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## **AXIOLOGICAL APPROACH TO ECONOMIC REFORMS IN UKRAINE**

In 1999, the journal «Science and Defence» published my article related to economic issues' influence on the security of Ukraine. The article discussed, among other issues, the ways to overcome the systemic crisis in Ukraine by consolidated use of tactical and strategic reform measures. Immediate tactical measures included reforming the system of governance and combating corruption, and strategic ones - restoring the rule of law and moral and ethical standards in the economy [1, p. 2-3].

Attempts were underway with the proclaimed purpose to reform the governance system. Numerous high-level commissions call on the government, including ministries and agencies, to reform themselves, but little has changed in practice.

Another problem is that in Ukraine reforms were entrusted to those who had been supposed to be reformed, and the reform of public administration were entrusted to representatives of this system. However, positive results from “self-reforms”, as the country's practice has shown, could not produce positive results, because independent experts should play a leading role in developing reform plans, since “the devil cannot reform hell”. In Ukraine, the number of officials is still too large, and their functions are inflated, but even more worrying is the poor quality of the middle management, and particularly the lack of morality among many high-ranking officials.

Therefore, it is critically important to carry out radical reforms of the public administration system aimed at deregulating the economy and improving the qualifications of civil servants at all levels. This schematic process should be accompanied by filling state institutions with people who have high moral and ethical principles based on Christian values. At the same time, the reform process should be accompanied by the rooting of Christian values in society as a vaccine against corruption, greed and slander.

Back in October 1994, a program of reforms was presented by the President to Verkhovna Rada. It was a professionally drafted document, which envisaged almost all the measures necessary for reforming the Ukrainian economy on a market basis. The program was adopted by the parliament, but its implementation was assigned to a non-professional staff, which eventually led to its inadequate performance. Instead of selecting and involving a professional team to execute the program, efforts were made to try and develop different programs, which were only within range of competence of the present team. This became the reason for the deepening crisis of the Ukrainian economy and led the country to the brink of bankruptcy.

Given all this, it remains still unclear who in particular is responsible for formulating economic advice for our Head of State. As the economic advisor to the president Anatoliy Halchinskiy mentioned in an interview, he was not the only one who gives advice to the Head of State and cannot be sure that his advice is accepted. Such a situation seems quite strange, as even the principal economic adviser does not know which and whose advice will be reflected in official state documents. If each time the advice of different people is considered, it is easy to imagine what a mixture of uncoordinated views and concepts guides our economic life [2, p. 8]. Our current economic situation proves this. Instead of restructuring unprofitable state-owned enterprises, they continue to obtain budgetary aid or tax preferences. Such harmful practices not only hinder real market reforms, but also increase the threat of a deeper and more disastrous economic crisis [3, p. 9].

In the process of centuries-old transformation, society has achieved significant results in education, science and technology. People have become more educated, more rational, but not wiser. This explains presence in society of all the same problems that many centuries ago, only at a higher technological level. The whole issue boils down to the acuteness of the problems and the activity of the state and society against the progress in the development of economic, social and other spheres of the country depends on the existence of a development strategy that largely considers the Biblical principles and postulates.

Adam Smith defined the major character of a truly virtuous person as prudence, justice, beneficence and self-command. Without such sacred respect for the general rules, it would not have been possible to count on anyone's adequate behaviour. This possibility makes a significant difference between a moral and honest person and an immoral and dishonourable person [4, part VII].

At present, one of the key problems in Ukraine is pervasive corruption, supported by excessive regulation, which impedes functioning of both individual firms and business. In fact, a paradoxical situation has developed in the Ukrainian economy, since corruption became a connecting link between developing market relations in the economy and people who want to gain access to the markets.

Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher argued that in a democratic era, governing a country without moral principles is virtually impossible [5, 512 p.].

The current global economic crisis has shown that the gap between the material sphere and moral principles can be very deep. However, this crisis is global not only in the geographical, substantive and systemic sense, but and not so much economic as economic-spiritual. Thus, to overcome the current crisis, not only new economic mechanisms are needed, but also new approaches that consider spiritual, moral, ethical and other human values. Nowadays, not only is the number of officials in Ukraine still too large and their functions bloated, but even more alarming is the low quality of mid-level employees, and particularly the lack of morality among many high-level officials. To successfully confront these challenges, a comprehensive approach is needed, which combines main aspects of successful modern development, including the axiological approach.

World experience of successful economies testifies to their close multi-year relationship with universal human values and the prevailing religion in the country. The same experience shows that the connection between economics and religious values makes people wiser, and society becomes more humane and stable, since a purely pragmatic approach to economic development, although provides acceptable growth, does not solve many fundamental problems of society.

Today, it is more important than ever for Ukraine to study and explore Christian principles and values that led to the formation of successful democratic European states. Ukraine needs new reforms that would change the internal basis for the development of the state, create conditions for the economy to work for the benefit of the entire society and equality before the law for everyone. However, one of the main problems in the implementation of these reforms is the observance of high moral and ethical standards at all levels of social relations.

Christian morality strongly condemns bribery and notes its destructive effects on individuals and society as a whole; Christian morality condemns both those who take bribes and those who give them: "He who is greedy of gain will trouble his own house, but he who hates gifts will live". Those who offer bribes to judges to render an unjust verdict are especially severely condemned: "The wicked brings forth a bribe out of his bosom to pervert the ways of judgment" (Proverbs 15:27).

The Bible contains quite detailed instructions regarding a number of the most important components of economic development, such as science, education and the field of knowledge in general, which are the most important components of human activity. The introduction of biblical postulates into the process of state building of European countries has proven its productive value. Ukraine should follow those recommendations and carry out reforms in accordance with biblical laws and teach them the young generation.

Today, human capital plays an increasingly important role in economic and social development. In this process education and training have become key elements in determining the quality aspects of the labour force. Not surprisingly, the economic success of Japan and the Four Tigers – Asian resource-poor regions, is closely linked to their emphasis on human capital development through education, which is one of the prevailing in the region basic milestones of the Confucian philosophy. Singapore's long-time Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew has repeatedly emphasized the importance of education for the development of democracy and the economy of any country [7, p. 94].

In the contemporary Confucian-tradition societies, there is a widespread understanding that such effective Confucian values as respect for merit and virtue are not created by constitutional or other normative legal orders but must be cultivated independently or at least in tandem with civic or state institutions. For example, responsibility for employment, social security, education, health care, poverty alleviation, and environmental protection is increasingly redistributed between the government and non-governmental organizations, between the collective and individuals in favour of the latter.

In South Korea, which, in contrast to the rigidly authoritarian regime of China, has developed onto a structural democracy, the influence of Confucian values and motivations is also difficult to overestimate. For example, based on analysing the jurisprudence of South Korean courts in cases related to freedom of religion and conscience, concludes that South Korean courts are still strongly influenced by Confucian statism, tending to give much greater moral weight to the interests of the state than to the interests of individuals, and even when they recognize a citizen's constitutional rights to such freedoms [8, p. 35-53].

In his greeting to the 9th National Prayer Breakfast of Ukraine, President V. Zelenskyi noted: “Today we have no right to forget or neglect Christian values, they must prevail both in our words and in our actions Without them, movement on the path to prosperity and desired peace is impossible”. [9, p. 2]. Practice of Ukraine and that of other countries fully corresponds to the dependence of success in reforming or rebuilding the economy on the presence of high ethical values in those who manage the process.

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