

## A Theoretical Thought of Constructing a Learning-Oriented, Service-Oriented and Innovative Marxist Ruling Party

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### Abstract

The Communist Party of China (CPC) has a tradition and quality of attaching importance to learn, people-serving and innovation. According to the principle of history’s consistency with logic, the report of the Eighteenth National Congress of the CPC has proposed the requirement of constructing a learning-oriented, service-oriented innovative Marxist ruling party. This ideology has undergone a process of evolution and gradual proposals, which are the basic connotation and basic requirement of constructing a Marxist ruling party. A learning and service-oriented innovative Marxist ruling party reflects a more comprehensive and deeper understanding of Marxism, which is the major strategy to further enhance the scientific level of CPC. The three parts are interrelated with each other: Learning is the method and tool; innovation is the basic requirement; service is the fundamental purpose. To establish a learning and service-oriented innovative Marxist ruling party is the basic requirement of constructing a party with the advanced nature.

**Key words:** Learning; Service; Innovation; Thought

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### INTRODUCTION

What kind of party is to be built and how to build the party is a major issue of the construction of CPC. After more than 90 years of explorations and practices, CPC has advocated a series of major decisions based on the conclusion of past experience to address this issue. In 21<sup>st</sup> century, it has focused on building the party’s advanced nature and governing capability and improving the party’s scientific level, which require the party to seek breakthroughs in the self-building. Under this background, on the basis of deepening understanding of the construction rule of a Marxist ruling party, the report of the Eighteenth National Congress of the CPC has raised the major proposition of constructing a “learning-oriented, service-oriented innovative Marxist ruling party”. From the perspective of promoting a new great project of party building in the new era and improving the party’s scientific level, constructing a “learning and service-oriented innovative Marxist ruling party” is of a great strategic significance. However, what is the learning and service-oriented innovative Marxist ruling party? Why we should propose to construct the learning and service-oriented innovative Marxist ruling party? What is the pertinence? What is the relationship between the three? These are the new questions in need of researches and resolutions.

### 1. THE BASIC CONNOTATION OF A “LEARNING AND SERVICE-ORIENTED INNOVATIVE MARIST RULING PARTY”

The gradual proposals of the concept of “a learning and service-oriented innovative Marxist ruling party” represent CPC’s maturing process of thinking of “what kind of party is to be built and how to build it”. A learning and service-oriented innovative

Marxist ruling party is the basic connotation of constructing a Marxist ruling party. The three parts are closely related to each other, but each has its own connotations.

Firstly, Marxist learning-oriented party has been proposed based on the basic characteristics of “learning-oriented party”, which takes Marxism as the guidance and main content, in the purpose of promoting the construction of the party’s governing capability and advanced nature so as to decide the issue of “how to build the party”. Therefore, in the definition of what is a “Marxist learning-oriented party”, the first is to understand the essence of “learning-oriented party”. “Learning-oriented party” is a new concept which has been advocated by CPC to adapt to the global, national and party changes, whose purpose is to establish a “learning-oriented organization” with a completely new connotation and specific requirement, promote the party members and cadres to learn scientifically, normatively and systematically, and enhance the learning ability of the party members and cadres so as to creatively realize the party’s political vision. Its essence is “learning”, which emphasizes that the party should highly value learning and be good at learning. It cannot be misinterpreted to regard the change in the party’s political and class nature as the construction of the “learning-oriented party”. On this basis, we have proposed to construct the “Marxist learning-oriented party”. To understand its basic connotation, we should grasp four points: the first is to express the nature of the Marxist party; the second is to reflect the feature of the “learning-oriented party”; the third is to locate the objective of Marxist learning-oriented party construction in the party construction; the fourth is to represent the service function of Marxist learning-oriented party construction to the Marxist ruling party construction. The construction of a Marxist learning-oriented party is guided by Marxism and takes Marxist classics, especially the theory of socialism with Chinese characteristics as the main learning content. It belongs to the scope of the party’s “ideological and theoretical construction”, and is the quality objective of the party construction. We should carry out learning activities by the means of Marxist position, viewpoint and method, establish a long-term mechanism of education so as to provide the foundation and security for constructing Marxist ruling party in terms of ideology and politics. Therefore, “Marxist learning-oriented party” refers to the Marxist party whose members are good at learning, able to learn on an ongoing basis, able to equip the whole party with Marxist theories especially the latest achievements of Marxism in China to guide the practices of socialism with Chinese characteristics, promote the party’s ideological and political qualities, and provide an innovative mechanism to improve the party’s governing capability and advanced nature.

