

Social Responsibility of the Government in the Conditions of the Global Pandemic Crisis

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Abstract: The state of development of contemporary society can be described as a systemic social crisis. In any destructive phenomenon caused by the crisis, the crisis itself can become a necessary moment of the dialectical transition to a new, orderly state of the system, a necessary factor and catalyst for modernization processes. Crisis-free state of development of society - a state that hinders its development. However, while recognizing the important role of crises in development, societies should still have mechanisms in place to protect people from their negative impacts, which should reduce their risks of transition and, by anticipating development trends, possibly reduce the transition process itself. Analysing the tendency of contemporary society to sustainable development, it is necessary to clarify that the solution of such a problem should actually be carried out by various actors, civil society associations, research institutions, etc. However, the main part of this task depends on the political power, the main functions of which include ensuring stable development and security in society, as well as the management of society as a whole and its economic, spiritual, political and social spheres in particular. Thus, the task of overcoming the current crisis depends primarily on the responsibility of political power, especially the state.

Keywords: *Social crisis, society, trust, responsible attitude to activity, irresponsibility, crisis states of society.*

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Introduction

The state of development of contemporary society can be described as a systemic social crisis. Namely, the significance of such a social crisis is evidenced by a sharp change in life, a difficult transition situation. Classifying the general causes of social crises, we can say that the main sign of the beginning of a social crisis is a violation of the integrity and precariousness of forms, relationships and relations in society and its subsystems, human activities, which are manifested in interaction between people. This description quite clearly characterizes the current state of social relations. Accordingly, the state of crisis as an integral element of social development becomes familiar to the philosophy and ideology of postmodernism, which allows not only a plurality of views, but also a variety of solutions.

In any destructive phenomenon caused by the crisis, the crisis itself can become a necessary moment of the dialectical transition to a new, orderly state of the system, a necessary factor and catalyst for modernization processes (Donaldson, 2001). Crisis-free state of development of society - a state that hinders its development. However, while recognizing the important role of crises in development, societies should still have mechanisms in place to protect people from their negative impacts, which should reduce their risks of transition and, by anticipating development trends, possibly reduce the transition process itself. According to Beck (2000), the task of contemporary society is to determine “how to prevent the systematic emergence of risks and dangers in the process of progressive modernization, to make them safe, so that they do not stand in the way of modernization and at the same time do not go out beyond the boundaries (environmental, medical, psychological, social)”.

Analysing the “tasks of contemporary society”, it is necessary to clarify that the solution of these tasks should actually be carried out by various actors, civil society associations, research institutions, etc. However, the main part of this task depends on the political power, the main functions of which include ensuring stable development and security in society, as well as the management of society as a whole and its economic, spiritual, political and social spheres in particular. At the same time, political power must not just resolve conflicts and ensure order in society, but, most importantly, find a balance between the common good and the changing aspirations of different social groups to pursue their interests. Thus, the task of overcoming the current crisis depends primarily on the responsibility of political power, especially the state. It is the state that must accumulate all resources and coordinate the actions of business, science, religion, etc. for its effective solution.

The phenomenon of power in postmodern society

Shmitt (2000) argued that the essence of politics is manifested in emergencies, crises, when the usual state of affairs is violated, standard legal measures are ineffective and the politician must take responsibility. Indeed, the analysis of responsible or irresponsible actions of the government in a crisis is an important way to determine the legitimacy of a government, and possibly to identify the nature of power as such. The situation of the crisis as an extreme aggravation of existing conflicts, bringing them to a new state is a kind of litmus test.

