

Original Paper

Countermeasures for “East Turkistan” Terrorism

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Abstract

Under China’s high-pressure counter-terrorism situation, the characteristics of “East Turkistan” terrorist organizations’ looseness, risk liquidity and behavioral uncertainty are becoming more and more obvious, challenging the established counter-terrorism model. To adapt to the new situation and new risks, we must not only rely on military means to suppress East Turkistan terrorism, but also strengthen the social governance of East Turkistan terrorism and dismantle its social base and extremist ideology, so as to break away from the “more counter-terrorism” approach. The more we fight against terrorism, the more we can cut off the root of the development of East Turkistan terrorism.

Keywords

East Turkistan, anti-terrorism, social governance

1. Introduction

Terrorism is a violent anti-social phenomenon with its roots in society and is associated with hegemony, poverty issues, ethnic issues, religious issues, etc. Terrorism has become one of the most important factors hindering social development in the era of globalization and it is a cancer lurking in the society. The “East Turkestan” terrorism has become the most direct terrorist threat to china at present.

2. Overview of “East Turkestan” Terrorism

“East Turkestan” is a general term for the ethnic separatist terrorists who aimed to divide the motherland and establish a secular “East Turkestan State”, which was first introduced as a political rather than a geographical concept. In the mid-nineteenth century, Tsarist Russia set up the “Turkistan Governorate” in the Central Asian region, so some Westerners began to call the Central Asian region “West Turkistan” and Xinjiang as “East Turkestan”.

As early as the end of the nineteenth century, some ethnic separatists, using the term “East Turkestan” as an interface, attempted to split the Xinjiang region from China and establish the “East Turkestan State. In the 1930s, the National Revolutionary Committee, a secret organization of armed insurgents led by Muhammad Imin and Grand Mullah Shabiti, took advantage of the confusion caused by the uprising of miners in southern Xinjiang and seized the leadership of the uprising, turning it into a separatist movement. The “Islamic Republic of East Turkestan” was eventually established with the support and assistance of the British government. In the 1940s, during the development of the “Three Regions Revolution”, Alykhan Tulli Shahirhankhoga joined the revolutionary ranks, confused many people with separatist ideas, gradually cheated the leadership of the revolution, and established the “East Turkestan Republic” in Inin. Provisional government. The two separatist regimes, the “Islamic Republic of East Turkestan” and the “Republic of East Turkestan”, seriously harmed the interests of their people and were therefore rejected by them. Eventually, the separatist regimes, which had lost the hearts of their people, disappeared into history, but the idea and actions of the “East Turkistan” terrorist organization’s attempt to establish a “Turkistan state” have never been interrupted.

The activities of the “East Turkestan” terrorist organizations can be divided into two stages. In the first stage, although the violent activities of the “East Turkestan” terrorist organizations have never been interrupted, they have mostly been hidden behind the scenes and have used certain “fuses” to trigger riots. However, most of the “East Turkestan” terrorist organizations are hiding behind the scenes and using certain “triggers” to cause various riots by luring the masses and deceiving students. The “Barren Township Incident” was the most serious armed riot since the liberation of Xinjiang, and marked the beginning of violent terrorist activities by the “East Turkistan” group. Since then, terrorist activities of varying degrees have occurred in Xinjiang and across the country. Some figures alone show that between 1990 and 2001, more than 200 violent terrorist incidents were perpetrated by domestic and foreign “East Turkistan” forces in Xinjiang, killing more than 160 people and injuring more than 440 others.

3. The Necessity and Importance of Social Governance

Social governance refers to a series of activities and processes in which the government, social organizations and the public are the main bodies, integrating and adjusting various resources and using various means to achieve and protect the legitimate interests of the public and maintain social harmony. Terrorism has a deep social foundation and a strong social force, and it is impossible to effectively combat “East Turkistan” terrorism without considering it as a social problem but only as a violent phenomenon. The subjects of social governance are diversified, including not only the government, military, and police, but also social organizations and individual citizens; the means of social governance are diverse, including not only military and administrative means, but also political, economic, social, and cultural means; social governance can achieve effects that are beyond the reach of simple military strikes, and can achieve a bottom-up type of governance, ensuring the long-term

peace and security of the people in Xinjiang. long-lasting peace and security and the people's well-being. China's overall anti-terrorism strategy is to use force to combat terrorism, promote social justice and fairness, and ultimately eradicate the root causes of terrorism on the basis of genuine "joint construction, joint governance, and sharing".

3.1 Social Background of the Activities of the "East Turkistan" Terrorist Organization

Backward economic and livelihood development is the real reason. Before the reform and opening up, Xinjiang was economically backward, people were living in hardship, and social conflicts were deepening; after the reform and opening up, although Xinjiang has made a series of achievements in economic development, accelerated the process of infrastructure construction, and improved people's living conditions, there is still a large gap compared with the national average. This gap has become a pretext for the "East Turkistan" terrorist organizations to confuse the masses and expand their membership with various rumors and fallacies. To curb the spread of "East Turkistan" terrorist forces, it is necessary to provide a favorable social and security environment for economic development through stable social governance, and gradually improve people's livelihood so that people in Xinjiang can enjoy the benefits of economic development and consciously join the "common construction, common governance, and common sharing" social governance pattern. in the pattern of social governance.

