**Party Leading Group Mechanism: An Advantageous Mechanism in China’s Political System**

**December 2022**

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As early as the early days of the founding of the Communist Party of China, the "leading group" appeared as an important system in the construction of the revolutionary base areas. In the 1950s, in order to strengthen the party's overall leadership over state affairs and to deal with the problem of the inadequacy of conventional state institutions in handling complex state governance, the "leading group" as a "sub-formal system" was widely used in the construction of the regime and became an important part of the national political system. [1] 33

Its symbol was the "Notice on the Establishment of Financial and Economic, Political and Legal, Foreign Affairs, Science, Culture and Education Groups" issued by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in 1958. This "Notice" pointed out that these central groups were led by the Central Committe Political Bureau and the Secretariat and reported to them. It was the first time that the establishment of a party working group was formally proposed to lead various tasks. Since the reform and opening up, in response to the objective requirements of the transformation of national governance, the central government has established a large number of "leading groups" with rich types and comprehensive functions.

After the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in 2017, the establishment of the "leading group" has been further strengthened, and its important role in political, economic and social life has been more fully demonstrated. In particular, from the central to the local, various "leading groups" within the party have increasingly become a leadership model for overall design, overall coordination, overall promotion and supervision of implementation. Looking at the development and changes of the "leading group" system in China's political system, we can see that this mechanism has become a system and mechanism with Chinese characteristics established by the Communist Party of China in the process of leading the Chinese revolution, promoting reform and construction. The "leading group" has gradually transformed into a modern organization with special functions such as handling complex and major comprehensive issues, solving important strategic issues in the reform process, and responding to major emergencies. On the basis of studying the "leading group" mechanism, we have a deep understanding of it as a superior mechanism of socialism with Chinese characteristics, which is of great significance to improving the party's governing ability, maintaining political stability, enhancing the state's governance capabilities, and improving the socialist system with Chinese characteristics.

**1. The “Leading Group” is an important mechanism for achieving the Party’s overall leadership**

The leadership of the Communist Party of China is the greatest advantage of the socialist system with Chinese characteristics. Adhering to the party's leadership over all work is the first priority in the basic strategy of upholding and developing socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era. The main functions of the "leading group" are to guide and regulate state affairs, organize and coordinate important work, and build major projects. It fully demonstrates the practical advantages of the party's leadership in terms of decision-making process and decision-making effectiveness.

**1. Realizing the Party’s “unified” leadership style**

From the perspective of the establishment of the "leading group", the "leading group" embodies the party's "unified" leadership style. The unified management system is a unique political system in China. Combined with the "line-block relationship", it constitutes a very distinctive institutional design of the Communist Party of China in leading and governing the country. [2] p. 28-34

In the 1950s, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China established a system of unified leadership of various departments and industries through a number of "leading groups", and implemented it in conjunction with the cadre classification management system.

At the beginning of the founding of New China, there were many things to be done and many industries to be developed, and the state was still very short of management talents and management experience.

In this difficult situation of learning while doing, the "leading group" system effectively played an important role in investigation and research, organization and coordination, and scientific decision-making. By strengthening the party's leadership, "leading group" system effectively overcame the problems of decentralization and factionalism in government work, ensuring the realization of socialist transformation and the rapid recovery and development of the national economy in a short period of time.

In this process, it also effectively trained cadres and explored effective ways for the party to lead the government work. This centralized management system is to guide and manage the relevant government departments by establishing a series of "leading groups" or committees, aiming to ensure that the government work is highly consistent with the party's leadership in terms of policies, strategies and directions, strengthen the centralized leadership of national and social affairs, and coordinate with the national economy, culture, society and other aspects. In order to further strengthen the party's leadership, after the Fourth Plenary Session of the Eighth Central Committee of the Party, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China issued the "Notice on the Establishment of Finance and Economics, Politics and Law, Foreign Affairs, Science, Culture and Education Groups".