Having built a logical chain “crisis-power-responsibility”, it should be noted that the final term should be interpreted more broadly - primarily as a social and moral responsibility of power. Moral liability is much broader than legal liability in that it is not limited to causation. In the legal field, the perpetrator is liable only for those actions or conditions for which it is the cause. From a moral point of view, the subject may be responsible for situations in which he is not directly guilty: a truly responsible state is a state that is able to help victims of natural disasters or stop genocide in another country (Braslavska, Rozhi, Honcharuk, Pliushch, Shumilova, & Silchenko, 2020; Honcharuk, Honcharuk, Zadorozhna, Sulym, Patiyevych, & Chystiakova, 2020; Nerubasska & Maksymchuk, 2020; Nerubasska, Palshkov, & Maksymchuk, 2020; Onishchuk, Ikonnikova, Antonenko, Kharchenko, Shestakova, Kuzmenko, & Maksymchuk, 2020). The definition of “social” in relation to responsibility implies that the main instance of responsibility to which the state must be fully accountable is society.

Thus, the problem of responsibility during the social crisis, on the one hand, is actualized by theoretical and methodological issues of studying the phenomenon of power as such, and on the other hand - the problems and contradictions that arise in current government practice. The study of the phenomenon of political power in the space of domestic science is especially relevant right now, as we are witnessing the most acute systemic crisis of social institutions both in terms of civilization in general and in contemporary Ukraine in particular. As a result, society is increasingly raising expectations for not so much quantitative as qualitative changes in government, as well as an adequate understanding of social security issues by the political elite.

We believe that responsibility is the basis of quality government. According to the definition of the philosophical dictionary, “responsibility is a category of ethics and law that reflects the special social and moral-legal attitude of the individual to society (humanity as a whole), which is characterized by the fulfilment of its moral duty and legal norms”. Society makes de-

mands on government officials, which are refracted in a situation of specific responsibility for each individual action of the government: “Responsibility arises in the process of specifying the total debt, taking into account the capabilities of the entity taken in a certain place at a certain historical time”. Thus, the responsibility of the government is a certain obligation, the purpose of which is to achieve and affirm the common good, and the fulfilment of this obligation is conditioned by legal and moral norms, the interests of civil society and specific historical circumstances.

The simplest way to increase the responsibility of the government can be to develop and approve legislation that clearly regulates the instruments of government accountability and clarified penalties that threaten non-compliance. However, “a comprehensive analysis of the legislation gives grounds to conclude that there are significant gaps in the legal regulation of constitutional liability of both national and local authorities”. Perhaps the problem is that the responsibility of the government is first of all a philosophical issue, and only then a legal one. That is, the essence must precede the mechanism. There is no doubt that the law should determine the rules of criminal, civil, disciplinary, material liability for government officials, for example, for a deliberate crime. But “legality” and “responsibility” are not always identical, and often the irresponsible action of the authorities does not fall under the law.

According to Bukhanov (2010), the following features should be inherent in a responsible government: “justice, honesty, diligence, punctuality, accuracy, etc.”. In addition, he provides a characterization of irresponsible power, although he does not consider it in a philosophical context, in the aspect of direct cause-and-effect relationships: “Irresponsible power is one whose actions lead to destructive consequences”. Rather, it should be said that irresponsible power is the power that not only promotes, but also indulges destruction. It is obliged to deal with crisis and catastrophic phenomena, even if not her actions led to such consequences.

The result of the government’s irresponsibility, its inability to cope with the crisis and its inability to prevent or at least anticipate it, is a decrease in its legitimacy. One cannot disagree with Shalimova (2010) states that “if the ruling elites cannot foresee possible social transformations, which are expressed in certain crises, they will be forced to leave the political arena, and with it - the ruling structures”. In addition, the consequences of the crisis in power are always tragic for the nation, as they lead to anxiety, confusion, all sorts of upheavals, revolutions, wars, deaths.

From our point of view, the irresponsibility of the government is an important indicator of the crisis in the political sphere, just as an indicator of

the economic crisis is the reduction of production, and the spiritual crisis - the destruction of generally accepted values.

