The New Administration under Xi Jinping and Li Keqiang, and Social Reform¹

Main Speaker: Wang Ming
Panelists: Ma Qingyu, Liu Peifeng
Chair: Ma Jianyin

Ma Jianyin: Honored guests, teachers and students, a warm welcome to all of you! This is the two hundred and third academic salon hosted by Tsinghua University's NGO Research Center and the first public welfare forum of the Philanthropy and NGO Support Center. It is co-hosted by the two parties. Today we are delighted to be joined by Professor Wang Ming, member of the tenth, eleventh and twelfth sessions of the national committee of the CPPCC (Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference). Professor Wang Ming is the director of Tsinghua University's NGO Research Center. He also both an exceptional researcher and policy advocate for Chinese social reform. The speech he will share with us today focuses on the new administration under Xi Jinping and Li Keqiang and social reform. This is the fruit of both his personal experience following his participation in this year's National People's Congress (NPC) and the CPPCC and the many long years he has spent deeply immersed in research on social reform.

The two panelists who join us today are also both famous scholars within this field: Professor Ma Qingyu from the China National School of Administration, and Professor Liu Peifeng from the Law School at Beijing Normal

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University. Respectively, they also hold the positions of deputy head of the Department of Public Management at the China National School of Administration, and director of the Research and Teaching Center for Constitutional Law, Beijing Normal University. Let us first invite Professor Wang to share with us his speech; then we will invite our two panelists to join Professor Wang in exploring issues pertaining to social reform.

Over to Professor Wang!

Wang Ming: Good afternoon everyone! Let me add a little to Dr. Ma’s introduction. The talk I’m about to give is derived from the speeches given at the School for Public Policy and Management Lectures for Party Cadres on the Study of the NPC and the CPPCC; at the same time it is part of the content of two of our courses, the first being “The Concept of Non-Governmental Management”, and the second being “Government Organization”.

The ‘State Council Institutional Reform and Transformation of Functions Plan’ Is a Manifesto, Which Is to Set in Motion the Second Round of Reforms

This year was the third time that I have participated in the annual meetings of the CPPCC and the NPC as a member of the national committee of the CPPCC. This time, there was a clear theme characterizing these two meetings, during which we saw a leadership change. That theme was the setting in motion of reforms, and confidence therein. The symbolic document of the greatest legal significance to emerge at this year’s meetings of the NPC and the CPPCC was not the Government’s Work Report, nor was it the Work Report of the NPC. It was the ‘State Council Institutional Reform and Transformation of Functions Plan’, which I will refer to as ‘the Plan’. I’ve been studying the Plan for a good while now. Today I’d like to share with you all some of the things I’ve come to realize during this process of research. I see this Plan as the reform manifesto of the Xi-Li Administration. The new government has already begun its work, but what can we look to in order to understand their views and strategic thinking? During the meetings of the NPC and the CPPCC, I kept searching for signs to understand just what it is that they are thinking. What is their strategy? I closely studied the Government Work Report, the Work Report of the NPC and the CPPCC Report, but I felt that basically, all of these documents are representative of the previous administration and its recommendations to the new administration. So where is the thinking of the new administration to be found?

It was while Ma Kai was in the throes of explaining the Plan, after I’d listened to the first half of his explanation, that I realized there was something