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The Established of Social Security System in the United Kingdom: Within the Victorian London

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Abstract: Marginal groups in Victorian London have been played an important role in the established of social security system in U.K. This paper summarizes about the most typical characteristics of marginal groups, most of them live in the city's slums or live in village, they are not integrating into mainstream society and have a low socioeconomic status. In this situation, to know the emergence of marginal groups is the key to solve the problem. The effects which greatly promote the development of human civilization because of marginal groups. Whenever in the Victorian London, the housing reform movement, or in modern society, America's Food Stamps, unemployment insurance and Medicaid also prove that the society has developed its social security systems.

Keywords: Social Security; Victorian London; Marginal Groups.

1. Introduction

There are no doubts that with the development of economy and industrialization, the gap between the rich and the poor is growing. In the period of Industry Revolution. 1/3 of worker families lived in a poor life, that was why Harrison point out that there is unnecessarily to image. The poor groups are a common phenomenon in London, however, with hundreds of years of economy development, when London has become the great power in the world, the poverty problems and the gap between rich and poor, have been major issues in London. And these social problems emerge with reasons. [1]

2. The Unreasonable Distribution of Social Wealth

The unreasonable distribution of social wealth makes a bigger gap between rich and poor. In 1801, 1.1% of the riches citizens gained 25% of the gross national income, in 1848, 1.2% of the richest citizens gained 35% of the gross national income, when the Industry Revolution was completed, 2% of the richest citizens gained 40% of the gross national income, the contrast was that the laborers income' proportion of the gross national income has decreased from 42% to 39% in1803 to 1867.[2] From these statistics, we see that with the further development of industry, the unreasonable distribution of social wealth make the rich becomes richer while the poor becomes poorer. And poverty comes to the marginal groups, they become a big army of poverty. Many social problems emerging with the unreasonable distribution of social wealth. In Queen Victoria's first excursion, she traveled through England heart of Industrial darkness, she saw what she did not want to see. She traveled through the landscape over British infernal, salty and sulfurous. She saw closely the darkness and dessert of industrial London: "sooty and sulphurous. The men, women, children, country and houses are all black. The country is very desolate everywhere. There are coals about and the grass is quite blasted and black." She writes that "I just now see an extraordinary building flaming with fire, smoking and burning coal heaps intermingled with wretched huts and carts and little ragged children." [3] That's the reality of the Victorian London.

3. Economic Policy of Laissez-Fair

In the period of Industry Revolution, Britain carries out the policy of laissez-fair, which means social interests and personal interests can be perfectly balanced by market's self-adjustment. Adam Smith, a founder of this theory, in his opinion, with the guidebooks of an invisible hand, everyone should pursuits their own interests, it can much promote the social interests. With the theory, he suggests that government should not have any interference but allow each citizen to pursuit wealth freely. In fact, because of laissez-fair, Britain begins to carry out the policy of "free trade" with foreign countries. Britain has canceled tariff barriers and trade protection with other countries and becomes the world factory. In the year of 1841, the proportion of industry grows up to 40.5%, economy has been strengthened. [4]

However, there are two sides of one coin. Laissez-fair is so. The largest disadvantage of laissez-fair is that it makes a blindly market and also a disorder social production, it causes the wastes of resources and labors. Disorder market causes economy crisis. Production is more than consumption, a large amount of goods cannot be sale but overstocked, finally, the industrialists have to destroy the goods and close the factories. Therefore, a lot of workers are underemployed, and a slumping of foreign trade has made massive people underemployed, social productive force is destroyed, wrecked and even ruined. The whole society falls down to chaos and paralysis. People live in the anxious minds and an unrest society.

4. Popular Theories of Getting the Poor off Conscience

With the development of laissez-fair, government let everything happen naturally in this country, everything lives and dies under competition. With the increasing of national incomes, no one cares about the problem of distribution and no official man tries to adjust the unreasonable distribution, there are several views about the poor among the ruling classes which to some extent, are also the reasons of the existence of marginal groups.

The first theory among ruling classes is Malthusianism.

This theory appeared in the 1830s, it was said that the poor should be responsible for their poverty, they were poor because their excessive fecundity. They were unable to control their lust, it caused them to breed up too many children. Therefore, in their opinions, poverty was none of business of the rich, which was the business of the poor, they had no responsibilities to help the poor and just watched them die.[5]

The second is the theory of Survival of the Fittest. In the middle of 19th Century, Herbert Spencer thought that the nature's way to evolve human being was to eliminate the poor, the marginal groups. Only the weak and the poor were eliminated, the quality of human life could be improved. Therefore, to some degrade, some of them expressed that wealth was a symbol of one's ability, the more wealth you owned, the strengthener you were. The poor, they were poor was because they were weak. They should responsible for themselves. [6]

The third is the idea that help the poor only hurts the poor. Among the ruling classes, there is a popular view is that any forms of public help to the poor is helpless, it only hurts them. They express that public assistance causes bad incentives, destroyed their morals. The more you help, the lazier they are. At that time, some people said that the poor should know the feelings of being poor, or they would never be hard-working and industrious. They regarded poverty as a personal thing, the poor should be responsible for it, the government and the society should do nothing. [7]

The last idea is that the rich think they are poor is because of their laziness, the source of evil is because of laziness. Some people think that poverty is the prerequisite of social development, it is an indispensable element. Without poverty, society cannot be survived in the state of civilization. Poverty also means bad luck. And poverty is source of wealth, for without poverty, there is no motivation to work, the poor will not fight for the happy and wealthy life, hence, you are poor because you are lazy and that' s the essence of poverty.[8]

All above theories are excuses for the rich to ignore marginal people, they resort to psychological denial. However, the history tells that if human being without compassion, there is no peace.

5. The Social Effects of Marginal Groups: Social Reform Movements

Poverty brings violence, crimes and even death. Marginal groups are one of the reasons of social instability, it is easy to see the bad effects which marginal groups brings, however, to some extent, some social reforms which happened in the Victorian London, had pushed the process and improved the development of human history.

In fact, the explosive growth of London population, the immigrants, the typical views of housing near job among the poor, large amount of agricultural population rush into London, urban planning and railway construction, high hosing rents... all these reasons make East End become "overcrowded slums".

After 1840s, some charity house agencies were founded in succession. These agencies were called Model Dwellings Companies. The way these companies to raised money was to absorb commercial capital and philanthropic capital as well. The companies combined charity and market economy so as to easily establish the housing and lease to working class at a seasonal price. They hoped the companies can get 5% of benefits from investments of housing projects of the poor [9]. In 1863, Waterloo established Improved Industrial Dwellings Company. This company obeyed the hosing policy strictly and solved housing problems for the poor with energy. In 1867, William Austin built up Artisan's, Laborer's and General Dwellings Company, in the end of 19th Century, this company had built up about 6400 apartments and offered shelters for 51000 people. [10]

In the Victorian London, in the reforms of housing and slums problems, Octavia Hillmade a great contribution. She is a housing reformer. According to the dirty, crowded condition of London slums, she established and transform applicable housings to marginal groups, which was at a low cost and low rental. She managed all the housing by herself and she had a good relationship with her tenants. She also renovated hosing environment and opened public space. Different from others, Octavia Hill had a great significance in housing reform history. She fulfills the government's policy with actions under her ways of private management and operation. [11] Her ways of reforming are so successful that these ways are learned by America and European continents.

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