Society is a complex system that develops, between the elements of which there is not a linear relationship, but “a system of heterogeneous connections: horizontal, vertical, structural, genetic, functional, cause-and-effect. In this case, any object can be considered both separately and as a whole. From the point of view of his place in the system of which he is an element, and from the point of view of his internal structure”. Accordingly, the disorder in one of the subsystems of society (spheres of public life) leads to destabilization. Thus, the lack of responsibility of decision-makers intensifies the process of devaluation of values in society. In a state of systemic crisis, the process of demoralization of the population, exacerbation of legal and economic inequality is largely formed under the influence of indifference on the part of government officials to security, stability, balance of interests, social justice. The common good is often less important than private or narrow corporate interest.

The crisis in the legal sphere is manifested both at the stage of formation of certain laws and at the stage of their implementation. In the first case, it is insufficient participation of the population in decision-making on the expediency or in expediency of a particular legislative act. In other words, all these laws are adopted not in favour of the public interest, but as a result of lobbying of individual businesses. According to Khalipov (2005): “the lobby (shadow, behind-the-scenes pressure on representatives of the official authorities, bargaining with them) is now widespread in democratic countries, a system of promoting the adoption or rejection of any bill”. As for the problems arising in the implementation of laws, they, as a rule, are caused by the ambiguity in their interpretation and the quality of the judicial system itself. Perhaps it is at this level that the causes of most disagreements, contradictions and conflicts arise. Taking into account the indicated factors, the responsibility of the state for representatives of socially unprotected groups of the population remains only declarative.

Contradictions that arise in the economic sphere are largely caused by the fact that, although the degree of influence of state power on the economy is formally limited, economically powerful groups are interested in influencing public authorities, in pursuing favourable policies. Therefore, among the prospects for the country's development in the foreground are not the values of development and well-being of all social groups, and the security of the ruling elite. It is obvious that the merging of business and government does not contribute to the establishment of responsibility, because business has other priorities - to make the most profit. Only a strong

civil society is able to reorient the activities of economic organizations so that corporate social responsibility of business is not simply declared, but expressed in real actions. And only a strong state is able to build its relations with business in such a way as not to be exposed to its harsh pressure and at the same time not to become a means of realizing all the desires of large economic entities.

Examining the direct interaction of the dominant and subordinate states, which occur in the process of communication between citizens and representatives of civil service (civil servants, officials) in the space of law, economics, morality, we can conclude that in a social crisis the state often fails to reconcile among themselves the interests of different social groups. Moreover, the conflict between the authorities themselves and the rest of the country's population tends to escalate. This is due to the fact that the latter remain deeply dissatisfied with the low degree of social responsibility of bureaucratic state institutions. As a result, the level of public confidence in public authorities has a steady downward trend.

A number of contemporary social researchers (among them Bourdieu, 1993) point to the high role of trust as a form of social capital in public life, showing a clear relationship between level of trust and economic well-being, quality of life, human development. As a rule, the level of interpersonal trust is considered in social science and it is concluded that its level can be raised by intensifying the activities of civil society institutions. As for trust in state power, from our point of view, it is no less important than interpersonal trust, and it depends most on the degree of responsibility of the government itself. Accordingly, it is possible to raise the level of trust in the state only by demonstrating real actions on the part of the authorities.

Social responsibility of the state in this context is a kind of mediator between interpersonal trust and trust in the state. A developed civil society is a necessary condition for responsible state behaviour. If civil society is weak, the state will not report to it. Implementation of socially responsible activities, in turn, is an important condition for increasing the level of trust in the state.

In a democracy, power is both the state and civil society. The first - in the form of representatives of the people, government officials, the second - in the form of associations and movements spontaneously organized by the people. The responsibility of the authorities in this context is not only the responsibility of the state for the decisions taken, but also the responsibility of civil society for the state to periodically report to society for its actions.

A pandemic crisis provokes social change, changes in habitual social ties, revealing overdue sharp contradictions and requires to resolve them immediately. At the time of pandemic, society emphasizes and exacerbates all the special characteristics of postmodern society, according to Mamzer (2020).

