

# CHINA EASTERN TURKISTAN

## POLICY

( Edwin Alplett )

### INTRODUCTION

The historical name of the land that is now known in the West as the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region is Eastern Turkistan. The motherland of the Turkic people is Turkistan. The eastern part of this region was invaded by the Manchu-Chinese in 1876 and became to known as Eastern Turkistan. Western part was invaded by Czarist Russia from 1865 on, and became to known as Western Turkistan. Western Turkistan was later divided in five republics called Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kirghizistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan.

### AREA OF EASTERN TURKISTAN

The area of Eastern Turkistan is 1,828,418 sq, which constitutes about 1/5 of the total area of China, including Tibet, Inner Mongolia and Manchuria.

### ECONOMIC LIFE

Eastern Turkistan is very rich in such minerals as uranium, platinum, silver, iron, lead, copper, sulphur, tin, mica, emeralds, coal and petroleum.

According to the reports of geologists, Eastern Turkistan has enough coal reserves to meet the needs of whole Europe for 60 years. (1)

Petroleum production for 1985 is expected to be 4,5 million ton. (2)

Seventy percent of the inhabitants in Eastern Turkistan are engaged in agriculture. The area land devoted to agriculture at present is about 48 million mu, of which 44 million mu are paddy fields or

irrigated land and cereal crops, mainly wheat and maize, cover about 77%. (3)

The number of the livestock in Eastern Turkistan is estimated at about 50 million. (4)

### CONCLUSIONS

Eastern Turkistan is in the heart of Asia. Throughout history those who ruled Eastern Turkistan often ruled <sup>ASIA</sup> as well. Throughout history all westward invasions from China or Mongolia invariably came through Eastern Turkistan. In westward movement this land always used by these invaders as a base of operations both militarily and economically.

It is useful to remember in this connection the words of the Russian Czar, Peter the Great: "He who rules Turkistan is destined to rule Asia." (5)

The historical Silk Road joining the East to the West also crossed Eastern Turkistan. The Chinese have now constructed the Karakoram Road joining China with Turkistan through Eastern Turkistan. Thus the ancient dream of Russia to reach "warm seas", has been realized by the Chinese who can now go overland from Kashgar to Karachi in 48 hours; and from Karachi one can easily reach further into the Middle East, Africa and to Europe.

Up to the present 24,000 kilometers of roads have been constructed in Eastern Turkistan. Of these 6,000 kilometers are asphalt covered.

In addition, there is a 2,350 kilometer long railroad, joining Urumchi, the capital of Eastern Turkistan with Lanzhou, the capital of China's Gansu province. Intensive work is now in progress to link this railroad to Kashgar.

but the Turkic people of Kashgar are resent against the extension of this railroad to their city. This resentment can be noticed by these verses:

(In the Uygur language)

Urtaq Kashgar to'g'ir yolu dep  
Buni yokni a'la'et  
E'ar payiz ke'ne se'm'atige  
B'ah'iyi a'f'e't y'e'z'ak'ei

(In English)

Under the pretext of Branchi-Kashgar railroad  
They want to rob the people of what they have  
If arrives the train to our city  
It brings nothing but adversity.

### POPULATION

Population figures of Eastern Turkistan vary from source to source. The latest estimates given the present population of Eastern Turkistan is slightly over 13 million. (6) Of this, the Uygurs are given as 6 million, the Kazakhs 800 thousand, other Turkic peoples 90 thousand, Honghans 100 thousand, Manchus 70 thousand, Tungans (Chinese Manchus) 100 thousand, the remainder of the population being Chinese. (7)

Before 1949 (Chinese Communist takeover) there were only 200 thousand Chinese in Eastern Turkistan. Today, their number is over 5 million.

### EDUCATION

Eastern Turkistan has one University, 12 other Institutions of Higher Learning, 800 secondary schools, and 14,000 primary schools.

The university of Urumchi contains 10 faculties with a total enrolment of 5,400. Of these 2000 from local population.

### RELIGION

The various Turkic peoples living in Eastern Turkistan the Uyghur, Kazakh, Kirghiz, Dzhirga, Tatars and the ethnic Indo German people Tajiks are all Muslims. Eastern Turkistani people, starting in 934 A.D. on, they began to embrace Islam. Eastern Turkistani people are proud of having Abdul Karim Satuk Bughra Khan as their first ruler who embraced Islam in Central Asia.

### POLITICAL HISTORY

From 210 B.C. on, Eastern Turkistan was ruled by various Turkic dynasties such as Han, Sui, Tang, Gokturk, Uyghur Kirghiz, Karluq, Basmi, and Qarakhanid, sometimes as a part of Turkic empires extended over other regions.

