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不久前,我去过北京、上海和广州。北京的空气污染难以置信,上海和广州的空气简直是灾难性的,广州的也非常糟糕。那几天,PM2.5数值都在100-150之间。但我知道我还算幸运,因为在我去之前,北京的PM 2.5曾达到过可怕的900,一个现代国家,空气污染能达到这个地步真的令人惊讶。

我曾叫它“中国大污染”。当然,我只去了三个城市。全中国有几百座城市,有的可能更糟。本质上,中国就像赶上了一场流行病。目前的情况让上世纪50年代著名的伦敦大雾比起来也不那么糟了。

在美国,这又催生了1970年的《清洁法》及1990年修订后的《清洁空气法》。来自绿色运动的压力1992年汇集在里根内卢举办的“地球高峰会”,出于许多原因,美国当时没有在峰会达成的协议上签字,但美国没有减少防治污染的努力。

美国之后又通过了一系列更严格的反污染法律,目前还在行将PM2.5降低至每立方米10微克的水平。美国的研究也更多地发现,即使是每立方米10微克这一被认为十分安全的水平,也会对老人和非常年轻的人的健康产生影响。

美国的一些州则出台了比联邦政府更严格的反污染法,包括在这方面一直领先的加州。加州的政策和法律常常被其他州甚至联邦政府作为指导。

之间在强有力支持关系的时候,最初打破这种循环,需要公民行动。只有这样之后,政府才会主动采取行动,但这时仍需要来自公民团体的“鼓励”。

中国的污染意味着什么

不用说,“大污染”会对几亿人口的健康产生影响。

我一直很爱中国,我爱那里的人们和文化。是的,我甚至认为中国做得很好。在这一点上,我在西方人中有些与众不同。

多数西方人对中国的治理存在一些质疑,但我认为,中国在治理方面做得相当好。中国高效,努力,安全,而且得到了很好的控制。

与其他新兴国家相比,中国一直

是一个榜样。中国不像俄罗斯,政府内不存在不受控制的犯罪行为,或是与有组织的犯罪存在事实上的伙伴关系。中国不像巴西,不存在大规模的过度监管和反商业偏见。中国不像印度,不存在社会混乱和基础设施的极度匮乏。

因此,尽管很明确中国还有很长的路要走,但其领导人的智慧及社会的益处也无可否认。中国模式,尽管有不少批评,但效果一直很好,或甚至好于其它模式。事实上,在如此短的时间内,在历史上最大的国家里实现所有这些好处是非常令人瞩目的。

所有这些在奥运会和世博会的时候都表现了出来。这两个时候,我都在中国。

两场盛事的基础设施令人惊叹。中国工人和志愿者的效率和友好也非常出色。是的,当时的空气是最干净、最可呼吸的,就像西方人希望的那样。

尽管有人知道,中国为了保证奥运会时期的空气清洁做出过多少努力——对官方用车进行限制,引入车牌单双号限制,等等。尽管以自己的方式令人印象深刻,但这些努力说明,中国政府能够成功地让这自然元素都为自己服务。

但缺少对空气的真正控制现在对中国人和外国人来说已变得显而易见。许多外国人到中国时都会感到中国缺乏对空气污染的控制。

这也就意味着中国缺少对制造污染的企业和个人的控制,缺少对企业如何生产产品、排放污染的控制,缺少对法规是否被遵守的控制,甚至整个社会在政府与产业之间的关系相对于个体公民的利益上都缺少正确方向。空气污染暴露出中国真正有效治理的程度到底有多少。

中国污染对世界意味着什么

当然,国外特别是西方媒体已经注意到了中国的空气污染。国外媒体对此进行了大量的报道。

西方人在视频中看到,紫禁城的大门隐身在污染的空气之后,天安门广场上的游客身影模糊。在我乘坐的前往北京的飞机里,我第一次看到飞机几乎是空的。

很多西方人的结论是,尽管中国表面上看起来十分正常且高效,但这场“大污染”却暴露出深度的治理问题。

中国一直以来苦心建立的高效与智慧形象受到质疑,有人将它与印度画上了等号,只是公共关系更好。

过去20年左右,社会和政治分析者一直对英国与中国实现增长的方式孰优孰劣有所争论。美国模式被称为“华盛顿共识”,代表自由市场和相对不受控制的表达与治理,新的模式就是“北京共识”,代表自由市场和集中控制式的表达与治理。

近几年,认为“北京共识”是实现增长的最佳模式的观点获得了越来越多的支持,特别是在发展中国家。即使是美国模式的坚定支持者,也越来越认同“北京共识”是一种可能比其更好的增长模式,一些发达国家可能也这样认为。

毕竟,看看最近欧盟的例子。或许,它也需要尝试一些“北京共识”?或许美国也需要?