Postmodernism is becoming an incomplete list of topics, including familiar problems such as pluralism, freedom, opportunities, progress and the ones that have been added at times of crisis, specifically - the responsibility of government (Patton, 2015, p. 687). Croitor emphasizes that the civilization and the philosophical aspects of social responsibility are related to contemporary challenges such as globalization, since the postmodern and post-informational societies are a part in the new cultural paradigm (Croitor, 2014, p. 255). Everyday life in postmodern society has shaped our identity and material values and pluralism of thoughts have become decisive (Dunn & Castro, 2012, p. 354). The challenges of modernity, one of the most powerful being in the form of a pandemic, make adjustments in the perception of one's own identity. For the sake of preservation, postmodernism seeks more flexible approaches to moral norms, to responsibility, trying to unite the efforts of politics, philosophy and education (Jun, 2014, p. 159). Previous ethical norms have proven to accustom to irresponsibility, as there is no need to develop one's own trajectory of responsibility in a clearly defined range of responsibilities (Holtzhausen, 2015, p. 770).

Analysis and solution of the most acute problems of interaction between the two sides of government in Ukraine allows us to identify those components within which the existing contradictions should be resolved. It is important to choose the right means of finding unanimity, coherence, integrity, where an important role is played by social philosophy, which summarizes the data of other sciences. Philosophy and on its basis social philosophy is guided by the existing experience of world philosophical thought action.

Features of social responsibility of contemporary power

Social responsibility is a complex phenomenon, the study of which is not possible without determining its content. According to the work of Paramonova (2001) "Social responsibility: genesis, essence, structure and development strategy" social responsibility is defined as a system. Paramonova (2001) notes that the obligatory elements of such a system are the subject, object and instance. The structure of social responsibility can be revealed only through the awareness of the goal as an important link in social responsibility. Thus, the subject of social responsibility is the bearer of certain qual-

ities that are necessary to achieve a certain goal. We assume that the subject of social responsibility can be an individual or a social group who have certain moral qualities, share the values of the society of which they are representatives. Such properties motivate the subject to observe social responsibility (Saunders, 2020, p. 16). The object of social responsibility is the goal, the achievement of which is necessary for harmony in society. The instance is the individual representatives of society, who voiced the subject as a necessary and recognized by the majority of society goal. Such an instance has the possibility to adopt restrictive measures and perform control functions over the subject of liability. Interaction, joint efforts of individuals aimed at achieving the chosen goal is the main indicator of social responsibility in society.

Power is the relationship between the subject and the object, where the subject takes a strong-willed position in relation to the object. The subject of power has its expression as an individual, a group or even an entire state. In this paper, we focus on the individual or social group as a subject of power. We also assume that the subject of authority coincides with the subject of public authority. By public power we mean legal power, the main tasks of which are to realize the interests of certain social groups, preserve the territorial integrity of the state and preserve a favourable climate in society, with the possible aim of increasing their legitimacy and strengthening their positions of power.

The presented structure of social responsibility, in our opinion, can legitimately become a basis for the description of structure of social responsibility of the power.

The authorities thus act as structural components of social responsibility:

- the subject as a bearer of the qualities necessary to achieve the goals of the object of power, as well as the qualities that allow him to maintain his dominant status;
- the goals and needs of the object of power, which the object with the help of the instance transmits to the subject of power as necessary conditions for life. Achieving the goals of the object of power allows the power subject to manifest itself as a bearer of power status and strengthen its privileged position;
- instance - representatives of the object of power, who put forward the subject of social responsibility of the government the necessary tasks and exercise control over their solution.

