

Text 5

Abstract of “Government Liability to Protect Vulnerable Groups”

Title: Government Liability to Protect Vulnerable Groups

Author(s): Wang Feng

Source: *Journal of Shandong Institute of Business and Technology*, 2005 (2)

Abstract:

The current economic situation is not the sole criterion for determining whether a group is a vulnerable group or not. We also need to include criteria such as social evaluation, resource consumption, and health condition in order to cover all the vulnerable groups. Because vulnerable groups have low social evaluation, low resource consumption, and poor health conditions, they have a major impact on social stability. Therefore, the government should improve administration according to law and promote the protection of vulnerable groups.

I. Criteria for Vulnerable Groups

1. Social evaluation criterion

Social evaluation is the attitude held by the general population towards a particular social group regarding its reputation and status. According to this criterion, those with negative social evaluation belong to vulnerable groups.

2. Criterion based on resource consumption

This criterion refers to the amount of resource which can be consumed, including economic resources and rights enjoyed. Those people with resource consumption lower than the average social standard belong to vulnerable groups.

3. Criterion based on health condition

In modern medicine, human health involves both physical and mental health. Therefore, one's health condition should include both of the two aspects. Usually, the health conditions of people from vulnerable groups are not optimistic.

II. Vulnerable Groups' Impact on Social Stability

Vulnerable groups have much fewer opportunities compared to non-vulnerable groups under the same conditions. This is the reason why it is much harder for vulnerable groups to gain social recognition and to realise their own worth. Crime rates are comparatively higher within vulnerable groups. Crimes are committed on one hand to survive and on the other hand to take revenge on society. It can be said in a sense that vulnerable groups are victims of those non-vulnerable groups who have power. However, those groups in power are not willing to face this kind of relationship with vulnerable groups; neither can they treat vulnerable groups appropriately, resulting in the revenge of vulnerable groups. The government should play the role of the initiator in solving problems related to vulnerable groups.

III. Why should we stress the government's liability to protect vulnerable groups?

1. Protection of vulnerable groups is a necessary means of achieving social justice.
2. Among different kinds of power, executive power is the main cause in violating rights of vulnerable groups and should bear the main responsibility.

IV. Government's Liability to Protect Vulnerable Groups

1. The government needs to abandon the old belief and change from the traditional "governing body" to a "service provider". The ultimate goal of a government should be to better realise people's rights and freedom instead of only governing people. The government should listen to the different voices and ensure the protection of the rights for more people.

2. We should actively promote relevant legislative work for the protection of vulnerable groups, ensuring that measures to protect rights of vulnerable groups have a legal basis. Administration according to law has already been a basic principle. Most of the relief measures for vulnerable groups depend on government executive orders. This means that we need to emphasise the importance of legislation.

3. The government should play an active role in guiding the direction of social evaluation and accept vulnerable groups with a tolerant attitude, creating a favourable atmosphere for vulnerable groups to enjoy a normal social life.

4. The government should establish and improve various systems and policies to ensure that legislation, administration and judicial systems can work together to actually improve the living conditions of vulnerable groups.

5. We need to strengthen the supervision of government power. Effective supervision is the key to preventing power abuse. In order to effectively protect the rights of vulnerable groups, relevant relief measures need to be enhanced. All are equal before the law. It is also the ultimate goal of the law to realise social stability and peace as well as socialism with Chinese characteristics.