Secondly, to correctly understand the basic connotation of “service-oriented Marxist ruling party” we need to grasp a few points. Firstly, fully understand the change from “service” to “service-oriented”. Although there’s only one word different from “service” to “service-oriented”, the connotation is miles apart. “Oriented” refers to the style, which means the establishment of a service-oriented party, service is not just an aim but also a method, which should be carried out into standardization and systematization. The connotation of service is also not limited to the narrow sense of “do good things”, but mainly reflected in the activities of serving people to be the masters of their own. Secondly, grasp the basic connotation of Marxist ruling party. “Service-oriented Marxist ruling party” is one of the basic connotations of Marxist ruling party, therefore, the construction of “service-oriented Marxist ruling party” shall take Marxist theory, especially the latest achievements of Marxism in China as the guiding ideology. The construction of “service-oriented Marxist ruling party” means partial transformations of the party’s construction. It refers to that on the premise of keeping the party’s nature, purpose and guiding ideology fundamentally unchanged, some of the functions and leadership change from being the masters on behalf of people to leading, supporting and securing people to be the masters of their own. Thirdly, grasp the standard of the construction of service-oriented party. “Service-oriented Marxist ruling party” is not a description of the nature of the party. The class nature of the party remains the same, so the “service-oriented Marxist ruling party” should reflect the spirit of serving the interests of people, especially the fundamental interests of the working class. The interests of people are the fundamental criteria to assess the value. Fourthly, the construction of “service-oriented Marxist ruling party” cannot impair the leading role of the Party. In a market economy, the proposal of “service-oriented Marxist ruling party” cannot and will not dilute the leading role of the party or reduce the party’s leadership, but will reinforce people’s confirmation to the party’s leadership with the increase of service and truly reflect the highest purpose of serving the people wholeheartedly. Fifthly, the construction of “service-oriented Marxist ruling party” does not weaken the party’s governing capabilities. The emphasis on the difference between the party’s service function and ordinary social organizations’ service function, to the ruling party, means that the main function is to assume political power and properly perform governance, therefore, the construction of “service-oriented Marxist ruling party” should be aimed at serving the party’s advanced nature, purity and governance capacity.

Thirdly, we must correctly understand the basic connotation of an innovative Marxist ruling party. Some scholars have pointed out that

the so-called “innovative” party’ referred to the party which insisted on everything from reality, constantly adjusted and

updated its programs, goals, tasks, lines, principles and policies in order to endeavor to achieve the mutual progress with social development and the trend of times. (Qi, 2006)

This definition of Professor Qi seizes the meaning of innovative of not satisfied with the present situation and do not remain stagnant, but this it is too general and suitable for parties of any nature. Due to the requirements of social progress and development of the times, all political parties have requirements of innovation, but to CPC which is a Marxist party, the Marxist theoretical quality of keeping pace with the times and the advanced nature and long-term of achieving the great historic mission of communism determine that innovation is the indispensable spirit of CPC. Therefore, the construction of “innovative Marxist ruling party” has its own special meaning. Firstly, the “innovative Marxist ruling party” is not a division on the nature or type but a description of the characteristics of CPC, stressing “innovative” and trying to make innovative normalized and standardized. It is the new mode which keeps the party’s class nature, consistently deepens the recognition of the law of party construction, and explores to improve the party’s scientific level to adapt to the new situation. To innovate the party’s governing resources, the core is to improve the innovation quality and creativity capability of the whole party. Secondly, the “innovative Marxist ruling party” is multi-dimensional, which is one of the basic connotations of the construction of Marxist ruling party, so it focuses on the Marxist theory of keeping up with the times and is the innovation history of Marxism in China. Thirdly, innovation is the governing quality of the “innovative Marxist ruling party”, whose essence is to improve the party’s ability to rule; at the same time, innovation is built on the basis of tradition. In a word, “innovative Marxist ruling party” refers to the Marxist party which can deepen our understanding of the law of party construction and summarize the party’s innovative experience, can promote innovation in all aspects of party construction according to the essential requirement of Marxist theoretical innovation and innovative spirit of reform, can adjust, update, develop and innovate various governing resources based on changes in the new situation, and can improve the party’s governing ability and overall innovation capability.

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## **2. WHY WE SHOULD CONSTRUCT A LEARNING AND SERVICE-ORIENTED INNOVATIVE MARXIST RULING PARTY**

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To build a learning and service-oriented innovative Marxist ruling party is the result of theoretical and practical innovation of CPC. From the theoretical aspect, it is a more comprehensive and deeper understanding of the essence of the Marxist parties; from the practical aspect, it is a major strategy to further enhance the scientific level of party construction.

