

China Chooses Development and Education, Not War, to Combat Terrorism

by Mike Billington

Aug. 2—The western world has been bombarded with virulent anti-China diatribes over the past year, reaching a fever pitch with the claim that the Chinese state has rounded up millions of Muslims in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, placing them in “concentration camps.” Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on May 2 told *Fox News* the camps were “reminiscent of the 1930s,” conjuring up images of Nazi death camps. Neocon fanatic Gordon G. Chang, author of the totally discredited book, *The Coming Collapse of China*, even claimed there were crematoria in the camps to dispose of the bodies.

It is indeed true that China has set up detention institutions, however these institutions are providing vocational education and training to those who have violated minor laws, such as refusing to carry government ID cards, calling them not “halal,” rather than making those individuals go through the regular judicial system.

Any comparison to Soviet Gulag “re-education” camps, or the outrageous comparison to Nazi death camps, is easily shown to be a vicious lie, in keeping with the desperate effort to describe China’s Belt and Road Initiative as an imperial plot to control the world.

A public letter from members of the most recent incarnation of the neocon Committee on the Present Danger, now focused on China, claims that China “is expanding its reach around the globe, co-opting

our allies and other nations with the promise of economic gain, often with authoritarian capitalism posing as free commerce, corrupt business practices that go unchecked, state-controlled entities posing as objective academic, scientific, or media institutions; and trade and development deals that lack reciprocity, transparency, and sustainability. The CCP [Chinese Communist Party] corrupts everything it touches.”

This comes from a western faction that has fully supported the neo-colonial policy of denying infrastructure and industrial development to the formerly colonized nations, on the grounds that such modern technology was



Public Domain/ Ron Przsuscha/

Michael R. Pompeo, U.S. Secretary of State, repeats lies about China.



not “appropriate” to their level of development.

In fact, China has *welcomed* foreign individuals and reporters to visit the detention centers. National Public Radio (NPR) in the United States sent a [team in May](#) and the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) [visited in June](#), both publishing extensive, fully illustrated reports. While the authors of these reports tried to portray the detention centers in the most negative light possible, they couldn’t cover up the

reality that these institutions are indeed providing extensive education—in the Mandarin language, Chinese history, and law—and specific vocational training, to thousands and thousands of mostly poor Uighur youths. The pictures accompanying the articles show diligent students, many dressed in traditional Uighur clothes, in clean classrooms and dormitories.

This past month, a group of experts from different parts of the world, most having long experience with China, were hosted on an eight-day “Information Mission” concentrating on China’s policies towards ethnic and religious minorities in general, and on its policies of counterterrorism in Xinjiang and neighboring Gansu Province. This group included Christine Bierre from the French office of the

lations with both Russia and China, a cooperation which threatens the very existence of Empire—the British imperial division of the world into warring blocs, East vs. West.

The Chinese Melting Pot

Islam came to China along the ancient Silk Road soon after the lifetime of the Prophet Mohammad, in the 7th Century. The thousands of Muslims who arrived both overland and by sea in the 7th to the 10th centuries included many traders, diplomats, and scientists. Beginning in the 10th Century, during the Song Dynasty,



Schiller Institute, who wrote an extensive report on the trip, which accompanies this article.

The picture provided by the combination of the quite hostile NPR and BBC journalists, and the friendlier group of China experts, is actually very clear—and yet it is being totally ignored by the European and American press and those hell-bent on stoking confrontation with China.

The rising pace of truly hysterical attacks on China is largely motivated by the fear that President Trump, especially with the exposure of the “Russia collusion” hoax, will finally be able to successfully carrying out his stated intention of building friendly, cooperative re-

Islamic astronomers played a critical role in China’s court in determining the calendar, leading to Muslim astronomers being recruited in large numbers from the Arab world during later dynasties.