The Chinese, taking advantage of the opportunities created by occasional weakness of such states, launched invasions of Eastern Turkistan in 104 B.C., 59 B.C., 73 A.D., 443 A.D., 657 A.D., 744 A.D., and 1759 A.D. but these invasions attained no permanent success, till the last Manchu-Chinese invasion in 1670. (9)

In 1911 the Manchus overthrew the Manchu dynasty and established a republic, but Eastern Turkistan remained an oppressed colony.

In 1949, the nationalist Chinese were defeated by the Chinese Communists. After that, Eastern Turkistan fell under Communist Chinese rule.

### UPRISINGS

The people of Eastern Turkistan have revolted against the Chinese 42 times since 1759 with the purpose of regaining their independence.

Three times, in 1863, 1933 and 1944 these uprisings were suppressed.

and an independent state was established. But these states were short-lived.

### THE FEUDAL CHINESE EASTERN TURKISTAN POLICY

One Chinese regime has been called "Feudal", the second "Reactionary" and the third "Revolutionary", yet the policies of the Manchu-Chinese, the Nationalist Chinese, and the Communist Chinese <sup>RULERS</sup> to the Turkic Muslim people of Eastern Turkistan are, with with minor differences, the same.

This policy rests on three main principles: Divide and Rule, assimilation, and "Da Han Cu-i" which means to Create a "Greater Chinese Nation".

The first Chinese administrators to practise this policy were Zho Zhung Tang, the commander-in chief of the Manchu-Chinese forces invading Eastern Turkistan, Liu Ching Tang, the first Governor-General, and Yuan Da Hua, who succeeded him in this post.

These three Manchu-Chinese administrators were responsible for, Eastern Turkistan receiving the Chinese name "Xinjiang", meaning "New Dominion", and its annexation directly to China on the 18 th of November 1884. (1) Under that administration, Eastern Turkistan was divided into four administrative regions, and the Uygur Muslims of Eastern Turkistan, accused of being inherently "rebellious", were subjected to a policy aimed at destroying their martial capabilities, and at breaking their spirit and destroying their pride and self-respect. (2) At the same time the seeds of discord were sown among the Eastern Turkistani people. Also, all cities and towns in Eastern Turkistan were given Chinese names. For example:

Urumchi	became	Tihua	Qumul	became	Hami	Qulja	became	Iding
Yarkent	"	Soche	Kashgar	"	Kashi	Hoten	"	Hotien
Keriye	"	Yatien	Niye	"	Minfeng	Chöchek	"	Chaheng
Cherchen	"	Chimo	Akso	"	Wensu			

In an effort to transform Eastern Turkistan completely into a Chinese province, Chinese settlers were brought in from such provinces as Gansu, Hunan and Yunnan.

The Turkic Muslims of Eastern Turkistan were forced to marry Chinese, to wear Chinese dress, to show exaggerated respect to Chinese officials, and kneel in greeting when they met a Chinese official. Chinese officials were given the right to punish the Turkic Muslims of Eastern Turkistan at their discretion, to imprison them and even to have them executed. Any appeal to higher authorities by the Turkic Muslims of Eastern Turkistan against such punishment was strictly prohibited, and any complaint about Chinese officials brought automatic punishments against those who made the complaints. Of the Turkic Muslims of Eastern Turkistan who opposed the rules and policies of the Feudal Chinese administration, more than one million were executed (13), and about the same number, fearing punishment at the Chinese hands, escaped to neighbouring countries (14) 200 thousand Turkic Muslims were transported from the southern part of the country to Ili Valley for forced labour, to provide food for the 100 thousand Manchu-Chinese troops stationed in that area. (15)

#### NATIONALIST CHINA'S EASTERN TURKISTAN POLICY

In 1911 the Feudal regime in China came to an end, and the Nationalist Chinese Government was set up.

Dr. Sun Yat Sen, the founder of the Nationalist China, in Article 4 of the National Development Program which he presented to the first Congress of the Kuomintang Party in 1924, admitted that there were Turkic people living in China, and that these people were the aboriginal inhabitants of Eastern Turkistan, and that all of them were Muslims. He stated that these people had ~~had~~ a right to self-determination and that this right should be granted them. (16)

But after the death of Dr. Sun Yat Sen, power passed into the

hands of Chiang Kai Shek and his clique. This group not only relegated Article 4, but also followed a policy actively dividing, and assimilating the people of Eastern Turkistan, thus aiming to create a "Great Chinese Nation".