### **2.1 It Is a More Comprehensive and Deeper Understanding to the Nature of the Marxist Parties**

A Marxist party is established in accordance with the scientific theory of Marxism, whose essence is to achieve, maintain and develop people’s interests. Advancement is the essential attribute of a Marxist party, and is the significant sign that differentiates a Marxist party from other non-Marxist parties. As a Marxist ruling party, CPC has both essential qualities of a Marxist party and a ruling party, therefore, it has the advancement which other parties are not able to surpass. However, CPC’s advancement is dynamic, “maintain and develop the party’s advanced nature is the fundamental task and eternal issue of the self-construction of a Marxist party” (*The Selected Important Documents Since*, para.8, 2008, p.525) The proposal of the construction of a learning and service-oriented innovative Marxist ruling party is the essential requirement to maintain the party’s advanced nature, and is the basic path to achieve, maintain and develop the interests of people.

Maintaining the party’s advanced nature in the theory and practice and keeping the party’s close tie with the people is the essential characteristic of CPC which differentiates it from the Western parties. First of all, Marxism is the guiding ideology of CPC. It “is generated from the sum of human knowledge”, and is by far the most advanced human theoretical system. However, Marxism is getting consistently enriched with the development of practices and the times, therefore, in order to maintain the advanced nature in the theory, the party must focus on learning, be good at learning, constantly absorb new knowledge and new ideas through learning, understand and apply the latest theoretical achievements and scientific knowledge of mankind, and promote Marxism to achieve sinification and modernization. Secondly, in the primary stage of socialism, the socialist cause with Chinese characteristics under the leadership of CPC is a great practice, and is an advanced and completely new exploration which has no ready-made experience of any country in the world to follow. To maintain the advanced nature in practice, the party must be good at learning and be bold in innovation, use the latest acquired knowledge and theory to solve a variety of new situations and new problems which may occur in the future road. The advanced nature of the party is to always stand at the forefront of the times. The learning and creative abilities are the key for the party to maintain the vitality and keep up with the times. From this point of view, the proposal of the construction of a Marxist learning-oriented innovative party is the most in-depth understanding of the nature of Marxist party, is an important way to improve the party’s learning ability and creative abilities, and is the inherent requirement of the development of the party’s advanced nature. Thirdly, as a Marxist ruling party, CPC takes

serving the people wholeheartedly as its highest purpose. All political activities it is engaged in are to better serve people's rights to be their own masters. The proposal of building a Marxist service-oriented party is the concentrated expression of the party's nature and purpose. Marxist service-oriented party has been proposed by the party based on the nature of Marxist party to adjust the party's function, integrate the party's governing resources, promote the party's role as a political organization, win people's hearts by the means of serving the people and serving the community, and truly become the tool to safeguard people's power and interests.

Building a learning and service-oriented innovative Marxist ruling party is the vivid manifestation of the nature of a Marxist party. Through the construction of the "three features" party, we can constantly improve the party's learning capability, service capability and innovation capability to help to maintain the advanced nature of the party and maintain the close tie with people. Meanwhile, through the demonstrative actions of the party, we can guide the people's desire of learning, stimulate the creativity of the whole society, and promote the constructions of a learning-oriented society, a service-oriented government and an innovation-oriented country. A learning-oriented society, a service-oriented government and an innovation-oriented country are also the reflection that the party keeps its advanced nature in the practice.

## **2.2 The Major Strategy of Further Enhancing the Scientific Level of Party Construction**

The Fourth Plenary Session of the Seventeenth Central Committee of CPC firstly has proposed "to improve the scientific level of party construction", and "to comprehensively promote the new great project of party construction with the spirit of reform and innovation"; Comrade Hu Jintao has made a great elaboration on this issue in his speech at the Commemoration of the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of CPC; the report of the Eighteenth National Congress of the CPC again took "with the spirit of reform and innovation, comprehensively promote the new great project of party construction and comprehensively improve the scientific level of party construction" as the theme in terms of party construction. They show to us that our party has made constant thoughts on how to improve the scientific level of party construction, and the recognition of the issue has reached a new height. The so-called "scientification of party construction" is to deepen the understanding of the law of Marxist party construction, build the party in accordance with the law of party construction, take the Marxist party building theory as the guidance and carry out party construction in line with the scientific development concept. The proposal of the construction of a "learning and service-oriented innovative Marxist ruling party" is the new answer to "what kind of party to be built and how to build the

party" in the practice, whose aim is to further enhance the scientific level of party construction.