There are over 20 million Muslims in China today. About half are Muslims of Hui ethnic minority, spread across China, who are primarily descendants of Arab and Persian migrants along the ancient Silk Road. The Uighurs and other Islamic populations of Turkish descent are largely concentrated in Xinjiang. Ten of China’s 56 officially recognized minority peoples are predominantly Muslim. Islam today is practiced openly and freely across China—there are 57,000 Islamic clerics in China, and 39,000 mosques, 25,000 of them in Xinjiang.

The same is true of Christianity, Buddhism and

other religions. There are more than 100 million Christians, and a similar number of Buddhists, who also practice their religion freely, despite fake news peddled by the anti-China propaganda outlets in the West.

The exploitation of the Uighur people by the terrorist networks of Al-Qaeda and Islamic State began with training in Pakistani camps of selected Uighurs for terrorist operations within China, and expanded when recruits were sent to Syria following the outbreak of the western-supported terrorist uprising there in 2011. Under the name of the Turkestan Islamic Party (TIP), an estimated 15,000 Uighurs have fought with the terrorists in Syria, with many returning to Xinjiang. It is estimated that as many as 5,000 are still in Syria, with the terrorists holding out in Idlib province.

A March 8, 2017 posting on *The Diplomat* provided a partial transcription of a February 2017 video released by the Islamic State in the Uighur language. *The Diplomat* reports that the 30-minute video shows—

footage of the detention of Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang by the Chinese state, images of violent torture in prisons, and escape to the Islamic State. The authors inserted an excerpt of a speech by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi from July 2014, wherein he broadly declared the Caliphate to include parts of China. Next, a bearded Uyghur militant wearing camouflage and surrounded by jihadists speaks in Uighur promising to wage a “holy war” to the bitter end until Sharia law has been spread throughout the world. He recites poetry in Uighur and swears loyalty and love to al-Baghdadi. . . . A militant teacher with his head covered . . . says, “Today we are fighting against *kafirs* [infidels] all around the world. Soon the black flag of *Tawhid* (Unity of Allah) will be



The Afaq Khoja Mausoleum near Kashgar, Xinjiang Province.

CC BY-SA 2.5 es

hanging in the capital cities of the United States, Russia, and China. . . . Oh, you Chinese, who do not understand what people say! We are the soldiers of Allah; will make you understand Islam with the tongues of our weapons. We will come to you to shed blood like rivers and avenge the oppressed.” After that, he brutally decapitates a prisoner dressed in red, who is hanging upside down.

It is of note that the offices of the “Free Tibet” and “Free Xinjiang” movements, financed by U.S. regime-change networks, including the National Endowment for Democracy and the Soros-funded groups, are headquartered at the same address in Washington, D.C.

Education and Jobs

Du Bin, the head of the Information Office of China’s Office of the State Council, who guided the NPR tour in May, told the journalists that one important aspect of countering the terrorist organizing in the Uighur community was education and poverty eradication: “Detaining and educating them and providing job skills are all necessary to help the Xinjiang region achieve a national goal of eradicating poverty by 2020,”



CC/Golegota

The Id Kah Mosque in the oasis city of Kashgar, Xinjiang.

he told the NPR journalists. NPR’s report ridiculed the Chinese claim that the people in the facilities had been “harboring extremist thoughts,” but it also quotes Mejit Mahmut, the ethnic Uighur principal of one facility—the Kashgar Vocational Education and Training Center—saying that the 1,500 students in the facility, mostly Uighur, are treated well and are free to return home to their families on weekends. The average stay in the facilities is eight months, he said.

Real Development

Since China launched its “Great Leap West” in 1999 to develop the vast, desperately poor regions of its far western provinces—and especially since President Xi Jinping announced the New Silk Road Economic Belt in Kazakhstan in 2013—Xinjiang has gone from being an isolated, landlocked region of poor farmers and merchants, to becoming a booming agro-industrial center, part of the greatest in-

frastructural development process in human history.

Then, there were few roads, and the only railroad was the Lanzhou-Xinjiang-Kazakhstan line passing through Urumqi. Now, hundreds of trains travel back and forth to Xinjiang, from the Chinese East Coast, and from Europe, every year. Two paved highways of 436 km and 562 km now cross the Taklamakan Desert, once known as a place where “once you go in, you never come out.” This modern transportation infrastructure connects the relatively more developed northern region to the isolated and impoverished southern region of Xinjiang. Average income in the province has increased more than ten-fold, for both the Uighur and the Han populations. Education and health facilities have expanded exponentially.

