

Lies of Omission: China's Xinjiang "Internment Camps", Extremist Terrorist Groups in Uighur-Xinjiang

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For years now Western media and governments have maintained an almost ceaseless barrage against China over what they claim are networks of "internment camps" built and used in China's western Xinjiang region to persecute the Uyghur ethnic minority.

These claims are a mix of half-truths, truths taken out of context, and outright fabrications and lies.

Yet the biggest lie of all is a lie of omission - hyping, exaggerating, and even fabricating stories about China's abuse of Uyghurs - while downplaying or entirely omitting the very real terrorist problem China faces in Xinjiang.

The BBC in a 2020 [article](#), "China Uighurs: Detained for beards, veils and internet browsing," would claim (emphasis added):

Predominantly Muslim, the Uighurs are closer in appearance, language and culture to the peoples of Central Asia than to China's majority ethnicity, the Han Chinese.

In recent decades the influx of millions of Han settlers into Xinjiang has led to rising ethnic tensions and a growing sense of economic exclusion among Uighurs.

Those grievances have sometimes found expression in sporadic outbreaks of violence, fuelling a cycle of increasingly harsh security responses from Beijing.

It is for this reason that the Uighurs have become the target - along with Xinjiang's other Muslim minorities, like the Kazakhs and Kyrgyz - of the campaign of internment.

The term "sometimes found expression in sporadic outbreaks of violence" is a deliberate and spectacular understatement with the BBC itself having previously documented the grisly terrorism extremists in Xinjiang have carried out.

Xinjiang is the Epicenter of Bloody Terrorism Protected by Western Media Silence

The BBC's 2014 article, "[Why is there tension between China and the Uighurs?](#)," reported

that (emphasis added):

In June 2012, six Uighurs reportedly tried to hijack a plane from Hotan to Urumqi before they were overpowered by passengers and crew.

There was bloodshed in April 2013 and in June that year, **27 people died** in Shanshan county after police opened fire on what state media described as a mob armed with knives attacking local government buildings

At least **31 people were killed and more than 90 suffered injuries** in May 2014 when two cars crashed through an Urumqi market and explosives were tossed into the crowd. China called it a “violent terrorist incident”.

It followed a bomb and knife attack at Urumqi’s south railway station in April, which **killed three and injured 79 others.**

In July, authorities said a knife-wielding gang attacked a police station and government offices in Yarkant, **leaving 96 dead.** The imam of China’s largest mosque, Jume Tahir, was stabbed to death days later.

In September **about 50 died in blasts** in Luntai county outside police stations, a market and a shop. Details of both incidents are unclear and activists have contested some accounts of incidents in state media.

Some violence has also spilled out of Xinjiang. A March stabbing spree in Kunming in Yunnan province **that killed 29 people** was blamed on Xinjiang separatists, as was an October 2013 incident where a car ploughed into a crowd and burst into flames in Beijing’s Tiananmen Square.

These are hardly “sporadic outbreaks of violence” but rather a concerted campaign of terrorism. It is terrorism that has plagued Xinjiang and wider China for years.

Also rarely mentioned or linked to China’s policies in Xinjiang is how many thousands of Uyghur extremists have travelled abroad fighting in Western proxy wars in places like Syria and who will eventually attempt to return to China.

US State Department-funded and directed Voice of America (VOA) in its [article](#), “Analysts: Uighur Jihadis in Syria Could Pose Threat,” would admit (emphasis added):

Analysts are warning that the jihadi group Turkistan Islamic Party (TIP) in northwestern Syria could pose a danger to Syria’s volatile Idlib province, where efforts continue to keep a fragile Turkey-Russia-brokered cease-fire between Syrian regime forces and the various rebel groups.

The TIP declared an Islamic emirate in Idlib in late November and has largely remained off the radar of authorities and the media thanks to its low profile. **Founded in 2008 in the northwestern Chinese region of Xinjiang, the TIP has been one of the major extremist groups in Syria since the outbreak of the civil war in the country in 2011.**

The TIP is primarily made up of Uighur Muslims from China, but in recent years it also has included other jihadi fighters within its ranks.

The TIP has claimed responsibility for the 2011 Kashgar attacks in Xinjiang killing 23 people.

Reuters would note in its [article](#), “China envoy says no accurate figure on Uighurs fighting in Syria,” that (emphasis added):

The Syrian ambassador to China told Reuters last year that **up to 5,000 Uighurs are fighting in various militant groups in Syria.**

Terrorism within China and a small army of terrorists honing their skills with US cash and weapons in a proxy war against Syria eventually to return to Chinese territory is certainly justification enough for China to take serious measures against extremism in Xinjiang.

But by now downplaying or omitting the terrorist threat in Xinjiang, the BBC and the rest of the Western media are attempting to decouple current Chinese policy in Xinjiang from the very real and extensive terrorism that prompted it.

Washington’s Role in Supporting Xinjiang Extremism

Worse still is that China’s terrorism problem in Xinjiang is the direct result of US funding and support.

Not only did the US arm and train militants in Syria Uyghur extremists are fighting alongside, separatist groups like the World Uyghur Congress (WUC) who openly seek Xinjiang “independence” have literal offices in Washington DC and are funded by the US National Endowment for Democracy (NED).

In fact, the US NED’s grant money to subversion in China is divided into several regions with their own dedicated pages on the NED website. Xinjiang is listed [by NED as](#) “Xinjiang/East Turkestan” - East Turkestan being the fictional country extremists seek to create.

Much of the extremism in Xinjiang is also linked to extensive support from US ally Saudi Arabia and NATO member Turkey.

While the US funds political subversion and Turkey aids Uyghur extremists fighting in Syrian territory, US ally Saudi Arabia funnels money and resources into Xinjiang itself to radicalize Muslim communities with Riyadh’s politically-motivated and extremist Salafism.

The LA Times in a 2016 article titled, [“In China, rise of Salafism fosters suspicion and division among Muslims,”](#) would reveal:

Salafism is an ultra-conservative school of thought within Sunni Islam, espousing a way of life and prayer that harks back to the 6th century, when Muhammad was alive. Islamic State militants are Salafi, many Saudi Arabian clerics are Salafi, and so are many Chinese Muslims living in Linxia. They pray at their own mosques and wear Saudi-style kaffiyehs.

The article also noted (emphasis added):

Experts say that in recent years, Chinese authorities have put Salafis under constant surveillance, closed several Salafi religious schools and detained a prominent Salafi cleric. **A once close-knit relationship between Chinese Salafis and Saudi patrons has grown thorny and complex.**

And that:

...Saudi preachers and organizations began traveling to China. Some of them bore gifts: training programs for clerics, Korans for distribution, funding for new “Islamic institutes” and mosques.

This invasive radicalism transplanted into Xinjiang by the US and its Saudi allies has translated directly into real violence – a fact repeatedly omitted or buried in today’s coverage of Xinjiang and left out of US and European condemnations of China for its policies there.

The US and Europe has waged a 20 year “war on terror,” invading entire nations under false pretexts, killing hundreds of thousands, displacing tens of millions, carrying out systematic torture, and building a global-spanning surveillance network – all while more covertly arming and funding real terrorism in places like Libya, Syria, and even in China’s Xinjiang.

All of this has been done with the help of a complicit Western media bending truths or entirely fabricating lies – but also by omitting truth.

It should then come as no surprise that US and European media has chosen to lie about China’s current policies to deal with what is clearly a real and dangerous terrorism problem in Xinjiang.

But the world can choose not to believe these lies.

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