中国的“大污染”让我们看到,“北京共识”存在一些重要的益处,但也存在一个致命的缺陷:危害健康。

每个国家都有各自的问题。美国有种族问题、犯罪问题、枪支问题等等。其他发展中国家也有自己的问题。中国也一样,但它努力想做得更好,至少表面如此。

中国的“大污染”暴露出治理问题的严重性,在某种程度上可能是一百本书都做不到的。空气污染就像病毒视频一样并不足。它不必通过微博告诉你,因为每个人自己就可以看到。空气污染向世界传达了一个信息:请谨慎考虑“北京共识”。

事实上,现在正在发生的,与西方二战后发生的非常相似。当时,污染的程度也相当高,西方国家的公民们意识到,政府和产业的关系过紧,公民必须给予压力,政府才会采取行动。

中国事实上是在走西方的老路。西方过去的经验表明,在公民团体的一致行动下,中国才会采取行动,让产业的利益不再置于公民的利益之上。

“大污染”的表面问题是中国人健康有害,但真正的问题在于,它会伤害对中国治理方式的信任。
(本报记者 兰晓晴编译)

空气污染和中国模式

西方如何解决空气污染

那么,历史上美国和其他西方国家有没有遇到过空气污染问题?它们是怎么解决的?

在美国和欧洲,空气污染在上世纪40-50年代是个巨大的问题,就和今天的大气一样。重大事件有1954年的伦敦大雾,曾导致大约4000人死亡,美国也发生过几起,最著名的是洛杉矶。

导致美国政府采取行动的关键性事件并不是因为酸空气致多少人死亡,而是因为一本著名的书:1962年出版的《寂静的春天》,作者是蕾切尔·卡逊。这本书引起了轰动,导致美国民众要求政府有所行动。

也正是这个时候,绿色运动开始在美国和欧洲兴起。这些环保运动者对立法和政府施压,让他们通过防治污染的法规,并规定特别的日子,在那天都必须减少污染。

这一切努力的结果是,美国的空气污染自上世纪40年代以来被大大降低。目前全美PM2.5的平均水平为每立方米10微克。

因此,美国和欧洲的历史经验表明,空气污染完全可以被控制。但是,以下几点值得注意:

- 1、即使严重侵害到身体健康,也不曾让西方政府采取行动。
- 2、美国绿色运动的推动力是一本书,这本书给当时的标准来看十分激进,甚至是颠覆性的。
- 3、在美国和欧洲,公民的行动再加上非政府组织(NGO)将这些行动组织成大众绿色运动,才真正推动了政府的改变。
- 4、绿色运动才是持续对政府施压,让其采取更多行动防治污染的力量。私营企业则倾向于抵制,产业反而对政府施压,让他们更缓慢地推进或干脆不要推进污染防治。
- 5、历史看起来表明,当污染非常严重的时候,往往是政府和私营企业



严重的
空气污染问题,
正在考验着
中国当前的发展模式,
作为世界经济
重要一环的中国,
如何寻找
与环境和谐共生
永续发展的
经济社会
正向增长模式,
成为中国本身
甚至整个世界
都必须正视的问题。

从现在起,华夏时报正式改版一周双刊。
成双,才更厉害

双剑

华夏时报 CHINA TIMES

"The Great Pollution: The Chinese Model doesn't Work, After All"

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I have just travelled through Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou. The air pollution was unbelievable in Beijing, disastrous in Shanghai and terrible in Guangzhou. The PM 2.5 index was around 100-450 during my visits. I know I am lucky because the index was even higher in Beijing before I visited, a terrifying 900. It's truly amazing that any modern country could let its pollution get so utterly unacceptable.

I call it, The Great Pollution of China.

