Spring 2019

China: Do the Uighurs represent a serious threat?

Bridget Read

Ryan Walters

Follow this and additional works at: https://commons.lib.jmu.edu/honors201019

Part of the Asian Studies Commons

Recommended Citation

https://commons.lib.jmu.edu/honors201019/637

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Honors College at JMU Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Senior Honors Projects, 2010-current by an authorized administrator of JMU Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact dc_admin@jmu.edu.
China: Do the Uighurs Represent a Serious Threat?

An Honors College Project Presented to

the Faculty of the Undergraduate

College of Integrated Science and Technology

James Madison University

by Bridget A Read and Ryan A Walters

Intelligence Analysis BS

Accepted by the faculty of the Department of Intelligence Analysis, James Madison University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Honors College.

FACULTY COMMITTEE:

Project Advisor: Timothy Walton, PhD.,
Associate Professor, PhD

Reader: Stephen Marrin, PhD.,
Program Director, PhD

Reader: Noel Hendrickson, PhD.,
Professor, PhD

PUBLIC PRESENTATION

This work is accepted for presentation, in part or in full, at ISAT Senior Symposium on 12APR2019.
China: Do the Uighurs Represent a Serious Threat?
Honors Thesis Submission
Bridget Read and Ryan Walters
Intelligence Analysis Capstone Project

Figure 1: Map of China with Xinjiang Autonomous Region Circled.\(^1\)
Table of Contents

Key Judgments .......................................................................................................................... 4
Background ................................................................................................................................. 4
Analysis ....................................................................................................................................... 5
Conclusion ................................................................................................................................. 10
Bibliography ............................................................................................................................. 11
Appendix A: Causal Analysis .................................................................................................... 18
Appendix B: Outside-In Analysis ............................................................................................... 25
Appendix C: Red Team Analysis ............................................................................................... 28
Appendix D: Divergent Scenario Development ......................................................................... 30
Honors Appendix 1: Bridget Read ............................................................................................ 33
Honors Appendix 2: Ryan Walters ............................................................................................ 42

List of Figures
Figure 1: Map of China with Xinjiang Autonomous Region Circled........................................ 2
Figure 2: Nations Neighboring Xinjiang .................................................................................. 5
Figure 3: Satellite Imagery Showing the Appearance of Re-Education Camps ...................... 8
Figure 4: Causal Forces in Xinjiang. ....................................................................................... 18
Figure 5: The Central Conflict (R2) ......................................................................................... 19
Figure 6: UN Responds to Human Rights Violations (B6). ....................................................... 20
Figure 7: PRC Justification of CT Operations (B8). ................................................................. 20
Figure 8: PRC Unwanted International Attention (B7). ............................................................ 21
Figure 9: Divergent Scenario Chart. ......................................................................................... 30
Key Judgments

The People’s Republic of China’s (PRC) utilization of harsh ethnic control policies coupled with extreme and violent enforcement by the People’s Armed Police (PAP) will likely drive the Uighurs to become a security threat to the PRC and disrupt international relationships. The Uighurs do not currently constitute a security threat to the PRC based on their limited connection to terrorist organizations and attacks. Due to several underlying factors, the Uighurs represent a political concern to the PRC and the conflict between the PRC and the Uighurs is fueled by ethnic tensions. Ongoing security operations in the Uighurs’ home province of Xinjiang exacerbate tensions as the PAP enforce harsh ethnic control policies. As the international community is becoming increasingly aware of the situation in Xinjiang, the PRC has come under pressure to explain its actions. These underlying forces could plausibly drive the Uighurs to become a security threat to the PRC in the future.

Background

The Uighurs are a Chinese Ethnic-Muslim minority residing in Xinjiang, an autonomous region that takes up one-sixth of China’s western border. The Uighurs have had the goal of independence from the PRC since the PRC was formed in 1949 and this goal was significantly hindered by the emergence of the PRC as a powerful nation-state in the early 1990s. The PRC became increasingly concerned with Uighur separatist movements following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the subsequent independence of Central Asian States. This time period was also marked by PRC fears of the viability of the communist system.

To maintain a strong, unified communist nation, the PRC has deeply embedded the concept of “One China”. Any strong minority identity threatens the PRC’s views of “One China”. In order to foster a strong and unified China, the PRC has a multi-level system in which individual citizens are always expected to play a role in promoting the PRC and controlling dissent by remaining loyal to the PRC and the government’s decisions. In all regions, the PRC tends to respond to domestic hostilities that threaten this loyalty system with oppressive policies that force assimilation as well as the direct force of the PAP.

