

New Thought on the Work of the Communist Youth League in Colleges and Universities in the New Era

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Abstract: After an arduous struggle, the Communist Party of China (CPC) has led the people of the whole country into a new era of socialism with Chinese characteristics. The history of the Party's struggle is the growth history of the Communist Youth League of China. In the new historical period, under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, the Communist Youth League of China has been given a new mission and responsibility. Based on the background of the new era, this paper traces the development process of the Communist Youth League, so as to give an analysis of and shed some light on how to integrate the work of the Communist Youth League leaders into the background of the times, how to grasp the new direction of the work of the Communist Youth League, and how to open up a new phase in the work of the Communist Youth League.

1 Connotation of “new era” and mission in this era

On October 18, 2017, at the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), General Secretary Xi Jinping delivered a report entitled “Winning a Decisive Victory in Building a Moderately Prosperous Society in an All-round Way and Obtaining the Great Victory of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics in a New Era.” The “new era of socialism with Chinese characteristics” is an expression mentioned for the first time in the report, which means that the Chinese people's struggle led by the Communist Party of China has entered a new historical stage. The proposal and establishment of the “new era” has been recognized as a major political judgment related to the overall situation, the fundamental, and the future, thus equipping the Party's struggle theme, goal of tasks, value pursuit, historical mission and the world with a new epochal connotation. First, the new era means the beginning of a new journey in time coordinate. It inherits the past and forges ahead into the future, and is the historical intersection of the “two centenary goals” of the Communist Party of China. Second, the principal contradiction of Chinese society has changed in the new era, from the contradiction between material and cultural needs and social productive forces, to the that between the people's increasing needs for a better life and the inadequate balance of development. Third, the new era means that the Communist Party of China has been given a new mission and goal. We should not only lead the people of the whole country to a well-off society in an all-round way by the 100th anniversary of the Party, but also build a prosperous, strong, democratic, civilized, harmonious and beautiful modern socialist country in the historical period by the 100th anniversary of the country. Fourthly, the new era means the pursuit of the new era and the responsibility of the world. While leading the people of the whole country to realize the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, the Chinese Communists actively build a community with a shared future for mankind, approach the center of the world stage, make China's voice heard, and contribute Chinese wisdom and strength to the development of mankind.^[1]

In this new era, all great struggles, projects, undertakings and dreams are inseparable from the people, who must be every Chinese child and grandchild living in this new era. Only when each generation does not live up to the great trust of the previous generation, but shoulders the mission of each generation, goes forward one after another, and stays true to the original ideals and aspirations, can the Chinese Dream be passed on from generation to generation and come true in the persistence of the people of the world.^[2] There is no doubt that the people are the core elements for the realization of the Chinese Dream, and what kind of successors to cultivate is the decisive factor

related to whether Chinese Dream can be carried through and finally realized. Therefore, the realization of Chinese Dream is not only to rely on and unite the people, but also to train, unite and develop younger generations in terms of long-term development. Young people are not only witnesses, doers and creators of the great cause of the Chinese nation, but also the core competitive force of all countries in economic globalization. Chinese youths are creating the future of China and even the future of the world. China's new era is bound to be closely linked with the fate of China's new youths. From the perspective of organizational security, in the new era, we must give full play to the role of mass organizations in gathering sand into towers and armpits, especially the Communist Youth League organizations firmly shoulder the important task of uniting, developing, and serving young people, in order to cultivate socialist successors who can reassure the party and the people.

