

Chapter 30

“Green Wellbeing” Is the Real Quality Wellbeing

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“People’s wellbeing” is the basis for a harmonious society. It is not only an old topic, but one of the most conspicuous terms in China today. The development of “wellbeing” can be roughly divided into three stages: “solution”, “improvement” and “development”. China, still in the primary stage of socialism, has just accomplished the task of providing adequate food and clothing and entered the “moderately prosperous” society. Therefore, the “wellbeing” of China is still in the stages of “solution” and “improvement”. To solve the problems of wellbeing today, the government has to meet the people’s needs for survival rights and development requirements, ensuring that all the people enjoy their rights, employment, medical and old-age care, housing and education.

The “development” of wellbeing is not just the economic growth and the rise of per capita incomes. More importantly, people’ sense of happiness will increase after the growth of the national income with good air quality, convenient transportation, blue sky, green water and mountains, clean environment, safe food and harmonious society. Therefore, only the development of “green wellbeing” is the real efficient wellbeing. Specifically, the “green wellbeing” has the following features.

First, it is supported by the concept of green and low carbon development. Although the “green wellbeing” is rich in connotation, the most basic idea is to achieve the economic and social development and the coordination between population, resources and environment through saving resources, protecting environment, reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, and promoting low carbon technologies. It is the wellbeing with sustainability supported by resource-saving and environmentally friendly production methods and consumption patterns. In the development of wellbeing, harmony between mankind and society, between mankind and nature is to be achieved.

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Second, it is the wellbeing with the synchronous progress of objective figures and subjective feelings. The “green wellbeing” not only refers to the increase of GDP, but more importantly, the rise of indicators for the people’s satisfaction, comfort and happiness, especially the mental joy and spiritual harmony. Can the people be harmonious in heart, happy in spirit and comfortable in life when they eat meat and fish with polluted air, contaminated water, gray environment, and the sun and green to be seen nowhere? The “green wellbeing” is not only manifested by the people’s real increase in objective income: they have more money in the pocket, richer food on the table, more spacious houses, more convenient transport, and no worry about education, medical and old-age care; more importantly, it is reflected by the increase of the people’s subjective feelings: they feel a happier life, bluer sky, greener water, brighter sun, and more comfortable environment.

Third, it is the sustainable wellbeing. Development is the absolute principle, and the key for China to solve the wellbeing problems relies on its own development, achieving a moderately prosperous society in all respects, building modernization, further improving the people’s material and cultural lives, enhancing the comprehensive national strength, and remaining invincible in the volatile global environment. The development of wellbeing with different methods and paths will have distinctly different developmental results. China is a country with serious shortage of resources per capita, with per capita arable land, freshwater and forests accounting for only 32, 27.4 and 12.8 % of the world average level respectively, and per capita reserves of oil, natural gas, iron ore and other resources also significantly lower than the world average level. Coupled with the long-term implementation of the mode of extensive economic growth mainly relying on investment and increase of material inputs, the consumption of energy and other resources increase very rapidly, and the environmental deterioration has become increasingly highlighted. Therefore, “made in China” should turn into “created in China”, the method of production at the cost of resource consumption and environmental deterioration should be changed into efficient production mode with high added value, low energy consumption and low pollution. Only by building the ecological civilization, forming the energy-saving and environmentally friendly industrial structure, ways of growth and consumption patterns can the sustainable development of “green wellbeing” be ensured.

Fourth, it is wellbeing with resource-saving consumption. “Green wellbeing” is by no means the greedy wellbeing recklessly wasting the natural goods, but the wellbeing treasuring resources and protecting the environment. While enjoying the achievements of the modern civilization, we are creating the bitter fruits poisoning ourselves and consuming the resources of our posterities. Statistics show that the United States with 6 % of the world’s population consumes one third of the worldwide resources. The use of the Earth’s energy by 200 million population of the United States is equivalent to the use of 20 billion populations of the developing countries. The materials consumed by an American in his life are 60 times as many as an Indian. The maintenance of a consumer society like the United States needs as many resources as of five Earth’s. China is a developing country, and its basic

national conditions of large population and insufficient per capita resources decide that China should not imitate the road of the United States and other developed countries in the wellbeing development. Private cars should be moderately developed, energy and land should be saved in construction industry, and villas and golf courses must be restrained. Only by establishing a conservation-oriented, green, natural, harmonious and healthy consumption pattern can the development of “green wellbeing” be ensured.

Five, it is the wellbeing putting people first and achieving people’s overall development. The ultimate goal of the development of the “green wellbeing” is to achieve people’s overall development, including the overall development of people’s needs, freedom in personality, talent, interests and moral quality. In the final analysis, it is the achievement of people’s overall physical and mental development. Therefore, the development of the “green wellbeing”, especially in the era of knowledge and information economy, should make everyone fear no trouble in the rear, lightheartedly live and work in this world, and enjoy warmth and happiness of the life.

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