Religious extremism is the root of the ideology. Under the guise of Islam and taking advantage of the simple religious beliefs of the Xinjiang people, the "East Turkistan" forces are essentially terrorist forces in the guise of religion, engaging in various terrorist activities that affect social stability and national security. In order to establish a "secular" caliphate, the "East Turkestan" forces have been trying to promote the idea that "Islam is the only religion in Xinjiang" and "oppose all ethnic groups other than Turkic peoples. The "East Turkestan" forces have been infiltrating the masses in Xinjiang by opening religious schools, publishing newspapers and books, and disseminating audio and video. This propaganda has not only strengthened the influence and discourse of the "East Turkestan" forces in Xinjiang, but has also eroded the minds of the masses and polluted the social atmosphere, and laid the social foundation for their expansion of membership and energy for action. To combat religious extremist forces, it is necessary not only for the government to strengthen propaganda and guidance, popularize and develop education, but also for the public to improve their ability to recognize abnormal situations in their daily lives, and to strengthen their contact with relevant government departments to provide advance warning and timely disposal, so as to create a high-pressure situation against religious extremist ideology in the whole society.

3.2 Important Geographical Location of Xinjiang

Xinjiang is located in the northwest of China, in the hinterland of the Eurasian continent, and is an important passage of the New Asia-Europe Continental Bridge. Xinjiang's rich natural resources and energy sources make it an important base for national strategic resource development and reserve; it is the core area of the "Belt and Road" construction, and its stability or otherwise reflects China's international image and international influence.

“The extremely important geographical location of Xinjiang determines the necessity and importance of tackling the “East Turkistan” terrorism. The “East Turkestan” terrorism has attempted to split Xinjiang from the motherland by violent means, such as the violent terrorist attacks in Shaibak District Park in Urumqi and the terrorist attacks in Moyu County. This poses a serious threat to the safety of people’s lives and property in the Xinjiang region, and is detrimental to the development and progress of the Xinjiang region, China’s national security and general social stability

4. Implementation of Social Governance Measures

Combating and solving the problem of “East Turkestan” terrorism requires the healthy functioning of the social organism as a whole. According to Mr. Zheng, a society is in a healthy state of operation when its economy, politics, ideology and culture, and social life are mutually reinforcing. This is also the effect that social governance needs to achieve.

4.1 Seize Opportunities to Promote Economic Prosperity and Narrow the Gap between the Rich and the Poor

“The Belt and Road Initiative is a key way for China to break the deadlock in economic development and implement the new development concept. As the core area of the Belt and Road Initiative, the regional government and enterprises should seize the opportunity to promote the economic development of the region and narrow the gap between the rich and the poor to prevent This is also an important strategy in the fight against terrorism in Xinjiang. First, seize the investment opportunities: “The state will put more projects and funds into the construction of Xinjiang, guaranteeing its infrastructure construction; at the same time, the construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor will also bring more opportunities for the introduction of foreign investment into the economic development of the Xinjiang region, ensuring the pulling effect of investment on Xinjiang’s economic development. Second, seize policy opportunities: Under the macro policy of “One Belt, One Road” initiative, the country has introduced a series of targeted stimulus policies and supporting measures, such as various projects to benefit people’s livelihoods, which were put forward one after another at the Second Central Symposium on Xinjiang Work, and the continuation of the Second Round of Western Development Strategy, the regional government should make full use of the policy The regional government should make full use of the policy dividend to promote industrial restructuring and upgrading in Xinjiang and turn development potential into economic strength.

The government of the autonomous region is taking advantage of the dividends brought by the “Belt and Road” to ensure that the fruits of development are shared by the people; the rich first will lead the rich later, narrowing the gap between the rich and the poor in the region, and ensuring that the masses are not tempted by terrorism for economic reasons, so as to achieve the goal of social governance to stop the continued spread of the “East Turkistan” terrorist forces. The goal of social governance is to stop the continued spread of the “East Turkistan” terrorist forces.

4.2 Strengthen Guidance and Publicity, Occupy the Ideological High Ground

Through the Internet, books, newspapers and sermons, the “East Turkestan” terrorist forces brainwash young people and simple believers, making them suffer from terrorist ideology.

To eliminate extremist, separatist and jihadist ideologies, on the one hand, government guidance is needed to strengthen national unity and establish national and ethnic consciousness among the masses of all ethnic groups, and on the other hand, social media and organizations are needed to promote and cultivate a lasting anti-terrorist consciousness among the people and develop daily conscious anti-terrorist behavior, making the social ideological front of all ethnic groups working together to maintain the unity and stability of the motherland more solid.