The theory of "Da Han Cu-i" was created by Prof. Li Dung Fang. According to his theory, all the nations living within the frontiers of China (Chinese, Turkic Muslim, Monghols, Tibetans etc.) originally descended from a "Great Chinese Nation." Therefore, it is necessary and fitting that they be once again united within the framework of a Great Chinese Nation. Prof. Li Dung Fang argued that the Uygur Muslims are descended from the Huns, and that the Huns in turn are descended from the "Ancient Chinese", thus they all share a common descent. Chiang Kai Shek and his clique were enthusiastic supporters of Prof. Li Dung Fang's theories.

In his book "Chinas Destiny" Chiang Kai Shek explicitly stated that all the nations in China are descended from a single Chinese Nation (Chung-hua), and that all these nations belong to the same race, and that these nations, united by race, differ from each other only through such minor factors as habits, traditions, religious beliefs and geographical barriers. Basically they are members of a single "stock", "race" and "nation". (17)

When measures taken by the Chinese Governor Generals of Eastern Turkistan reviewed, it becomes clear that the administrative policies practised in this country are in total accord with these views of Chiang Kai Shek.

The Nationalist Chinese did not change these views in the slightest even after being defeated on the mainland and being obliged to take refuge in Taiwan. (19)

About 300 thousand Turkic Muslims of Eastern Turkistan were

liquidated who opposed this policy. (20)

### COMMUNIST CHINA'S EASTERN TURKISTAN POLICY

At the 6th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in 1945, Mao Zedong criticised the inhuman policy of the Nationalist Chinese against the minority peoples living in China, and announced that after a Communist takeover of power in China, the peoples of Mongolia, Tibet and Eastern Turkistan would have the right of self-determination. These peoples would have the choice between full independence, if they preferred it, or establishing a Federated Republic, if they wanted to live within the framework of a Federal China. (21)

But after Mao seized power in China, he entirely denied these previous promises.

Faced with that situation, the Turkic Muslims of Eastern Turkistan pleaded that they might be permitted at least to form a federated republic. But Mao rejected this request, terming it a demand "hostile to history and socialism". Mao stated that "Eastern Turkistan had always been an inalienable part of an indivisible China, even before the liberation of China. Thus, there would be no sense in dividing China now into federated republics".

Seeing this hard attitude of Mao, the Turkic Muslims of Eastern Turkistan requested that at least the name "Xinjiang", given to their country during the Feudal Chinese rule, be changed to the historical name of the land "Eastern Turkistan". And if that should not be acceptable, they wished the country to be called "Uyguristan".

But Mao rejected this wish of the people, too. He decided to form separate "autonomous regions" for all the "peoples" living in Eastern Turkistan.

On the 1st of October, 1955, the whole of Eastern Turkistan was given the name "Xinjiang Wei Wu Er Zi Zi Chu", meaning Xinjiang



Uygur Autonomous Region.

Thus Mao combined another turn-about, this time against his former dictum that "there is no need to divide China into federated republic, because China has been a single, united land from the earliest times", with a policy of dividing the Turkic Muslims of Eastern Turkistan, who really united throughout history. Thus following closely the policy of Feudal and Nationalist China to "divide", "assimilate" and unite within the of a "Great Chinese Nation".

The newspaper "Xinjiang Ribao", the organ of the Chinese Communist Party of Eastern Turkistan, wrote in its issue dated 15 th February 1958

"The Latin alphabet which has been prepared to fit the phonetic structure of the Chinese language will be most useful in helping the fusing together of the Chinese and the minority peoples. To oppose the Latin alphabet means to oppose the fusion of peoples living in China, and to oppose the establishment of socialism and of Communism."

In accordance with this view, Mao pursued a policy of systematically introducing Chinese words and expressions into the language of the Turkic Muslims of Eastern Turkistan.

After the imposition of Latin alphabet prepared to fit Chinese phonetics, further steps were taken to cut off the people of Eastern Turkistan from their ancient culture. For example, 370 thousand books written in Arabic alphabet, some of them of great value, were destroyed.

(22)

Under the pretext of "socio-economic reforms", Mao drove the Turkic Muslims of Eastern Turkistan into communes, aiming to turn them into herds to destroy family bonds, which were considered sacred by the Turkic Muslims, and to eliminate all national and religious traditions.

Mao's campaign against the Islamic religion was particularly severe. All copies of the Holy Quran, Hadith and other religious works were

destroyed, all mosques were closed, and were used as barracks, party headquarters, stables, slaughterhouses, etc. Clergymen were arrested, tortured, used for forced labour and cleaning sewers, and especially were forced to care for pigs, slaughter it and to eat pork. (23)

The reason for this particularly severe attack by Mao on Islam is that it was regarded as a major obstacle to Mao's policy of assimilation of the Turkic Muslims of Eastern Turkistan.