These five groups led the corresponding functional departments of the government respectively. The local party committees at all levels also set up this system, with the secretary or standing committee member in charge of the business of each major department, and their role is similar to the relevant "leading groups" of the central government today. As the power and functions of the central party's working departments continued to expand, local party committees also began to extend from personnel management to leadership and guidance of the work of various government departments, and even more detailed than the central government〔3〕. These "leading groups" in charge of various fields within the party reflect the party's leadership over the work of the major "ports". Local party committees also divided the party's leadership over state affairs in the same way as the central government, thus forming a "line-to-line relationship" from the central government to the local governments. Similar to the "block-to-block relationship" management method of the government over social affairs, a set of management agencies with administrative management characteristics that completely correspond to the government has been formed in the Party Central Committee. The party's leadership over government work is characterized by a centralized management system, forming a "line-to-block combination" relationship in which the "leading groups" and deliberative and coordinating agencies within the party and government manage state affairs. This is the product of the combination of the modern bureaucratic system and the centralized management system of socialism with Chinese characteristics. For example, the Central Political and Legal Group (1978), the Central Finance and Economics Leading Group (1980), the Central Propaganda and Ideological Work Leading Group (1988), the Central Committee for Comprehensive Management of Public Security (1991), the Central Organization and Establishment Committee (1991), the Central National Security Leading Group (2000), etc. In addition to these permanent "leading groups" responsible for major tasks to undertake the corresponding "portal" work, temporary "leading groups" will also be established for some short-term tasks to carry out work. Generally, they will be led by leading cadres at relevant levels, and will be given corresponding authorizations according to the scope of the tasks involved. They have the corresponding power to coordinate, guide and make decisions for relevant departments and local governments. This mechanism is extremely flexible, mobile and efficient. It is a practical and creative working mechanism. For example, the Central Leading Group for Judicial System Reform (2003), the Central Leading Group for the Party's Mass Line Education and Practice Activities (2013), the Central Leading Group for Cultural System Reform and Development (2014), etc., are such leading bodies that perform their functions within a certain time limit. Except for the major changes during the "Cultural Revolution" due to well-known reasons, this system has become a consistent system since the Communist Party of China came to power, and it has been improved day by day in practice.

2. It embodies the basic principles of democratic centralism

Xi Jinping pointed out: "Democratic centralism is the fundamental organizational system and leadership system of our party. It correctly regulates the basic principles of intra-party political life and the handling of intra-party relations. It is a scientific, reasonable and efficient system that reflects and embodies the interests and aspirations of all party members and the people of the whole country and ensures the correct formulation and implementation of the party's lines, principles and policies." [4]

The decision-making method of the "leading group" fully reflects democratic centralism, the fundamental leadership and organizational system of the party. The "leading group" has extensive contacts with various departments engaged in actual work and can more easily understand the actual work situation. It is a link between the party's leading organs and specific business departments. Through full discussion and brainstorming, it puts forward draft decisions based on a full study of the actual situation. The superiority of this mechanism is conducive to preventing bureaucracy and formalism that are divorced from reality. It is a feasible way to make decisions in accordance with the law, democratically and scientifically. The "leading group" is an advanced mechanism formed by the Communist Party of China after long-term exploration and summary in the practice of revolution, construction and reform and opening up. Fully utilizing this mechanism is a strong guarantee for correctly implementing the principle of democratic centralism and realizing the correct leadership of the party in various fields such as politics, economy, culture, society, and ecological civilization. The decision-making characteristics of the "leading group" based on the basic principle of democratic centralism are mainly reflected in the following two aspects:

First, democracy under centralized guidance. The "leading group" has a large number of powers. The "leading groups" at different levels are all established by the central or local party committees (standing committees), are responsible to the central or local party committees (standing committees), and carry out their work under the leadership of the central or local party committees (standing committees).

The "leading groups" can fully play their role in accordance with the authorization and effectively prevent behaviors that violate the party's organizational principles such as decentralization and factionalism.

