

GLOBAL VIEWS

DING LONG

The truth prevails

China's successful counterterrorism and de-radicalization measures in Xinjiang withstand the attempts to defame them

The Xinjiang-related issues that are making headlines in the West are not about human rights, nor are they about ethnicity or religious belief. They are simply lies fabricated by the United States with the purpose of sowing discord within China and alienating China from the rest of the international community.

"Things to Know About All the Lies on Xinjiang: How Have They Come About", a report released by China Watch Institute, reveals "an industrial chain" whose purpose is to hype up Xinjiang-related issues with the aim of containing, destabilizing and weakening China.

The Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region, like any other parts of China, has benefited a lot from the targeted poverty alleviation drive the country has implemented in recent years. The region has shaken off extreme poverty and the living standards of people of all ethnic groups have improved greatly. The region once again enjoys social stability and economic development thanks to the counterterrorism and de-radicalization measures introduced in recent years.

But manipulated by the US, Xinjiang-related issues have been cloaked in human rights, ethnic minority rights, freedom of religious belief and cultural diversity to cater to tastes of Western media outlets, academic communities and the public in order to mobilize anti-China forces. Yet it is absurd to say that the US cares about the human rights of Muslims as the last several decades have witnessed the US military forces trampling over human rights in Islamic countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria.

Xinjiang-related issues have been hyped up by organized forces with

deliberate planning and cross-sector cooperation, demonstrating a top-down mechanism to manipulate Xinjiang-related issues. Any incidents that are worth sensationalizing are hyped up by some pet think tanks and media outlets. Anti-China forces in the US Congress will later submit bills to legalize sanction, then anti-China proposals are submitted in international organizations such as the United Nations Human Rights Council to internationalize Xinjiang-related issues and counter China.

First, "facts" are fabricated for speculation. According to the China Watch Institute report, most figures and events in the cases that allegedly show disappearances and deaths of people in Xinjiang are completely inconsistent with the facts. Nonetheless, these cases which are mostly fabricated by the core persons of the World Uyghur Congress and a cohort of Xinjiang separatists living overseas are repeatedly cited by Western media and human rights organizations. Many online videos showing "violation of human rights in Xinjiang" actually present scenes in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iraq and Syria. The Chinese government's poverty-reduction efforts of providing free vocational training and introducing jobs for migrant workers in Xinjiang — which is actually common in other provinces — are also distorted as "forced labor" practices.

These "facts" are then sensationalized by US media outlets. Radio Free Asia, a US government-funded news agency, has employed a group of Xinjiang separatists who are also employed by US intelligence agencies to spread rumors and create trouble. Some Western media outlets that pride themselves on their professionalism have produced



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reports based on the presumption that China is guilty of the allegations of these troublemakers. Some Western reporters who have claimed to have conducted impartial "interviews" in Xinjiang have spread their unsubstantiated eye-catching reports on social media platforms in order to attract eyeballs and manipulate public opinion.

The academic community has also been involved. In recent years, seminars on Xinjiang-related issues and research reports have increased substantially, with academic papers published by scholars who have never been to Xinjiang.

Adrian Zenz is one of them. He is touted as a Xinjiang expert by the US government and some media, but he has never been to Xinjiang and his papers are full of fallacies

that are against common sense and academic norms. The source of his data is just Radio Free Asia.

The Australian Strategic Policy Institute is to be blamed for hyping up the alleged "forced labor" in Xinjiang first. Most of the information and data in its research reports are cited from other papers full of speculation and inferences, of which the main authors are anti-China extremists.

Once the issues are stirred up, politicians will take up the baton. Anti-China members of the US Congress have used topics such as "forced labor" and "monitoring and privacy invasion" to impose sanctions on China. Since 2019, some members of Congress have been attempting to develop a system of on-target sanctions through special bills under the Uyghur Human

Rights Policy Act upper-level legislation. With these bills, the US government is able to apply sanctions for various purposes including undermining China's supply chain and weakening its technological and industrial advantages.

For a long time, terrorism and extremism have posed great threats to social stability and economic development in Xinjiang. To cope with the challenges, the Chinese government has focused on boosting economic growth and targeted poverty alleviation and launched de-radicalization measures in the region, making notable achievements. Xinjiang has seen no violent or terrorism incidents for nearly four years. De-radicalization measures centering on vocational training and standard Chinese teaching have been launched to help local ethnic minorities get more employment opportunities, which is expected to fundamentally eliminate extremism and ensure long-term stability and people's well-being.