Of the Turkic Muslims of Eastern Turkistan who opposed this policy, 360 thousand people were executed (24), more than 100 thousand fled to Soviet Union in desperation (25), and 504,800 people were driven into 10 of the 19 hard labour concentration camps in Eastern Turkistan. (26)

The new rulers of China, who have seized power after Mao's death, have felt the need to admit some of the injustices committed against the Turkic Muslims of Eastern Turkistan.

For instance the newspaper Rin Min Ribao, the organ of the Communist Party of China dated 20th October, 1978 writes:

"... Minority nations have been forced to burn their dead, and conceal the ashes, to eat pork and to keep pigs against their will. Minority nations have also been kept in a very backward state economically. The rulers tried to exterminate their culture. We have the obligation now to help them attain a higher standard of living and to activate their culture..."

As these passages make clear, the Maoists who came to "liberate" Eastern Turkistan 30 years ago, have done nothing whatsoever in all this time for the benefit of the Turkic Muslims in Eastern Turkistan.

It is a fact that there has been a measure of liberalization affecting the people of Eastern Turkistan during the rule of the new Chinese leaders who came to power after the death of Mao Zedong.

This liberalization has occurred mostly in economic, cultural, religious life of the of the people, and in greater freedom to travel.

But it appears that these measures of liberalization, just beginning to put into effect, are still far from satisfying the people, because many armed clashes are reported to have taken place in the cities in Eastern Turkistan from 1979 on. (27)

These clashes gave rise to disputes among Chinese and Turkic Muslim leaders. As these disputes grew, Deng Xiaoping, China's strongman, felt the need to go to Eastern Turkistan in August 1981 to act as an arbitrator playing a pacifying role, and to remove Wang Peng from his post as Chairman of the Communist Party in Eastern Turkistan, replacing him with Wang Enmao.

These clashes and the unrest in Eastern Turkistan have their source in the desire of the people for political rights.

The people of Eastern Turkistan demand that they be granted full autonomy. Although, at present Eastern Turkistan is called "Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region", but in reality no right of self-rule is granted to the Turkic Muslim people. The reins of government are completely in the hands of the Chinese. About 90 % of the important administrative posts are occupied by Chinese officials. (28)

The Turkic Muslims yearning for self-rule finds expression even in songs and poems that are passed from mouth to mouth. One of them is this:

(In Uygur language)

Aftonom digen bilen

Uyguristan bolalmidi

Ah bu menin biqare halkim

Musulman eli bolalmidi

(In English)

Just by saying Autonomous Reg

It did not become Uyguristan

Ah, my, poor suffering nation

Did not become a Muslim land

These lines make clear that the people of Eastern Turkistan are opposed to the name "Xinjiang" and want their land to be called "Eastern Turkistan" or at least "Uyghuristan", and expresses the strong desire for self-rule.

The people of Eastern Turkistan also demand that the number of Chinese settlers in their country be reduced. Before 1949 there were only 200 thousand Chinese in Eastern Turkistan. Now they are more than 5 million. The Turkic Muslims of Eastern Turkistan fear they will be overwhelmed among such a large number of Chinese, and will lose their national identity.

Here is a "dirge" whispered again from mouth to mouth among the people, on the occasion of a death among the Chinese settlers:

(In Uygur)

Miqlap miqlap kelisen

Birlep birlep ketisen

Kaçan tügesen

Carim kardeşim menin!

(In English)

You come by thousands

But you go one by one

When shall you ever finish

Oh dear brother of mine!

Mohammed Refik, the Pakistani author, says in his book "Islam in China", published 1963:

"...Communist China, after she occupied Eastern Turkistan, has been making the people of that country labour more for the Chinese interests than to meet their own needs..."

That is true. The Turkic Muslims of Eastern Turkistan has to work hard. And, in spite of that, he is not granted a share in the great natural wealth of his own country. He still lives at a bare subsistence level. This situation finds its expression in the following lines:

(In Uygur)

Emgekni ubian kilsak

Uygur balanıza ho deydu

(In English)

If we keep on working hard

They say, the Uygurs are good.

Hakikette gin turmak

but the moment we demand our rights

Logey diyye zo deydü.

They say, march to the hard-labour

camps.

For no other reason than that they have asked for their rights, thousand of Turkic Muslims from Eastern Turkistan have been branded as "subversive", "anti-revolutionary", or "pan-Islamist", and taken away.