Of course, I just saw 3 cities. There are hundreds of cities all over China. Many of them are even worse. Fundamentally China is living through a permanent pandemic. It makes the London smog of the 1950s look like a slightly wispy day by comparison.

How Did the West Solve Its Air Pollution Problem?

So what is the record of the US and the Western countries with air pollution? How did they solve their huge problem?

In the US and Europe, air pollution used to be a huge problem in the 1940s and 1950s, just like China now. Major events like the great London fog of 1954 led to around 4000 deaths and there were other major smog events in the US, especially in Los Angeles.

The pivotal event which led the US government to take action on air pollution was actually not mainly because people died from bad pollution. It was due to the publication of the famous book by Rachel Carson called "Silent Spring" in 1964. This famous and influential book led to popular demand by US people that the government take action. It essentially shamed the US government into taking action that it would not otherwise have taken.

It is from this time that green movements started to emerge in the US and Europe. These movements pressed legislators and government to pass regulations against pollution and specifying dates by which reductions in pollution must take place.

In the US this led to the Clean Act of 1970 and to a new expanded Clean Air Act in 1990. Pressure from green movements then coalesced at the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. For various reasons the US did not sign the agreement that came from the summit, but this did not reduce the actions in the US against pollution.

The US has continued to pass numerous stricter anti-pollution laws and currently it has under discussion reducing PM 2.5 levels below a level of 10 micrograms per cubic meter. Research in the US continues to show that even at levels viewed as being very safe, such as 10 micrograms per cubic meter, both elderly and very young people still suffer major health impacts.

Some US States have passed even tighter anti-pollution laws than the US Federal Government. This includes California whose anti-pollution efforts lead those of all other States. California's policies and laws often serve as a guide to other States, and even to the US federal government.

The result of all this effort is that in the US air pollution has been reduced dramatically since the 1940s and the passing of the Clean Air Act in 1970. Currently the PM 2.5 level in the US is an average of 10 micrograms per cubic meter.

So the history of the US and Europe shows that it is possible to get air pollution under control. However we should note the following:

1. Even severe health impacts did not by themselves lead to Western governments taking action
2. The major driver of the green movement in the US was a book that was, by the standards of the time, very radical and even subversive
3. It took citizen action and the organization of this action into popular green movements by NGOs to lead to real change by government, both in the US and Europe
4. Green movements are the ones continuing to press government for more action on pollution, with private companies tending to resist and with industry putting pressure on governments to proceed more slowly, or not at all
5. The record seems to show that when pollution is very bad, it is because of a strong supportive relationship between government and private companies that do the polluting. Initially to break this cycle it requires citizen action. It is only after this has occurred that governments start to take the initiative themselves but even then they need "encouragement" from citizen groups.

What Does Pollution Mean in China?

It goes without saying that The Great Pollution is severely damaging the health of hundreds of millions of people. It will cut short their lives. Millions of children will suffer cognitive deficits because of the lead and mercury in the air which damages their young brains and nervous systems more quickly and easily.

I have always loved China. I love the people, culture and yes, I even think the government has done a good job. In that I am a little unusual amongst Westerners.

Most Westerners have some doubts about Chinese governance. But my view is that the Chinese government has done not just a good, but an excellent job of governing China. China is efficient, hard-working, safe and well-controlled.

Compared to other emerging countries, China has been a role model. Unlike Russia, it doesn't have the uncontrolled criminality in government and the de facto partnership with organized crime. Unlike Brazil, it doesn't have massive over-regulation and its anti-entrepreneurial bias. Unlike India, it doesn't have the social chaos and tragic lack of infrastructure.

So even though it's clear that China has a long way to go, the wisdom of its leaders and the benefits to Chinese society are undeniable. The Chinese model, despite all the criticisms, has worked very, very well, maybe better than anyone else's. The fact that it has been able to achieve all these benefits in the largest country in history in such a very short time is hugely impressive.

All of this was on display in the Olympics and then Expo. I was in China both times.

The scale of the architecture for both events was stunning. The efficiency and friendliness of Chinese workers and volunteers was outstanding. And, yes, the air was mostly clear and breathable, just like a Westerner expects.

