With the war of words and sanctions heating up between the US and China, Washington is getting increasingly determined to stir separatist sentiments in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region of the PRC. The ability to inflict real damage on its primary geopolitical competitor by turning Xinjiang into a break-away region or plunging it into chaos has transformed the matter of Uyghur separatism into Washington's weapon of choice in its struggle against Beijing in today's version of the Great Game.

Whenever the matter of separatist movements of China is brought up, one starts thinking about Tibet and Xinjiang. The latter is often being referred to as East Turkestan by both local separatists and their Western sponsors, with none of them even mentioning the fact that this region has an estimated 21 billion tons of oil reserves together with 10.3 trillion cubic meters of discovered natural gas deposits. Further still, Xinjiang's coal reserves account for nearly 40% of the national total, while rare earth metals and uranium deposits make up more than three fourths of China's mineral reserves. It goes without saying that American special interests would very much like to dip their toes into this wealth.

However, Xinjiang is so much more than just natural resources, as it remains the largest province-level division of China with a population of well over 23 million people. The fact that this region shares a border with a total of eight states transforms it into a major transportation hub that would play a pivotal role in China's One Belt - One Road
global infrastructure initiative. It's noteworthy that the Trans-Eurasia fiber optical line from Shanghai to Frankfurt runs through the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. It's also planned that a major oil and natural gas transportation hub is going to be established here, ensuring unimpeded hydrocarbon flow from the Caspian region to the Asia-Pacific.

Now, these days Uyghur separatism has become a multi-faced phenomenon. At the front we have the World Uyghur Congress with its headquarters located in Munich. This organization is headed by Rebiya Kadeer that would meet with George Bush Jr. at the White House back in 2007 to receive his support. On the same year, the US Congress adopted a bill stating Uyghur separatists are allowed to pursue self-determination in Xinjiang, claiming that Beijing was bound to change its internal policies to reflect this position. Unsurprisingly, the US State Department allocates some 215 thousand dollars on the activities of this organization each year.

It's even less surprising that the National Endowment for Democracy that sponsored the Tibetan unrest of 2008, Iran's Green Movement of 2009 together with a number of “colored revolutions” is also sponsoring the World Uyghur Congress. Additionally, this organization receives charities through the Uyghur American Association that is also headed by Rebiya Kadeer. In total, the funds that this organization receives allow it to publish books, hold conferences that draw hundreds of participants from all corners of the world and maintain a number of offices in the UK, Turkey, Australia, Sweden and Canada.

Those activities create a perfect smoke-screen for Western intelligence agencies that work in cooperation with their Saudi and Turkish counterparts to “advance the Uyghur cause.” Turkish intelligence agents are tasked with maintaining a line of communication with those separatists operating in Xinjiang, providing them with counterfeit passports and clues about the safe trails that they keep open for them. As for Saudi intelligence officers, they are engaged in a long list of activities in Xinjiang that they have grown accustomed to long ago. Those are infiltration operations under the guise of missionary missions, mosque sponsoring, and grants on the training of future radical militants that are handed out under the pretext of promoting religious education.

Thus, according to the German war correspondent Lutz Kleveman that wrote a whole book on the Xinjiang debacle titled The New Great Game: Blood and Oil in Central Asia, the US is less interested in any actual military containment of China as it's confident that it can achieve its goals through its smoke and mirrors tactics hidden behind the deceptive surface of diplomatic negotiations.

In a bid to build up anti-Chinese hysteria in the media over the alleged human rights abuse in Xinjiang, Washington would use its member on the United Nations Committee on the Elimination Of Racial Discrimination, Gay McDougall to draw public attention to a report drafted by a curious non-governmental organization - Chinese Human Rights Defenders. Once this initial goal was achieved, Western media sources, including The Guardian started presenting allegations presented in the above mentioned report as facts. However, the US failed to gain enough momentum to force any international players into condemning China publicly over this report, as it all ended with a number of outraged individuals demanding the PRC to close those education camps, where those former ISIS fighters that returned home from Syria are being re-socialized.

In mid-February, Turkey's Ministry of Foreign Affairs released a statement made by its spokesperson Hami Aksoy that contained allegations that “more than one million Uighur Turks incurred arbitrary arrests and were subjected to torture and political brainwashing in internment camps and prisons”. Then, Hami Aksoy proceeded with accusing Beijing of creating impossible conditions for a distinguished folk poet Abdurehim Heyit, stating that those conditions led to his untimely demise. In response, a couple of days later China released a video of the said poet performing on stage, thus driving a steak through the heart of this latest smear attempt.

It's curious that a month earlier a pro-government journalist from Yeni Şafak, Ibrahim Karagul revealed on Twitter that the media campaign against China over Xinjiang was nothing but a CIA operation, but it didn't take long before this tweet was deleted. However, his revelation would be supported by a prominent French analyst Thierry Meyssan who wrote an article titled: The CIA is using Turkey to pressure China.

In a bid to build an anti-Chinese coalition Washington would establish an annual meeting of foreign ministers and prominent representatives of civil society to discuss the state of religious freedom in various countries of the world. This year, the meeting took place in mid-July but ultimately failed to provide the US with any newsworthy material. The failure to assemble an Islamic anti-Chinese coalition over Xinjiang was admitted by the US ambassador at large for international religious freedom in his interview for The Daily Signal. It's also curious that Washington tries to prevent international observers from visiting this Chinese province, as it itself has little trust in the allegations it makes.
It's only logical that upon facing a major challenge in the form of terrorist and radical organizations raising their heads, Beijing took a number of steps to address this situation, one of them is its attempt to promote education in Xinjiang to provide better job opportunities for the local population. And it seems that this tactics works, as there's been no major terrorist attacks or cases of massive civil unrest for well over three years there. At the same time, the PRC tries to improve the social conditions of Uyghurs. It seems that China has found a perfect answer to both the provocations the West stages and the allegations that follow them.

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