名古屋外語大　2013年

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次の英文を読み，下記の設問に対する最も適当な答えを，それぞれ①～④の中から選びなさい。

Income inequality, the widening income gap between rich and poor, is increasing across much of the developed world, a trend that will continue unless governments move aggressively to arrest it, according to a report released at the end of 2011 by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

This gap is being driven in part by a growing difference in wages, as skilled workers (a)command an unreasonably large share of the rewards made possible by technological progress, the report said. In addition, a surge in foreign direct investment and a looser system of regulation that has reduced employee protections have led to a wage premium for high-skill financial jobs and fewer rewards for workers at the bottom, the report said. The result is the highest level of income inequality in more than three decades, according to the Paris-based OECD, whose members include 34 developed countries and whose (b)mission is to promote policies for improving economic and social well-being.

The report comes as rising dissatisfaction with economic inequality has spread over into street protests in dozens of cities around the world. “The social contract is starting to fail in many countries,” OECD Secretary General Angel Gurria said in a statement. “This study denied the (c)assumptions that the benefits of economic growth will automatically make their way down slowly to the disadvantaged and that the greater inequality helps greater social mobility. Without a comprehensive plan for all-round growth, inequality will continue to rise.”

The average income of the richest tenth of the population in OECD countries is about nine times that of the poorest tenth, the report said. The United States, Turkey and Israel have among the largest ratios between the incomes of those at the top and the bottom, roughly 14 to 1. Germany, Denmark and Sweden have among the lowest at 6 to 1, but the ratios are up from the 1980s. The gaps in Chile and Mexico have been declining but remain the highest among OECD members, at more than 25 to 1.

Overall, inequality among working Americans has risen 25 percent since 1980, the report said. In 2008, the average annual income of the top 10 percent of Americans was $114,000, nearly 15 times higher than that of the bottom 10 percent.

That finding is consistent with other studies documenting the widening economic (d)gulf, which has become a growing political issue in the United States. The share of income going to the nation’s richest 1 percent more than doubled between 1980 and 2008, rising from 8 percent to 18 percent, the report said. The richest 1 percent of Americans make an average of $1.3 million in after-tax income, compared with $17,700 for the bottom 20 percent. Meanwhile, the top (e)federal income tax rate has fallen from 70 percent in 1981 to 35 percent, the report said.

To reverse the trend, the OECD report said, countries should implement tax and social policies that take more from top earners while offering more support to those at the bottom. But the opposite has been happening: As many countries struggle with slow-moving economies and heavy debt, they generally have been pushing to cut government spending while reducing taxes in hopes of encouraging economic growth.

Ⅰ According to the passage, choose the best answer.

(1) What is this article about?

① It describes how the OECD developed into an organization of 34 countries over the last 30 years and the purposes of their activities.

② It introduces results of a study showing the unhealthy gap in the incomes of the member countries that urges them to improve the situation.

③ It reports that people from low-income countries are getting rewards by asking for rich OECD countries’ help.

④ It summarizes the recent increase in crimes caused by people with advanced information skills and calls for arresting them.

(2) Which of the following is not mentioned as a cause of the huge difference in the income?

① Many countries are unable to make rules to protect those who are lowly paid.

② People with low income hold street protests in many countries instead of working harder.

③ Technologically skilled workers get paid far better than non-skilled workers.

④ Direct investment from foreign countries leads those with specialized knowledge to get paid more.

(3) Which of the following countries has the highest income inequality?

① Chile ② France ③ Germany ④ The United States

(4) What was reported in other studies on the American economy?

① Average Americans’ annual income of $1.3 million is reduced to $17,000 after tax deductions.

② The federal income tax rate for the richest people in America is now increased to double the rate of 30 years ago.

③ The share of income that goes to America’s richest people increased 1 percent in 2008 compared with 1980.

④ The average income of the top 1 percent of Americans is over 70 times as large as that of the bottom 20 percent.

(5) What does the article conclude?

① Governments should cut social spending and reduce tax, so that the economy should recover, but they have strong opposition.

② Many countries have introduced new social policies in order to heavily tax rich people, but it is not working well.

③ The top earners should pay more to support the poor, but because of the poor state of the economy, governments are unable to do this.

④ Those who are at the bottom should be taxed heavily, but because they are in heavy debt already, governments cannot push the new law.

Ⅱ Choose the word which can best replace the underlined word.

(1) (a)command：

① obtain ② order ③ support ④ suspect

(2) (b)mission：

① task ② team ③ test ④ trial

(3) (c)assumptions：

① assaults ② arrangements ③ beliefs ④ belongings

(4) (d)gulf：

① change ② bay ③ difference ④ increase

(5) (e)federal：

① continental ② national ③ prefectural ④ provincial