Although the decision-making core of the "leading group" is composed of a few people, this does not mean that the production of decisions is an inward-looking and closed process, or that opinions are only exchanged within the decision-making core, and lack interaction from outside the organization. In fact, China's party and government decision-making model has shifted from a single, closed decision-making model to a pluralistic, open decision-making model.

In particular, the communication and absorption of opinions from outside the organization has become an essential part of the contemporary Chinese party and government decision-making model. When facing decisions on major issues, the "leading group" often incorporates experts and scholars in related fields and people from all walks of life into the decision-making body, forming a new participation structure and communication mechanism〔5〕13-14.

If we take the drafting group for the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China as an example, General Secretary Xi Jinping personally took charge of the group. During the drafting process, Xi Jinping solicited opinions from the whole party from top to bottom and from bottom to top on many occasions, held hundreds of symposiums in various fields inside and outside the party, widely concentrated the wisdom of the whole party, and solicited opinions and suggestions from non-party members in a certain way, making the report highly democratic and scientific.

Second, centralization based on democracy. The draft decision proposed by the "leading group" comes from a scientific and democratic decision-making process, and also relies on the decision-making group to reach a consensus and form a decision to the greatest extent. Since the "leading group" is a governance method adopted when dealing with cross-departmental issues, whether it can quickly reach a consensus on decision-making becomes a measure of whether the "leading group" mechanism is effective. In fact, the superiority of democratic centralism ensures that the party can effectively reach a consensus in the process of dealing with decision-making opinions from multiple departments and multiple subjects〔6〕46-47, which is also the fundamental premise for the survival and development of China's "leading group" mechanism.

From the depth of the "leading group" mechanism, the close connection between the "leading groups" at all levels and the central or local party committees (standing committees) ensures the unity of thought and consistency of action. Therefore, the "leading group" mechanism can not only fully reflect the advantages of democratic centralism, but also make this advantage fully utilized in the actual governance process. By fully promoting democracy, respecting various interest subjects, mobilizing the enthusiasm of all parties, and through effective centralization, it maintains the authority of the central government and its leadership core, ensures that the whole party and state organs are in step, and ensures the implementation of the party's line, principles and policies. Democracy under centralized guidance and centralization based on democracy constitute a vertical and horizontal coordination relationship, which can interact, complement and coordinate with each other〔7〕381.

**2. The “Leading Group” is an important mechanism that highlights the socialist principle of concentrating resources to accomplish major tasks**

The academic community has distinguished the types of "leading groups" in China based on different research perspectives. Some divide "leading groups" into comprehensive leadership decision-making groups, specialized groups, and dispatched groups according to the nature of the tasks they undertake; some divide them into seven types according to the duration and spatial scope of the tasks they undertake, namely, fulfilling international obligations, leading long-term strategic work, leading a medium- and long-term comprehensive work, and short-term temporary work. [1] 111-121.

Based on the research results of scholars, China's "leading groups" can be summarized into three types of groups: those that deal with complex and major comprehensive issues, those that solve important strategic issues in the reform process, and those that respond to major emergencies. This emphasizes the working principle of the Party and the government to concentrate their efforts on major events through the "leading group" mechanism.

1. Dealing with complex and major comprehensive issues

This type of "leading group" is established to solve a regional comprehensive affairs or coordinate the deployment of major engineering construction. Due to the comprehensive, complex and collaborative nature of the work undertaken, the functions of this type of group are usually overall design, coordination and deployment, and overall planning. It provides macro-guidance and planning for the relevant units and organizations involved in the task. It mainly exists within the government and is headed by the main leaders of the State Council to implement the central government's policies, guidelines and instructions. For example, the State Council Leading Group for Revitalizing Old Industrial Bases such as the Northeast, the State Council Leading Group for "Three Wests" Agricultural Construction, the Beijing-Shanghai High-Speed ​​Railway Construction Leading Group, the State Council Leading Group for Daqin Railway Construction, etc. Taking the "Leading Group" for the "Two Basics" in the Western Region of the State Council as an example, the group leader is a State Councilor, and the deputy group leaders are the Minister of Education and a Deputy Secretary-General of the State Council. The units involved in the task include seven ministries and commissions, including the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Finance, the National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Science and Technology, the State Council Western Development Office, and the State Council Poverty Alleviation Office. The heads of relevant departments serve as members of the group, and an office is set up in the Ministry of Education. This type of "leading group" is generally abolished immediately after the mission is completed. It has a strong timeliness and the establishment and abolition process is relatively standardized.