Although some knew that China had made special efforts to keep the air clean during the Olympics – banning official use of cars, introducing the license plate restriction system etc. – even that was impressive in its own way, showing that the Chinese government could successfully command even the natural elements to do its bidding.

But the true lack of control over the air has now become painfully apparent, not just to the Chinese, but to all foreigners. Any foreigner visiting China can have no doubt that China has no control whatsoever over air pollution.

In turn that means that there is no control over the companies and people that produce it. No control over how companies produce products, discharge pollutants. No control over whether regulations are obeyed. No control even over the right direction of Chinese society in the area of the relationship between government and industry relative to the interests of private citizens. The air pollution lays bare the extent to which there is true effective governance in China.

What Does this Pollution Mean for the World?

And of course, the foreign, particularly the Western media has taken note. There has been a huge outpouring of articles in the foreign press.

Westerners now see videos of the pollution cloaking the gates of the Forbidden City, and the misty outlines of tourists in Tiananmen Square. For the first time ever on my flight to Beijing, the flight was almost empty.

The conclusion of Westerners particularly is that China, despite the appearance of normality and efficiency, has a deep governance problem revealed by The Great Pollution.

The Olympic aura has been destroyed. It has been replaced by a miasma. The image of efficiency and wisdom so painstakingly built by China has been replaced by an image that China is just another version of India, just with better public relations.

Over the past 20 years or so there has been a debate amongst social and political analysts about the relative merits of the American and Chinese ways of achieving growth. The American model was called the Washington Consensus. This represents the free market and relatively uncontrolled expression and governance. The new model was the Beijing Consensus, the free market with centrally controlled expression and governance.

In recent years, there has been growing support for the view that the Beijing Consensus is the best model for growth, especially in emerging countries. Even strong supporters of the US model have been coming to believe that the Beijing Consensus was a viable and even better model for growth, even maybe for advanced countries.

After all, look at the recent sad economic experience of the European Union. Maybe it needs a dose of the Beijing Consensus? Maybe even the US needs it too?

The Great Pollution of China has settled that debate once and for all. The Beijing Consensus has some major benefits but one fatal flaw. It kills you.

Every country has problems. The US has a race problem, a crime problem and a gun problem (among others). Other emerging countries have their problems too. China is no different in having problems, but it managed to do better than just about everyone, or at least, it seemed to.

The Great Pollution of China exposes the severity of its governance problems in a way that a million books could not. Air pollution is the viral video that won't go away. It doesn't have to be shown on Weibo because everyone can see it for themselves. Air pollution is broadcasting a message to the world that clearly says: whatever you do, don't adopt the Beijing Consensus.

In fact, what is happening now is very similar to what happened in the West in the period after World War II. At that time, despite the huge levels of pollution, it became clear to the citizens of the Western countries that government and industry were too close and that governments would not take action without pressure from citizens.

The Chinese government is actually following the same path followed by Western governments. The record is that the Chinese government will not take action unless there is concerted action from citizen groups because, like the Western governments then, the Chinese government is too close to industry and is representing their interests over and above the interests of the citizens.

The apparent problem with the Great Pollution is that it is permanently damaging the health of Chinese people. Of course, this pollution is also damaging the health of everyone else in the world as it wafts on global air currents to the clean cities of Europe and the US.

But the real problem with The Great Pollution is that it is destroying belief in the Chinese way of governance.

China now not only needs to save the lives and health of its citizens and those of the rest of the world. It needs to save face too.

The Beijing Consensus is now officially dead. The issue is, what comes next?

The Chinese have a saying: “Ren yao lian; shu yao pi”

Where will the bark of the tree come from?

Dr. E. Ted Prince, the Founder and CEO of the Perth Leadership Institute, located in Florida in the US have also been CEO of several other companies, both public and private. He is the author of 'The Three Financial Styles of Very Successful Leaders (McGraw-Hill, 2005) and numerous other publications in this area. He is a frequent speaker at industry conferences. He works with large corporations globally on leadership development programs and coaches senior executives and teams in the area of financial leadership. He has held the position of Visiting Professor at the University of Florida in the US in its Graduate Business School and also at the Shanghai University of Finance and Economics in China.

The lesson from the West has been that without concerted action from private citizens, government will not act since it is more responsive to demands from the private sector to not make any, or only minimal change.