2 Development process of the Communist Youth League of China

The Communist Youth League of China is the product of certain social and historical conditions. The Qing Dynasty from 1636 to 1912 was the last feudal society in China. In the middle and late Qing Dynasty, there appeared political rigidity, cultural despotism and isolation of the country, which led to the isolation of the whole Chinese society from the Western world and gradually lagged behind the West. In particular, after the Opium War of 1840, China was constantly invaded by great powers, and the Sino-Japanese War and the War of Invasion into China by the allied forces of the eight powers further deepened the national crisis. The Westernization Movement and the Reform Movement of 1898 also failed to change the fate of China being completely reduced to a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society. Since the year 1915 when a group of Chinese scholars, influenced by western education, launched an anti-feudal new culture movement, democratic thought has spread all over China. With the outbreak of the October Revolution of Russia in 1917, Marxism spread to China, thus pushing the New Culture Movement to a new stage, during which, Marxism was widely spread in China. In the collision and conflict between old and new cultures, the thought of Chinese youth began to be enlightened, which laid an ideological and theoretical foundation for the emergence of the Communist Youth League. At the end of the first World War in 1918, the unequal treaties at the Paris Peace Conference became the fuse of the May 4th Movement, and the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal patriotic movement in 1919 opened a new era for realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Thoughtful progressive young people have become an inestimable new force in the land of China. Before the founding of the Communist Party of China in 1920, through the organization and operation of its predecessor, the Communist Group, the Youth League was gradually established with young people who were ideologically progressive and consciously revolutionary. The Communist Party of China was formally founded in July 1921. After less than a year of preparation, the Chinese Socialist Youth League was officially established on May 5, 1922.^[3]

3 Political attribute of the Communist Youth League of China

From the perspective of the historical evolution of the Chinese Youth League, it was born in a semi-colonial and semi-feudal old China and is the product of the combination of Marxism-Leninism and the Chinese revolutionary movement. But as far as its attribute is concerned, in order to lead the people of all ethnic groups to achieve the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, the Communist Party of China needs to unite young people and successors before it arises at the historic moment. Therefore, since the establishment of the Communist Youth League in May 1922, its political orientation must be the assistant and reserve army of the Communist Party of China, and the group organization of advanced youth under the leadership of the Communist Party of China. It is also a school for the broad masses of young people to learn socialism and communism with Chinese characteristics in practice. Being loyal to the party, relying on the party and serving the party is the inherent political character of the Communist Youth League. The Communist Youth League organizations must unswervingly adhere to the leadership of the

Communist Party of China, unswervingly adhere to the development path of socialist groups with Chinese characteristics, unite and lead the youths of all ethnic groups throughout the country, and actively devote themselves to the cause of revitalizing China and realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Whenever and wherever they are, the Communist Youth League members, under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, are concerned about the central work of the party and make efforts and contributions to the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

4 Responsibility and mission of the Communist Youth League in colleges and universities

Contemporary colleges and universities shoulder the three major functions of training specialized talents, developing scientific knowledge and serving the society. The fundamental question of what, how and for whom socialist universities should train people was also discussed by General Secretary Xi Jinping at the National Education Conference in 2018. China is a socialist country under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, which determines that the education of colleges and universities must also take the training of socialist builders and successors as the fundamental task, in order to train generation after generation of useful talents who support the leadership of the Communist Party of China and China's socialist system and are determined to strive for socialism with Chinese characteristics all their lives. The most dynamic, creative, thoughtful and expressive groups of young students gather in colleges and universities all over the country. Therefore, the Communist Youth League of colleges and universities has become a relatively formal, largest and most effective team in the Communist Youth League organization, and it is a mass organization of advanced young students in colleges and universities. In the "Implementation Plan for the Reform of the Communist Youth League in Colleges and Universities" issued in 2016, it is clearly stated that the Communist Youth League in colleges and universities must firmly grasp the political direction, respect the dominant position of students, focus on the main business, link up and down, and lead the thoughts of young students to be responsible for the ideological and political education of young students. Such is the lifeline of all work in colleges and universities. Therefore, the Communist Youth League in colleges and universities must also closely related to the main body of young students, strengthen the political, advanced and mass nature of the organization, build a team of the Communist Youth League in colleges and universities in the new era, and lead the growth of young and middle-aged people in the new era, so as to cultivate new socialist youth with the characteristics of the new era. It is the unswerving mission of the Communist Youth League of colleges and universities to constantly seek new methods, models and channels in line with the moral education of young college students in the new era.