Those who have not been liquidated have been sent to Peylo hard labour concentration camp, and are expected to spend the rest of their lives there.

Peylo hard-labour camp is in the Takl'makan Desert region, in the area bounded by the cities of Haralbashi, Merkit and Yuzurga. The Chinese call this hard-labour camp "Logey Nung Chang". It is reported that there are 15 thousand prisoners there now. This camp is under the direct administration of the Ministry of Public Security (Gung En Ting), in the provincial capital, Urumchi. The great majority of the inmates in the camp are political prisoners. But as Communist China do not accept that there are political prisoners, all the inmates in the camp are treated as criminals. Most of the guards are Chinese. The political prisoners are made to <sup>work</sup> at the hardest jobs. Those who complete their sentences are not released. They are given the status "Shing-sing", which means "Those who are entering life anew", and are kept on working at forced labour. The only difference is that at this stage they are paid wages of about 40 to 50 Yuan a month. They are not permitted to go back to their homes and families, unless the local communist party organizations from the prisoners former place of residence passes a resolution that, as a result of his stay and re-education in the hard-labour camp, he has been rehabilitated. But the members of the local communist party organizations are afraid of being branded as "having voted in favour of a serious 'criminal'", and so such resolutions generally are not passed.

This results in people who have been sentenced to this hard labour camp for whatever length of time, remaining till they die.

Ethnic groups living under the threat of losing their national identity tend to have stronger feelings of nationalism. In Eastern Turkistan, feelings of nationalism have been greatly strengthened as a reaction against the pressure of Chinese chauvinism.

And the fact that the policies toward the Turkic Muslims of Eastern Turkistan followed by Feudal, Nationalist and Communist China under Mao Zedong have been so similar, is due to the extremely chauvinistic nature of the Chinese nation.

The Chinese always called their neighbours, the Turkic peoples, "Shing-nu" meaning "barbarians".

The famous Chinese philosopher Wang Fu zhi, who lived during the 17 th century, wrote:

"...It is no injustice to conquer the lands of Barbarians; It is not an inhuman act to kill barbarians; It is not dishonest to deceive barbarians". (29)

The Chinese have a saying "Yi yi ji yi". This proverb means, "Rule a barbarian through a barbarian".

They also have proverb that says: "Ning -zing weygo bugi jam". This means: " I might make concessions to distant people, but I shall permit no right to the bondsmen under my rule".

The conduct of Chinese chauvinists under the Feudal, Nationalist and Communist Chinese rule has been exactly in accordance with these proverbs.

The pressure of the Chinese chauvinism is being felt in Eastern Turkistan just as much today as it has been in the past. The following  
The following passage in August 1977 issue of the periodical Hung-chi,

the ideological organ of the Chinese Communist Party, confirms this conclusion:

"... Chinese chauvinism, which has always existed in China, is just as strong today as it **ever** was. Chinese chauvinists are against non-Chinese nations being granted any rights whatsoever. Although the Communist Party of China is waging a struggle against these chauvinists, this struggle so far has not been very successful..."

What the Turkic Muslims of Eastern Turkistan are trying to make the new Chinese leadership understand is that Chinese chauvinism must be stopped and that they will continue to do everything in their power to preserve their national identity. The responsibility for all evils that might result will be on the Chinese.

If the new Chinese leaders choose to disregard the just wishes of the people of Eastern Turkistan, frictions and discords between the Turkic Muslims of Eastern Turkistan and the Chinese can be expected to escalate to dangerous degrees. As has happened in the past, foreign powers will attempt to benefit from this discord, and that could bring much loss and suffering to the Turkic Muslims of Eastern Turkistan, and also serious loss to the Chinese.

Wang Enmao, the Chairman of the Communist Party in Eastern Turkistan, in an interview which appeared in the 17th April, 1982 issue of the newspaper Rin Min Ribao, alludes to the same danger, saying:

"...In order to stop expansionist policy of Soviet Union, it is necessary that we harmonize and strengthened the relationship and friendship between the people of Xinjiang and the Chinese..."

If we turn these words, representing Marxist usage, into plain language, the meaning which emerges is this: Relations at present

between the Chinese and the Turkic Muslims of Eastern Turkistan are not good at all, and they must be turned to friendly relations, otherwise it will be difficult to stop the expansionist policy of Soviet Union towards Eastern Turkistan.

Why should it not be possible to create these friendly relations between the Turkic Muslims of Eastern Turkistan and the Chinese by granting the just wishes of Turkic Muslims of Eastern Turkistan?



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