Scientification of the party construction is established based on the correct understanding of the objective law of Marxist party construction. "The ruling law of the Communist Party is the law and objective requirement which the Communist Party must follow and reflect the nature and necessity of the ruling party." (Yu, 2005) Its main evaluation criteria is that whether it is conducive to promoting the party's governing capability, whether it helps to ensure the party's advanced nature and whether it is conducive to the party's leadership to the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics. The fundamental criterion is to see whether it meets the interests of people and whether it gets the recognition of people. CPC not only has the general characteristics of class nature, political nature and practical nature of Marxist party, it is also a party with a learning quality, innovation character and service spirit. The construction of a Marxist learning and service-oriented innovative party is the scientific decision of promoting the party construction on the base of a further recognition of the party's governance concept, governance objective, governance strategy and governance condition, etc..

Firstly, the proposed construction of a Marxist learning-oriented party is aimed at promoting the party and government cadres and party members' learning, especially the learning of Marxist theory to be scientific, standardized and systematized, which is a strategy to improve the party's ideological and political qualities. Marxist theory, especially the results of Marxism in China is the major learning content of the construction of a Marxist learning-oriented party. Marxism has not only the formed classical theories but also living social practices, which are continuously enriched with the development of practices. From the perspective of the advancement and openness of Marxism, building a Marxist learning-oriented party can ensure the party's advanced nature from the root. Secondly, the proposed construction of a Marxist service-oriented party is the requirement to fulfill the ruling purpose of a Marxist ruling party and the necessity to always retain the party's advancement. Deng Xiaoping once pointed out that the reason CPC "is able to become the vanguard and lead the people is because, and only because, it is the wholehearted server of the people." (*The Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping [Volume 1]*, 1994, p.218) In essence, the leadership and ruling of CPC is a kind of service behavior, but in the process of the party's long-term and stable governance, there are not only the serving conditions but also the danger of being isolated from the people. If loses the support of the people, the party loses the only condition to be the advanced force. Therefore, the proposed construction of a Marxist service-oriented party needs to emphasize the party's service, emphasize the ruling party's value of serving the people wholeheartedly, and take the fundamental interests of

people as the highest evaluation criteria. Thus, the ruling party's value and the fundamental interests of people achieve a high degree of consistency. A Marxist service-oriented party reflects the scientific concept of the people, and is the fundamental premise to improve the scientific level of party construction. Thirdly, the proposed construction of a Marxist innovative party has a logical consistency with strengthening the party's governance ability and achieving the party's historical mission. *A Decision of the CPC Central Committee on Strengthening the Party's Governance Capability Construction* issued by the Fourth Plenary Session of the Sixteenth Central Committee has elaborated the guideline, overall objective, principles, policies and governing style of the governance capability construction, and outlined the party's five governing capabilities, which were closely related to the implementation of the party's spirit of innovation, and should have been fulfilled to strengthen the party's governing capability during the construction of a Marxist innovative party. The great historical mission of CPC is to realize communism. This noble mission determines the long-term and complexity of the realization process, which will inevitably encounter new situations and new problems, and is a test of the party's governing ability. No matter the theoretical basis, goal or road to achieve the mission, they inherently require the establishment of a Marxist innovative party. For example, from the perspective of the road to achieve the mission, in the course of the struggle to realize communism, CPC firstly explored a new-democratic revolutionary road of encircling the cities from the rural areas, then worked out a road of building socialism with Chinese characteristics, which success both depend on the party's innovation. Today, the road of building socialism with Chinese characteristics is still under exploration and development, in order to achieve the leadership of the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics, the party should still rely on innovation to maintain and develop its advanced nature. Building a Marxist innovative party is the requirement of the era.

Building a learning and service-oriented innovative Marxist ruling party is a newly proposed concept, but

the focus on learning, serving the people and innovation have always been the tradition and characteristics of our party. Building a learning and service-oriented innovative Marxist ruling party is in line with our party's consistent practices and the historical logic of theoretical development. Though they each have different meaning, they're three closely linked and mutual complementary propositions. The construction of Marxist learning-oriented party is the method and means of the construction of Marxist service-oriented innovative party; the construction of Marxist service-oriented party is the ultimate goal of the construction of Marxist learning-oriented innovative party; the construction of Marxist innovative party is the basic requirement of the construction of Marxist learning and service-oriented party. Learning-oriented, service-oriented and innovative Marxist ruling party interlink and interact with each other, which constitute an organic integration taking effects in the whole system of party construction. They are the new idea to improve the scientific level of party construction, and are the basic requirement to build an advanced party in the new period.

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