5 New direction of the work of the Communist Youth League in colleges and universities

5.1 Guiding young students to strengthen their beliefs, never forget their initial ideals and aspirations, and set the right goal

Firstly, the Communist Youth League organizations in colleges and universities should make efforts to strengthen their ideals and beliefs, educate and guide students to establish the common ideals of communism and socialism with Chinese characteristics, enhance students' "four self-confidences", and be determined to shoulder the important task of national rejuvenation. Secondly, we should make efforts to cultivate patriotism, let patriotism firmly take root in the hearts of young students, educate students to love and support the Communist Party of China, determined to listen to and follow the Party and take root in the people and contribute to the country. Thirdly, efforts should be made to strengthen moral cultivation, educate and guide students to cultivate and practice socialist core values, improve their moral character in a down-to-earth manner, and become people with great love, virtue and great feelings. Fourthly, we should make efforts on the Sinicization of League's history and Marxist Theory, popularize advanced theories, simplify complex issues, lead young students to study League's history and the Party Constitution, and strengthen young students' sense of belonging and identity to the organization. Only when the

young students in colleges and universities make a firm political choice and set the course of life, can they take the lead among all young people to find a good direction in the great cause of the country and the nation.^[4] Only in this way can young people influence young people, jointly establish ideals and beliefs of the same mind and direction with the theme of this era, form joint forces, and strive for these ideals and beliefs, so as to form a positive moral concept with socialist core values as the core in the campus.

5.2 Guiding young students to study diligently, dare to practice, and have the courage to struggle

The Communist Youth League in colleges and universities should, first, guide young students to make efforts to increase their knowledge and knowledge, learn their chosen majors well, and achieve their expertise. The second is to guide young students to put theory into practice and dare to try, so as to test what they have learned with practice, and to put what they have learned into practice. Young students are encouraged to actively participate in competitions such as “Creating Youth”, “Challenge Cup” and “Internet Plus”, and apply what they have learned to seek truth and innovation in practice. We should also actively take part in the social practice of “going to the countryside” and all kinds of campus culture and sports activities, so as to absorb as many nutrients from multi-disciplines as possible. What is more, we should actively participate in international exchanges and cooperation and take the initiative to broaden our global horizons. Through practical activities, we can find problems, find rules, learn to think and solve problems. Only by integrating into the big stage of life, the big classroom of society, and the melting pot of the masses, can we accumulate wisdom in practice, increase our ability in fighting the storm, and show the style and demeanor of young students in colleges and universities. The third is to let young friends set up the consciousness of hard struggle and be a doer of tenacious struggle, hard struggle, and unremitting struggle, turn the ambition of life into the driving force of struggle, always maintain the spirit of struggle, optimistic attitude towards life, dare to bear, but not afraid of wind and rain. In the career that they choose and love, they will strive for continuous self-improvement and forge ahead courageously, full of youthful blood to realize the value of self-life at the same time, and add a steady stream of youthful vitality for the construction and development of colleges and universities, as well as for the realization of the “Chinese Dream”.

5.3 Deepening the organizational reform, joint efforts, and innovation and development of the Youth League

We will further promote strict management of the League and shape a new style of League cadres. League cadres are the basic force to do a good job in the ideological and political work of the Communist Youth League in colleges and universities, and it is also a bridge and link for the Communist Youth League to widely connect and effectively involve students. Only when League cadres take the lead in growing up as role models for students can they effectively influence and unite the majority of young students. Building a contingent of Youth League cadres with high political awareness, strong comprehensive ability, excellent work style, strict discipline, and good at doing youth work, which can reassure the party committee and satisfy the students, is not only an important basis for realizing the task of the Communist Youth League, but also a strong guarantee for the development of the school.^[5] This requires that: first, the Communist Youth League must build a vertically and horizontally intertwined network of basic-level league organizations,^[6] and strengthen the working strength of the basic-level league organizations; second, League education organizations at all levels should unswervingly carry out educational and practical activities on the theme of learning socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era, further enhance the ideological construction of League members, and strictly enforce discipline and strict organizational life in the League; third, they should conscientiously implement the requirements of “three meetings, two systems and one lesson”, and standardize the basic League work. Only in this way can the fighting fortress role of the Communist Youth League in colleges and universities be brought into full play in the cause of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

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