2. Solving important strategic issues in the reform process

Some "leading groups" undertake some major overall and strategic tasks. These "leading groups" are at a higher level and are generally headed by party and state leaders. Such high-level "leading groups" can effectively and quickly organize and carry out various major tasks, and can form a wide range of political mobilization from the central to the local level. Party committees and governments at all levels will also set up corresponding "leading groups" according to the requirements of the work and the needs of specific work. This type of "leading group" often has the characteristics of high-level members, long task time, strong work continuity and high stability of the group structure. For example, the Central Foreign Affairs Leading Group, the National Science and Technology Education Leading Group, the Central Cultural System Reform Leading Group, the State Council Deepening Health System Reform Leading Group, etc. For example, the Central Leading Group for Comprehensively Deepening Reform belongs to this type of "leading group" that solves important strategic issues in the reform process and coordinates the deployment of major tasks. As of 2017, the Central Leading Group for Comprehensively Deepening Reform has issued a total of 162 documents, including 47 for social and livelihood reforms, 40 for economic reforms, 34 for rule of law reforms, 23 for the Deep Reform Group's own rules, and 18 for party building. In addition, the work of the six special groups under the Central Leading Group for Comprehensively Deepening Reform involves many aspects of the reform process, including the economic system, ecological civilization, democracy and the legal system, cultural system, social system, party building, and discipline inspection, which fully reflects its own work functions of overall coordination, top-level design, and overall promotion. After the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the Central Leading Group for Comprehensively Deepening Reform was also changed to a committee. The "leading groups" at high levels, such as deepening reform, rule of law, finance and economy, national security, informatization, foreign affairs, and auditing, chaired by the highest leaders of the Party and the state, are responsible for decision-making and key tasks related to major issues such as national reform, development, and national security. They reflect the strong determination of the Communist Party of China to solve certain major problems at an important historical juncture of China's economic and social development and never give up until the goal is achieved, the decisive measures taken to solve these problems, and the superb leadership art of doing extraordinary things with extraordinary measures. This system is a great creation of the ruling party's leadership art and governance methods under the modern rule of law environment, and has great practical significance and far-reaching historical significance.

3. Response to major emergencies

This type of "leading group" is established to deal with major events and emergencies, reflecting the effectiveness of the system of the Party and the State in dealing with social emergencies, natural disasters, national security, etc., and showing the institutional advantages of rapid response and efficient operation in dealing with emergencies. This type of "leading group" is usually established at the first time of an emergency and enjoys a high priority in resource allocation. The group is quickly disbanded when the work is completed, such as the National SARS Prevention and Control Command, the State Council's Leading Group for Investigation and Handling of Major Gas Explosion Accidents, and the State Council's General Headquarters for Earthquake Relief and Disaster Relief. Taking the State Council's General Headquarters for Earthquake Relief and Disaster Relief as an example, the commander-in-chief is a State Councilor (adjusted to a vice premier of the State Council in 2013), and the members are the heads of more than 30 ministries and commissions such as the Central Propaganda Department, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Justice, and the Ministry of Finance. It has 9 working groups under it, including the emergency rescue and disaster relief group, the mass living group, the earthquake monitoring group, the health and epidemic prevention group, the publicity group, the production recovery group, the infrastructure guarantee and post-disaster reconstruction group, the water conservancy group, and the social security group. The General Office of the State Council is responsible for hosting the meetings of the General Command and the special meetings held by the Commander-in-Chief and Deputy Commander-in-Chief, collecting, summarizing, analyzing, reporting and releasing important information, supervising the implementation of the matters agreed upon by the General Command, and communicating, liaising and coordinating important matters with relevant regions, departments, the military and the armed police. This type of "leading group" demonstrates the strong organizational and coordination capabilities of the Party and the State in responding to emergencies, and has become a convenient and effective governance option for coordinating and solving problems arising in the process of economic and social development.