In recent years, the per capita income in Xinjiang has grown by more than 8 percent year-on-year, much higher than the country's average. By the end of 2020, the last 10 impoverished counties in Xinjiang shook off poverty. In 2019, the region welcomed more than 210 million tourists from home and abroad, a sharp increase of 42 percent year-on-year. With religious freedom, it now has more than 24,000 mosques, meaning that there is one mosque for every 530 Muslims.

While terrorism is the common enemy of humankind, de-radicalization is our common cause. Some countries such as the US have politicized Xinjiang-related issues and spread rumors to contain China, even not hesitating to undermine the global anti-terrorism and de-radicalization efforts. However, the plot of smearing China on Xinjiang-related issues to contain its development is bound to fail.

The author is a professor with the Institute of Middle East Studies, Shanghai International Studies University. The author contributed this article to China Watch, a think tank powered by China Daily. The views do not necessarily reflect those of China Daily.

Ins and outs of the lies about Xinjiang

Report details nine points of truth behind the lies about Xinjiang that the anti-China forces have been spreading

By CHINA WATCH INSTITUTE

The ultimate purpose of the West lies about the Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region is to mislead international public discourse and smear China's international image.

The world should not be deceived by the false narrative that the United States and its allies are spinning about Xinjiang.

In a report titled "Things to Know About All the Lies on Xinjiang: How Have They Come About", China Watch Institute, a think tank powered by China Daily, details the truth behind the lies about Xinjiang that the anti-China forces have been spreading. Layered from their objectives, political means, and how they made up the sources, the report highlights nine points.

- As early as in the last century, the United States and other Western countries started to support separatist and terrorist activities in Xinjiang, in order to destabilize China and contain its development.

- Adrian Zenz, a far-right fundamentalist Christian with links to the US intelligence agencies, has falsely claimed that millions of Uyghurs in Xinjiang are held in detention camps.

- The so-called research findings published by Zenz and others are full of fraudulent data and claims.

- A "report" released by the Australian Strategic Policy Institute in March 2020 claims that "more than 80,000 Uyghurs were transferred out of Xinjiang to work in factories across China between 2017 and 2019". In fact, this "report" is full of loopholes and lacks any factual basis.

- Instead of verifying the truth of these allegations, some Western media outlets rushed to hype them up. The BBC even went so far as to pay for "evidence".

- The Network of Chinese Human Rights Defenders, which is supported by the US government, was the first organization to propagate the falsehood that China has detained millions of ethnic Uyghurs in Xinjiang.

- The "First Independent Report" on Xinjiang which was widely reported in Western media actually came from an institution funded by a sham university.

- The World Uyghur Congress and one of its affiliate organizations, the far-right Uyghur American Association, attempt to stoke Western hostility against China, with the aim of subverting China and establishing an "East Turkistan" nation-state in Xinjiang. The US government has supported and subsidized Uyghur extremist organizations through the National Endowment for Democracy.

- The so-called Xinjiang Victims Database put together by anti-China forces is an ill-motivated and baseless project designed purely for political manipulation.

MARCOS CORDEIRO PIRES

We must contain the lie machine

Social media has become a channel for propaganda and an instrument of political destabilization

The creation of mass media has enhanced the effects of lying and manipulation. In the 1930s, media such as daily newspapers, cinema and radio were widely used by several countries' governments to mobilize their population for their political goals. This activity was pushed with the latest knowledge of social psychology, sociology, statistics, and semantics. In Germany, Adolf Hitler and his minister of propaganda Joseph Goebbels explored all possibilities created by this knowledge to target the objectives of domination through propaganda.

During the Cold War, the United States used mass media to push anti-communist propaganda that sought to demonize socialist governments like the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries and all the Third World's national-democratic movements. Since then, international news has been filtered through agencies who work in line with their home country's intelligence community.

McCarthyism sought to eliminate from US culture and media any positive reference associated with communism and used a lot the media manipulation. Hollywood films, for example, created negative stereotypes of Russians, Chinese and Cubans, among others, and went so far as to portray socialist countries as being eternally bleak, suppressing sunny days in scenes depicting these countries. The development of filming techniques enabled the construction of credible, albeit false, narratives.

