering to the standards, guaranteeing the quality, improving the structure, and achieving careful development”, realizing the growth of the number of Party members. The rapid development of countryside causes the class differentiation of farmers. Party organizations should represent farmers in different classes. They must absorb farmers from different classes into the Party organizations. On one hand, rural grassroots Party organizations should focus on the rich farmers and the grads-turned village officials, guiding them to join in the Party. On the other hand, rural grassroots Party organizations should pay attention to helping the poor and the weak, give policy favors to them, help them get rid of poverty and difficulty, and absorb them into the Party. Meanwhile, rural grassroots Party organizations should care about the middle class, especially the back-to-countryside migrant workers. They received advanced productivity and culture in cities, well-informed and actively-thinking. They can easily adapt to the market economy during the process of developing rural economy. This kind of villagers has greater influences and exemplary effects on the villages. The rural grassroots Party organizations should communicate with them frequently, help them to improve their minds and thoughts, and absorb the outstanding ones into the Party. The Party is a melting pot accommodating the rural elites at different classes. The rural grassroots Party organizations should take in people who are willing to dedicating themselves to the communist cause. By focusing the two sides and the middle, rural grassroots Party organizations can achieve the growth of the number of new Party members, expanding the basis of the Party in western countryside.

(2) “Using Party building to enhance the League building” triggers the stock for candidates of new Party members. Chinese Communist Youth League is the bridge and the link for the Party connecting the youth. The organizational system covers politics, economy, science & technology, education, culture, health, and many other fronts, and all aspects of social life. Based on the wide coverage and the most precise organizational system, Chinese Communist Youth League maintains the most direct and extensive connection with the majority of youth, and develops deep feelings for the youth during the process of long-term connecting, caring, and serving the youth. In countryside, although the number of Party members is small, the number of League members is large. Besides, the League members are usually the young people with good education. They are more active in work. Party organizations should take initiatives to care for the building of League organizations, help to train qualified League members, make them establish the faith, improve their competence and skills, stimulate the enthusiasm for participation, and absorb the excellent League members into the Party. Therefore, rural grassroots Party organizations should record the information about the youth in villages. Break the traditional pattern of League organizations and use the contracted and non-contracted methods to expand the representativeness of the Communist Youth League, enhancing the vitality of the League organizations, widening the channels for League organizations connecting and serving the youth, and effectively ensuring that the League organizations in the towns or streets operate smoothly. “The youth is the future of the state, the hope of the nation, and also the future and the hope of the Party.” Only by this way, rural League organizations can select the excellent youth who possess strong political qualities, good business skills, and innovative working ideas and introduce them to the grassroots League organizations, which will stimulate the sources for candidates of new Party members.

4.2 Take Construction Projects as Carriers to Cultivate New Farmers and Achieve the Improvement of the Quality of Party Members

The quality of Party members is the life of Party organizations. “We will never accept the Party members with bad names. In the world, the Communist Party of China is the only one that focuses on the quality, instead of the quantity of Party members, and cleaning out the people ‘sneaking into the Party’.” “The Party with less members but higher qualities is way better than the Party with more members but worse qualities.” The grassroots Party organizations in western countryside can introduce projects according to local conditions. They can improve the quality of Party members in the process of construction projects, such as the building of comprehensive pilot demonstration, the training for rural Party cadres, and the entrepreneurial activities of grads-turned village officials, the construction of gardens in villages, the industrial support for farmers’ development, the adjustment for lagged-behind villages, the poverty-saving and difficulty-solving project, the creation of excellent pilot demonstration for Party building, etc., and properly deal with the relationship of pilot demonstration and wide popularization. By supporting the projects, grassroots Party organizations can improve their strengths and

improve the quality of Party members.

4.3 Improve the Grassroots Democratic System and Enhance the Cohesion of Grassroots Party Organizations

“The cohesion of Party means that the Party can attract the Party members and the masses on one hand, on the other hand, the Party members and the masses prefer to gathering around the Party.” In order to improve the grassroots democratic system in western countryside, firstly, the rural grassroots Party organizations should “focus on serving the central task, make innovations of learning methods, enrich learning contents, improve the leaning system, make Party organizations at all levels become the learning-oriented Party organizations, and leadership groups the learning-oriented ones.” Cultivate the rural Party members in the organizations and help them achieve the comprehensive development. Secondly, care about the Party members and carry out the real services for Party members. The grassroots Party organizations should keep a dynamic record of Party members’ conditions so that they can take care of the Party members in trouble or the disabled Party members. Give the ordinary Party members more policy favors in conducting the poverty-saving projects and the foreign-invested projects. Improve the capability of Party members earning more money. By this way, Party members will develop a sense of honor. Thirdly, establish the connection points for Party members. Some ordinary Party members seldom think about the Party or the masses. To establish the connection points can not only make the ordinary Party members more responsible, but also help to resolve public contradictions.

4.4 Enhance the Membership Awareness of Party Members and Improve the Attractiveness of Grassroots Party Organizations

Firstly, strengthen the educational trainings of rural Party members. The grassroots Party organizations in western countryside should provide the educational trainings for Party members according to the practical conditions in the west of China. They should explore an appropriate mechanism for the educational trainings of Party members in western countryside in order to enhance the advanced nature of rural Party members. Secondly, improve the fighting capacity of rural grassroots Party organizations. Currently, western agriculture and countryside are entering a new economic stage. Rural grassroots Party organizations should actively guide the farmers to achieve the transition from traditional agriculture to modern agriculture that focuses on the market, the orders, and the green elements. As far as the culture is concerned, focus on the publicity of excellent traditional cultures, “red culture”, and the Marxist. Building and publicizing the excellent culture can help to enhance the membership awareness of Party members, improve the attractiveness of grassroots Party organizations, benefit the reform and opening policy and the modernization process, help Party members carry forward the patriotism, the collectivism, and the socialism, and achieve the unity of China, the happiness of people, and the stability of society. As far as politics is concerned, use the democracy in the Party organizations to promote the democracy in villages, and guarantee the full autonomy of farmers. Thirdly, set a good example and make it work. Learning from the good example is to exceed the good example. Rural grassroots Party organizations should seize both the “footholds” and the “general base”. They should not only focus on the building of the whole Party branch and strengthen the fighting capacity and the cohesion of the branch, but also pay attention to the publicity of outstanding branches and Party members and set good examples.

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