**III. The “Leading Group” is an important mechanism for preventing and defusing major risks**

Major risks involve multiple fields such as politics, ideology, economy, science and technology, society, external environment and party building. Relying solely on relevant departments to prevent and resolve risks is obviously unable to adapt to the profoundly changing external environment and the new situations, new problems and new challenges facing China's reform, development and stability. Therefore, adhering to the leadership of the Party is the baton for preventing and resolving major risks in various fields, and avoiding the occurrence of subversive mistakes by grasping the implementation of each level at each level.

1. Preventing major risks in key areas

Preventing and defusing major risks lies in predicting major risks in advance and being able to quickly find solutions after risks occur. Major risks that appear in various fields often have their own characteristics, especially in the process of reform, which often involves various fields. This requires the establishment of risk prevention mechanisms under the overall design and overall command of the Party. As General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out: "We must have both the initiative to prevent risks and the high-level strategies to deal with and defuse risks; we must not only fight a well-prepared battle to prevent and resist risks, but also fight a strategic proactive battle to turn danger into safety and turn crisis into opportunity."〔8〕

The "leading group" mechanism is undoubtedly an effective mechanism for solving major risk problems, especially comprehensive and complex problems. The "leading group" mechanism covering all areas of the state and society is one of the many high-level strategies for defusing major risks. The "leading group" is the vanguard of the strategic proactive battle to resist risks.

In terms of ensuring political security, the Central Leading Group for Cybersecurity and Informatization (now the Central Cybersecurity and Informatization Committee) established by the central government, the relevant "leading groups" for the party's own construction and ideological construction (such as the Central Leading Group for External Propaganda Work, the Leading Group for Party Building System Reform, etc.), and local provinces and cities established such as the Leading Group for Ideological Work and the Special Group for Local Discipline Inspection System Reform, etc., all carry out their work under the leadership of the party committee at the same level, with party committee leaders serving as group members and the party committee's main responsible person taking the lead in coordinating specific work.

In terms of maintaining stable economic development, promoting supply-side structural reform, coordinating and solving major problems in fiscal and economic work, and properly responding to major risks that may arise in the economic field, the Central Financial and Economic Work Leading Group (now the Central Financial and Economic Work Committee), which was established earlier and has existed for the longest time, has played an important role in responding to and solving special difficulties encountered by the national economy, organizing and implementing strategic adjustments to the national economy, and preventing and defusing financial risks. Under the leadership of the Party committees at all levels at the central and local levels, the work organized and coordinated by the "Leading Group" has enhanced the China's early warning capabilities and coordination and disposal capabilities in preventing and responding to fiscal, economic and financial risks.

In terms of maintaining social stability and preventing major risks in the social field, the central level has set up a special group for reform in the field of democracy and the legal system, a central leading group for social system reform, and a central leading group for education work to coordinate and govern national social affairs. The establishment of local deliberative and coordinating institutions for education, health, medical care, employment, food safety, etc. is more extensive, and many of them appear in the form of temporary "leading groups" and are immediately abolished after the main work is completed, playing a role in preventing problems from happening and preventing them from happening.