The ability to manipulate society

through control of the media has reached a new level with the emergence of social media and the availability of relatively cheap audio and video recording equipment. It is interesting to note that such social networks are controlled by a handful of companies that work closely with the US government. The revelations of Edward Snowden and Julian Assange reveal the intricate surveillance schemes organized by the information community in conjunction with telecommunications and big technology companies.

Social networks are being used on a large scale as instruments of political destabilization, propaganda and social control. We saw this in the so-called color revolutions in Ukraine, Myanmar, Syria, Egypt, Venezuela, Brazil and China's Hong Kong special administrative region. The speed with which lies and prejudices are spread via social media is impressive. The Brexit referendum, the creation of far-right communities such as Q-Anon, demonstrate propaganda's corrosive power through new technologies.

We are currently following the creation of false narratives by Western governments and media groups to demonize the People's Republic of China on issues related to the novel coronavirus, the Hong Kong political process, technology and the Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region. Specifically, concerning Xinjiang, a false tale has been constructed that the central government is sponsoring a "genocide" against the Uygur ethnic group and that millions of Muslim people are being confined in "concentration camps" and used as "forced labor". These lies, like others, are like a house of cards, but when the lie is repeated a thousand times, it ends up confusing public opinion.

This narrative disregards the activism of radical groups that sought, based on another false tale that of an "independent Turkistan", to separate China's region by violent means. There have been count-

less incidents involving bomb or knife attacks by members of these radical groups. It is worth remembering that this extreme "wave" spread in Central Asia after the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics collapsed, causing great turmoil, such as the Chechnya and Dagestan wars and, subsequently, with the profusion of radical Sunni groups after the attacks of Sept 11, 2001. It is in this context, the Shanghai Organization for Cooperation has emerged, aiming to guarantee political stability in Central Asia and combat extremist Islamic groups.

China's approach to dealing with extremism differs significantly from that adopted by the US and its allies, namely the so-called war on terror, which has led to the destruction of countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and Libya, and the deaths or exiles of millions of civilians. In China's case, the strategy involves re-education and professional skills training for part of the population to create new opportunities, something far different from the "concentration camps" and "forced labor" the Western media and governments have sought to portray.

The lie machine is a well-oiled cog, as is the case with false narratives involving Muslims in Xinjiang. The fake news use testimonies from supposed academics and non-governmental organizations called "independent", which have the seal of the great media groups when repeating the lies a thousand times. In fact, these actions are coordinated by the intelligence services to destabilize governments that are considered hostile. In the name of "freedom", "democracy" and "human rights", para-state entities such as the National Endowment of Democracy (NED) have a structure for regimentation and staff training, which joins private organizations such as the Heritage Foundation, Charles Koch Foundation, Albert Einstein Institution or even media groups such as the Epoch Times newspaper, linked to



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the Falun Gong cult.

Unfortunately, due to the strict control exercised by large Western news agencies,

the false narratives are sold as if they were true. In this respect, social media tries to replicate and multiply the lies, as in the case of the alleged "genocide" in Xinjiang, the "atrocities" committed by the Syrian (or Libyan) government, the alleged lack of security of Huawei devices, and systems or still of "systemic corruption" in the Brazilian oil company Petrobras. Regarding this last aspect, between 2013 and 2018, Brazil faces mass demonstrations that look like a "colored revolution" supported by foreign forces.

The imposition of sanctions against Chinese authorities and Xinjiang's cotton production is part of a narrative that is far removed from any concern about human rights. In fact, it aims to constrain and pressure the Chinese government in a broader context of disputes, such as the trade war and

competition related to 5G and artificial intelligence, fields in which China excels.

Similarly, it seeks to isolate the Chinese government by creating artificial friction with European and Asian countries that are economically integrated with China and seeks to contain the advances of the Belt and Road Initiative.

When the US is intensifying its strategy to contain China, it is important to pay attention to what the West's propaganda mill is churning out. There is a need to redouble communication efforts to face the flood of lies and manipulation skillfully dealt with increasingly sophisticated resources. We know that the first victim of war is the truth and, because of this, the issue of information warfare must be handled very skillfully.

The author is a professor at the Sao Paulo State University (UNESP) in Brazil. The author contributed this article to China Watch, a think tank powered by China Daily. The views do not necessarily reflect those of China Daily.