



China Stands by Re-education Camps in Xinjiang

OE Watch Commentary: In recent months there has been a growing level of scrutiny and condemnation in the West of the re-education camps that China has established in its westernmost Xinjiang region. China claims they are a way to de-radicalize potentially extremist Muslim Uyghurs and, in doing so, to prevent terrorism. On 3 September the Chinese website *dwnews.com* published the accompanying excerpted Chinese-language article defending the country’s policies in Xinjiang in the face of pressure from Western countries to close them down.

The article first notes that the criticism of China is part of a wave of critiques in the West to superficially display concern about human rights. The article then argues that the violent conflict between the Chinese government and those who commit terrorism—presumably referring to Uyghur terrorists or terrorist groups in Xinjiang—the latter is the one responsible for provoking the violence. The article then explains that the re-education camps and the previous terrorist attacks exist in a dialectic that the Western critiques fail to acknowledge. The article suggests the Western critiques make it seem as if the re-education camps exist in a vacuum and for no reason. According to the article, if there were no re-education camps the government would be forced into a passive and defensive state simply waiting for the next attack.

The purpose of the camps, according to the article, is to transform the mind and not to inflict bodily harm on anyone. Although the article does not discuss the content of the re-education at the camps, it claims they will eliminate the spiritual violence carried out by the extremists and make them more rational. The article also suggests that it is appropriate to re-educate the entire Uyghur or Muslim population of Xinjiang, even though only a few people have been terrorists because it is impossible to anticipate which ones among the masses will become terrorists. The article also does not deny that it will be unfair to many people and cause them non-physical harm, such as being unable to attend work during their time in re-education. However, the article suggests that this is compatible with international law because China is doing the minimum required to deal with a security threat to the survival of the state.

End OE Watch Commentary (Zenn)

“The focus of the ideological reform is to eliminate the spiritual violence carried out by extremists.”



“Khotan-mezquita-d04.”

Source: Colegota, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Khotan-mezquita-d04.jpg>, (CC BY 2.5).

Source: “为中国新疆改造营辩护 (Defending China’s Xinjiang Re-education Camps),” *dwnews.com*, 3 September 2018. <http://blog.dwnews.com/post-1052758.html>

Recently, ideological reform camps in Xinjiang, China have again raised a wave of Western public concern. The US Congress frequently holds hearings to show that there are “very serious” human rights issues.

Legally and ethically in treating a violent conflict, it is the responsibility of the party that provokes the incident on its own initiative that must be considered, because provoking violence means being the cause of the incident. The counter is often a passive “response” of a defensive nature. The Chinese government’s implementation of a large-scale re-education camp began in 2014, and before that, there were numerous cases of violent terror in Xinjiang, and more and more terrorist acts have caught the government and the military police in a state of dormancy. Although counter-terrorism was effective, the local people in Xinjiang still lived in a state of horror and uneasiness. In such a place where terrorism has been destructive for a long time, the local government must of course control the situation, fulfill its responsibility of protecting the residents, and also prevent regional ethnic factionalization and extremist forces.