2. Avoiding Subversive Errors

From the perspective of the types of "leading groups", with the refinement of the types of "leading groups" and the scientific division of party and government functions, many "leading groups" within the party have begun to be established with the main functions of coordinating and guiding policy implementation, and more emphasis has been placed on overall design, arrangement, deployment, supervision and inspection, etc. This type of "leading group" is mostly established by party committees at all levels, with the same organizational structure and staffing horizontally, and vertically showing a correspondence from the central to the local level. This organizational method can unify thoughts and build consensus to the greatest extent, ensure the party's leadership over various tasks, improve execution, and avoid subversive mistakes. Many "leading groups" related to ideological construction and the party's own construction have effectively guaranteed the realization of this function. For example, in order to strengthen the socialization effect of the party's political ideology, the Communist Party of China will regularly carry out political ideology learning and education practice activities, and the "leading group" is specifically responsible for the organization and implementation of this work. For example, the National Rural "Three Represents" Important Thought Learning and Education Activity Joint Conference, the Central Leading Group for Maintaining the Advancedness of Communist Party Members Education Activity, the Central Leading Group for In-depth Study and Practice of the Scientific Outlook on Development Activity, and the Central Leading Group for the Party's Mass Line Education and Practice Activity. The establishment of such a vertical group can transmit the important theoretical achievements and guidelines of the Party Central Committee from top to bottom in a timely and accurate manner, and popularize them to party committees at all levels and the majority of party members, so as to form unified ideological understanding and the same values, hold the ground and expand the results of education.

Unlike flexible organizations with similar organizational structures in the West, China's "leadership group" mechanism can effectively prevent the risk of fragmentation of social values ​​and social structure by building consensus to the greatest extent. Therefore, from the perspective of the organizational structure of the "leadership group", the top-down isomorphic organizational model can not only ensure the effective conduct of the political process, but more importantly, ensure that the political process can uphold consistent value standards and firmly grasp the absolute leadership of ideology, so that China can have a stronger response capability in the face of multicultural impacts and huge challenges in the information age, and can stand firm in the severe ideological discourse pattern, avoid the occurrence of subversive mistakes, and gain stronger support on the road to becoming a socialist modern power.

**4. The “Leading Group” is an important mechanism for scientific decision-making and scientific governance**

General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out that promoting the modernization of the national governance system and governance capacity is to adapt to the changes of the times, reform the systems, mechanisms, laws and regulations that do not meet the requirements of practical development, and constantly build new systems, mechanisms, laws and regulations to make all aspects of the system more scientific and more perfect. Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, all-round reforms in various fields have been continuously deepened, the party's governing capacity has been significantly strengthened, and the government's administrative level has been increasingly improved. The decision-making model of the "leading group" has shifted to a "consensus-based decision-making" model based on extensive political participation and research practice, forming a benign mechanism operation state of scientific decision-making and scientific governance.

1. Ensuring the scientific nature of decision-making

The "leading group" within the party, whose main function is to guide and deploy national and social affairs, is a decision-making, deliberative and coordinating body and is the guiding decision-making body in China's "leading group" mechanism. The effectiveness of decision-making comes from the scientific nature of decision-making. The decision-making methods of these "leading groups" within the party reflect the decision-making characteristics of the party and government system in the new era and are a key boost to promoting the construction of the governance system and the modernization of governance. With the continuous development and improvement of socialist democracy with Chinese characteristics, the consensus-based decision-making model of the "leading group" within the party today is manifested in that through extensive solicitation of opinions and suggestions from the whole party and the broad masses of the people, the decision-making has a deep mass base, and the democracy and scientific nature of the decision-making is continuously enhanced. Through extensive consultations inside and outside the party, the recognition of all sectors of society, including the democratic parties, is enhanced. This decision-making model not only exists in the "leading group", but has also gradually become a common method for major decisions of the party and government.

For example, in the process of formulating the Draft Outline of the National Medium- and Long-term Talent Development Plan (2010-2020), the Central Talent Work Coordination Group took the overall requirements of implementing a talent-strong state proposed at the 17th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (2017) as the criterion, and after continuous discussions at 17 meetings, it decided to compile a "talent plan". Then, for several months, experts were selected from government departments, party committee organization departments at all levels, relevant colleges and universities, and scientific research institutions to implement the compilation of the "talent plan". After holding more than 40 meetings, the first draft was completed after sufficient demonstration, analysis, discussion and research, and various special seminars were held for discussion. Finally, after the approval of the Central Committee, the "talent plan" was publicly solicited for opinions from the whole society. After absorbing the opinions and suggestions of experts and scholars, especially the general public, the "draft" was officially issued, fully reflecting the rigor and scientific nature of the decision-making process.