Human Rights Mafia Not Pleased

In a July 8 letter to the UN Human Rights Council, 22 ambassadors to the UN organizations in Geneva condemned China’s policies towards the minority Uighurs in Xinjiang. According to Reuters on July 10, the letter raised concerns about “large-scale places of detention, as well as widespread surveillance and restrictions, particularly targeting Uighurs and other minorities in Xinjiang.” The signers called on China to allow “meaningful access” to experts, and wrote:

We call on China to uphold its national laws and international obligations and to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of religion or belief in Xinjiang and across China. . . . We call also on China to refrain from the arbitrary detention and restrictions on freedom of movement of Uighurs,



and other Muslim and minority communities in Xinjiang.

An unofficial list names the signers as the ambassadors of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the UK. The United States did not sign.

China's Foreign Ministry accurately said the letter "neglected the facts" and was a slander against China, an interference in its affairs, and the politicization of human rights.

On July 12, 37 UN ambassadors in Geneva countered with their own letter to the Human Rights Council, praising China's humane approach to fighting separatist/terrorist recruitment efforts. By the end of the day on July 26, fully 50 ambassadors to the United Nations Office in Geneva, including many from majority-Islamic countries, had signed the counter-letter strongly praising China's policies in Xinjiang.

Xinhua quoted from this joint letter on July 13:

We commend China's remarkable achievements in the field of human rights by adhering to the people-centered development philosophy and protecting and promoting human rights through development. We also appreciate China's contributions to the international human rights cause. Faced with the grave challenge of terrorism and extremism, China has undertaken a series of counter-terrorism and de-radicalization measures in Xinjiang, including setting up vocational education and training centers. Now safety and security has returned to Xinjiang and the fundamental human rights of people there have enjoyed stronger senses of fulfillment, happiness and security.

The ambassadors expressed their "firm opposition" to certain countries' practice of politicizing human rights issues, by naming and shaming, and publicly exerting pressures on other countries.

The original 37 signers were from Algeria, Angola, Bahrain, Belarus, Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Comoros, Congo, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Gabon,

Kuwait, Laos, Myanmar, Nigeria, North Korea, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Tajikistan, Togo, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela, and Zimbabwe.

By July 26, they had been joined by 13 more including Iran, Iraq, Sri Lanka, Djibouti and Palestine.

On August 1, *Global Times* editorialized:

It is worthy of recognition that the situation in Xinjiang has been changed through strengthening social governance that uproots extremism, rather than through massive violence. Without an "anti-terror war" or "cultural revolution," Xinjiang has kept its original social structure and cultural tradition, but terrorism and related evil forces have been destroyed. . . . Over the past year, Xinjiang has invited tens of foreign envoy groups, international observers and journalists to visit the autonomous region, especially the vocational education and training centers. This attitude is a manifestation of Xinjiang's sincerity in combining anti-terrorism and de-radicalization work with respect for human rights. Xinjiang once suffered from chaos over a period of time. Terrorists were rampant and extremism echoed external forces.

There have been no terrorist attacks in Xinjiang in the past three years.

Education, or 'War on Terrorism'?

As in Tibet, those who cry for a return to the backwardness and the impoverishment of the old days in Xinjiang can only be those who, like Prince Charles, wish to preserve the Empire and reduce the world's population, keeping the majority of the world's citizens living in primitive conditions. Contrast the education-method to counter terrorism being implemented in Xinjiang to that of Tony Blair, George Bush, and Barack Obama—bombing entire nations into oblivion under the name of a "war on terror," killing hundreds of thousands, mostly civilians, with a result that there are more terrorists created than existed in the first place. Were America and the European nations to join with China and Russia in the New Silk Road, in joint development of the formerly colonized nations, then the terrorist scourge would be soon eliminated.