In carrying out specific publicity and education work, the government should pay attention to the monitoring and use of the Internet, establish a sound review system and access mechanism for Internet information, take down terrorist-related apps, shut down websites with religious extremist overtones, monitor and ban terrorist-related online community discussion groups, and carry out the “net purification action” to the end. At the same time, the government should also appropriately publicize the evidence of terrorist organizations’ terrorist activities through the Internet, television, and other efficient information media, so that the public can realize the evil nature of terrorism and mobilize the public to oppose terrorism, thus increasing the social participation in anti-terrorism, and making terrorism fall into the state of “missing the way to help. This will lead to a situation in which terrorism will be “defeated”. We will carry out educational activities on ethnic unity, promote mutual respect and understanding among all ethnic groups, and give full play to the active role of patriotic religious figures and believers among all ethnic groups, so that they can become an important link in maintaining national unity and ethnic unity.

4.3 Embedding the Masses, the Formation of a National Counter-Terrorism Model

The participation of the public in counter-terrorism can functionally complement the government’s counter-terrorism efforts. The government, due to financial and human resources constraints, can only carry out a wide range of prevention, focusing more on the “surface” and the crackdown after the terrorist activity has occurred. (Note 1) Terrorists are very concealed, but they must survive in the society, and the people are spread all over the society, so it is difficult to escape the eyes of the masses from any abnormal behavior and become a powerful force to monitor the terrorists, focusing most on the “point” and the warning and prevention work before the occurrence of terrorist activities.

Counter-terrorism awareness is raised so that the masses will oppose terrorism and extremism from the bottom of their hearts. Raising awareness of counter-terrorism requires the government to make use of various forms, including the media and the Internet, to create an atmosphere of “universal counter-terrorism,” to strengthen counter-terrorism propaganda and education, to carry out extensive study, discussion and propaganda in various industries, and to arm the public with scientific and cultural knowledge and core socialist values. At the same time, we also ask religions and religious people to correct the source of religious beliefs and guide the public to establish correct religious

beliefs.

Second, to build a long-term counter-terrorism exercise mechanism. Anti-terrorism awareness can only be effectively transformed into anti-terrorism capability through anti-terrorism practice, and only through continuous rehearsal and training can effectively improve the public's anti-terrorism capability. (Note 2) Regular training and drills for the public should include: identification of suspicious and dangerous people; identification of suspicious and dangerous objects; identification and handling of several common types of terrorist incidents such as explosions, arson, plane hijackings, hostage-taking and shootings; identification and initial handling of biological, chemical and nuclear terrorist attacks; identification and response to cyber terrorist attacks, etc.

Finally, attention should be paid to sorting out and guiding mass emotions. When people's emotions are inflamed by terrorist activities, they need to be guided to choose the right counter-terrorism measures and methods, rather than letting them intensify and avoiding being exploited by terrorists or other unruly elements—letting people's emotions go is letting terrorism have room to operate; when people's emotions are frightened by active terrorist forces, they should show the country's "hard power" to strengthen people's confidence in counter-terrorism and maintain their motivation. When the masses are frightened by terrorist activities, they should demonstrate the country's "hard power" to strengthen their confidence and maintain their motivation to fight terrorism.

When the masses are generally conscious of the anti-terrorist struggle and maintain a strong anti-terrorist awareness in all aspects of their lives and work, they will become the tentacles and eyes of professional departments, which will greatly compress the space for terrorist activities and enhance the targeting of the fight against terrorism, so that terrorists will have nowhere to hide.

4.4 Carry out Education and Training to Get Rid of Mental Control

Urging terrorist organizations and elements to renounce terrorist violence, recognize social order and participate in the process of social and political development in a legitimate manner is a more cost-efficient way of fighting against terrorism that has been proven by historical experience. (Note 3)

In the case of the "East Turkistan" terrorist organizations, it is necessary to effectively combat and control the recalcitrant elements on the one hand, and to give the members of the terrorist organizations channels and hopes for transformation on the other. The Xinjiang Vocational Skills Education and Training Center has taken up the latter responsibility.

The Education and Training Center is a school in nature, and through its help and education work, it will unite, educate, and save to the maximum extent possible the majority of people who have committed minor offenses, and avoid them becoming objects that terrorism and extremism can control and exploit. According to the actual needs of counter-terrorism in Xinjiang, and in response to the realities of the trainees' language barrier, poor literacy, lack of basic legal knowledge, low level of work skills, and difficulties in employment, it has set up courses focusing on the national common language and script, legal knowledge, vocational skills, and de-extremism to help trainees get rid of the brainwashing of terrorist and extremist forces and give them the opportunity to reintegrate into society

for re-employment and redevelopment.

The white paper “Vocational Skills Education and Training Work in Xinjiang” states that Xinjiang’s education and training work is aimed at eliminating terrorism and religious extremism at the source, and is entirely a move to respect and safeguard human rights. (Note 4) The education and training centers have rehabilitated one group of terrorists and religious extremists after another, causing terrorism and religious extremism to continuously lose their membership base, which not only helps Xinjiang region achieve social stability, but also alleviates resistance to the implementation of other social governance measures and promotes the construction and development of a harmonious socialist society.

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