2. Facilitating the effective implementation of decisions

The scientific decision-making of the "leading group" is realized through the deliberative and coordinating bodies within governments at all levels as policy implementation units. China's "leading group" mechanism is an organic combination of the central government to local governments, from the party to the administration, and from top to bottom. It has the characteristics of effectiveness from scientific decision-making to scientific governance. It is a rare cross-departmental collaboration mechanism in the world that combines efficiency and science. The effectiveness of many "leading groups" or deliberative and coordinating bodies that serve as the front line of policy implementation is mainly reflected in the effective formation of decision-making consensus among members within the group and the efficient transformation of the group's work goals.

First, the members of the “leading group” can effectively reach a consensus on decision-making. In simple terms, it relies on the mobilization mechanism in the local “leading group”, that is, the leader of the “leading group” can use the dual “leadership identity” of the local administrative leader and the leader of the “leading group” 〔9〕109 to unify the fragmented decisions of the units where the group members are located, so as to strengthen the unity of the decision-making process. This is also a method often used in the implementation of central decision-making under China’s current political system. This method effectively regulates the relationship between the authority system and effective governance〔10〕22.

Second, the efficiency transformation of the work objectives of the "leading group" has improved the quality of the completion of work objectives. In the practice of national governance, in order to complete the tasks assigned by the superiors, the subordinates often decompose the target tasks quantitatively and establish an evaluation mechanism with material rewards and punishments. This governance method mainly occurs in the "block relationship" of the Chinese government, because the government has the most direct control over financial and organizational resources. Figuratively speaking, the subordinates set up relevant "leading groups" to undertake the tasks assigned by the superiors, decompose the task objectives through the "leading group" mechanism, and hand them over to the members of the "leading group" to share. The team leader uses his own political authority to mobilize the team members to participate in the work, form an evaluation system that matches the tasks, and provide incentives.

Fully understanding and correctly evaluating the status and role of the "leading group", a governance method with Chinese characteristics, is a major issue that should not be circumvented for the deepening reform and rule of law that are being promoted. At present, there is a perception in practice that the "leading group" and other institutions should be the object of reform. We believe that this perception is wrong and very harmful. The "leading group" governance method has not only played an important role in history, but it is still indispensable in the current and future process of socialist modernization with Chinese characteristics. Instead of being the object of reform, it should be the light cavalry and commando for promoting the rule of law. The reason for making this judgment is that practice has proved that adhering to the "leading group", a governance method with Chinese characteristics, is an important path to practicing Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era. At the same time, it should also be seen that the "leading group" governance method is a rare and important means in the process of vigorously promoting the rule of law based on the special national conditions of contemporary China. Of course, with the continuous deepening of the practice of rule of law, the leading group governance method will also gradually be incorporated into the track of the rule of law.

In short, from the perspective of institutional logic, the "leading group" continues the party's organizational tradition and embodies the effective combination of the centralized management system and democratic centralism; from the perspective of organizational effectiveness, the "leading group" has improved the ruling party's governance capabilities for national affairs and economic and social affairs, and has demonstrated a high level of governance in optimizing resource allocation, coordinating inter-departmental linkages, and solving major problems. As an advantageous mechanism of socialism with Chinese characteristics, the "leading group" provides effective institutional support for building a socialist modern power and promotes the further improvement of the national governance system and governance capabilities. At the same time, it should be noted that the design of the system must also be operational. If the system design is complicated and even professionals find it difficult to understand, then such "profound" knowledge can actually only become the "private property" of a few people and cannot be applied in practice at all. [11] General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out: "No matter what system is established and improved, it must be based on the principle of comprehensiveness in law and simplicity in practice, pay attention to the combination and coordination of substantive norms and guarantee norms, and ensure that they are targeted, operational and highly instructive." [12] 379 It can be foreseen that with the continuous improvement of the "leading group" mechanism, the great practice of socialism with Chinese characteristics under the leadership of the Party will surely become more orderly and exciting.

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