Such a structure of social responsibility of power allows us to come to understand the social responsibility of power as a means by which power

reproduces itself, achieving the goal of the object. In addition, it is the government's understanding of its obligations to make and implement socially significant decisions that meet the expectations of the object of power. Note that such socially acceptable activities always represent the interests not only of the object of power, but also of the subject itself. By exhibiting socially responsible behaviour, that is, by implementing activities that reflect the values of the object of power, meet its needs, the government itself seeks to increase its rating and its smooth reproduction. Authorities seek to accumulate symbolic capital, which is also possible through social and political responsibility to the object of power. Power, expressing its social responsibility and accumulating symbolic capital, strives for its legitimacy. It is, as noted by the French sociologist Dogan (1994), "a symbol of faith," and therefore it is sure to be in the minds of citizens. Society is confident that the authorities are endowed with special rights to make decisions and establish rules, the object of the rules must accept and comply with it (Li, 2008, p. 7). The legitimacy of power is the recognition as an object of power of the subject and his actions as justified, and the processes carried out by political and social institutions as necessary and beneficial. Thus, we understand the social responsibility of the government as a tool through which the government reproduces itself. The social responsibility of the government is also the awareness of the government of its obligations to meet the interests and needs of society. A sign of social responsibility of the government is the activity of the government, which is aimed at achieving the goals of the object of power, meeting its needs (Parker, 1976).

The concept of social responsibility is not identical to the concept of socially responsible government. Socially responsible government, in our opinion, is a government that by its decisions satisfies the interests of certain social groups without exposing other social groups to negative influence. Indicators of socially responsible government are:

- the level of tension in society, which is associated with public policy, as well as socio-political changes, possible crises. This criterion characterizes not only the socio-psychological state of the individual, but also the state of society as a whole. The feeling of socio-political tension is associated with the experience of contradictions within the community, its dissatisfaction with the policy, the functioning of social institutions, reforms and the way of life caused by the above factors. Dissatisfaction in society leads to the development of not only intragroup contradictions, but also open conflict situations that directly affect the stability of the social system. Indicative in this case is the May events in France associated with the strikes of students and trade unions in 1968. The inability of the government to guarantee cer-

tain social guarantees of labour for workers, as well as the stability of the economic situation leads to the development of political depression in society, mass protests and riots, open conflicts in society and subsequent resignation of the government;

- the level of trust in the government as an indicator of socially responsible power is directly related to giving the subject of power the right to make decisions that affect the lives of all social groups. The delegation of management functions takes place after an evaluation, often subjective.

- the level of efficiency is determined by the effectiveness of management decisions. The efficiency of power is an indicator that operates for the most part to the management process, where power realizes itself;

- an indicator of professionalism as a correspondence between the experience and professional qualities of the subject of power in accordance with the position held in government institutions. Social experience shows that professionalism plays an important role in making appropriate decisions in current affairs and in situations of uncertainty. Therefore, the awareness of the subject of power of their strengths and capabilities in the power process, in our opinion, occupies an important place in the study of the criteria of socially responsible power as a basic principle of activity. In our opinion, career growth is impossible without the professional qualities of a subject of power. Social tradition shows that career growth in society is often an indicator of effective human work, its suitability for the position, the availability of strength and opportunities for more complex and large-scale activities. The indicator of professionalism means not only the labour potential of the subject of power, but also the ethical - moral potential of the subject of power. Professional qualities, which are expressed only in productive activities without taking into account the negative consequences for others, cannot be considered morally justified and, accordingly, professional.

Conclusions

Thus, the structure of social responsibility of power includes the following elements: 1) the subject as a bearer of certain qualities necessary to achieve the goals of the object and to assert itself in power; 2) the object of social responsibility of the government, which are the goals and needs of the object of power; 3) instance - representatives of the object of power, which broadcast the needs of the object and exercise control over the activities of the subject of power. From our point of view, the irresponsibility of the government is an important indicator of the crisis in the political sphere, just as an indicator of the economic crisis is the reduction of production, and the

spiritual crisis - the destruction of generally accepted values. Therefore, the responsibility of the government is not only the responsibility of the state for the decisions made, but also the responsibility of civil society for the state to periodically report to society for its actions.

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