In Xinjiang, the PRC has been utilizing counterterrorism operations in order to control the Uighur population. The PRC asserted a link on 29 November 2001 between Uighur members of the Eastern Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM) and Osama bin Laden and the Taliban in an officially released party document. In 2002, the ETIM was officially declared a terrorist group through United States (US) Executive Order 13224 and United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolutions 1267 and 1390 which justified the PRC’s assertion. This official recognition later caused confusion as to the true threat posed by the Uighurs to the PRC.
Analysis

The Uighurs do not currently constitute a serious threat to the PRC’s stability. In order to be considered a serious threat, a party must have high levels of both intent and capabilities. The Uighurs have high levels of intention as a separatist threat, but relatively low levels of intention of causing physical harm to the PRC. Regardless, the PRC has currently diminished the Uighur’s capabilities to pose a threat to the PRC’s homeland security. PRC intelligence and security forces have successfully kept Uighur separatist forces from effectively organizing any sort of resistance inside or outside of China through collaboration efforts with other nations in Central Asia as well as domestic counterterrorism operations. The few existing dangerous Uighur groups lack the coordination and sophistication needed to make significant progress towards their goals of causing harm to the PRC, due to the extreme policing and political oversight of the Xinjiang region.

The conflict in Xinjiang between the Uighurs and the PRC is one fueled primarily by ethnic tensions. The Uighurs have not positively benefited the same way as the Han Chinese majority has from the PRC’s efforts to modernize and improve life in Xinjiang. Economic disparity is driving ethnic unrest, as the Uighurs are unwelcome, underpaid, and underemployed in their own region. The PRC’s “Great Leap West” in 1999 prompted tens of thousands of Han citizens to emigrate to Xinjiang in order to take advantage of government-funded economic expansion; taking jobs and positions away from the Uighurs. Many Uighurs reside in poorer rural areas, relying on low paying jobs in dangerous or unsubsidized fields. Such modernization efforts in Xinjiang has prompted the idea amongst Uighurs that their culture is being targeted by the central government and the Xinjiang region is no longer their own. Divisions along ethnic lines in multiple areas of life have continued to drive a wedge between the PRC and the Uighurs in Xinjiang (See Outside-In Chart in Appendix B).

The PRC’s political actions in Xinjiang began by focusing primarily on homogenizing the Chinese culture within the region, but the underlying ethnic unrest labeled the Uighurs as a security threat to the PRC. The Uighurs became increasingly discontented by PRC policies that oppressed Uighur culture and the PRC continued to create such policies with the intention of homogenizing the culture and mitigating the external separatist threat. As tensions within the region grew, the PRC began to become concerned with the possible relationship between the Uighurs and Islamic Terrorist Groups (ITGs). This concern was fueled by the geographic position of Xinjiang in relation to Southeast Asian and Middle Eastern countries that tend to have cells of Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State (IS); potentially allowing for the easy exit and return of radicalized Uighur foreign fighters (Figure 2: Nations Neighboring Xinjiang).
The PRC viewing the Uighurs as a threat to their national security has exacerbated Uighur tensions. The core conflict between the PRC and the Uighurs is due to a self-perpetuating conflict over harsh control policies and the PRC’s treatment of Uighurs in the Xinjiang region (See R2: Central Conflict Loop in Appendix A). Examples of such policies include laws against speaking Turkish and dressing in traditional Uighur garments; aimed at forcing the assimilation of Uighurs into Chinese culture.\textsuperscript{17} The more control policies and actions taken by the PRC in the region, the greater the level of discontent amongst Uighurs and the greater the chances of dissent within the region. This dynamic between the PRC and the Uighurs creates a vicious cycle as the actions of dissent are met with harsher control policies and other actions by the PRC that create an even more hostile environment.

The PRC does not differentiate between non-violent and violent political actions against the central government’s policies and responds to all acts of discontent amongst citizens with counterterrorism forces.\textsuperscript{18} The PRC links “terrorist activities” to any actions, attempted actions, or goals that “undermine public security”; which is a considerably broad definition and a large departure from the type of actions that would be considered terrorist actions in the US and other Western nations.\textsuperscript{19} The discontent in Xinjiang over the previously mentioned ethnic control policies introduces a third actor in the region, the People’s Armed Police (PAP). The PAP is a paramilitary PRC force responsible for security within the borders of China as well as law enforcement and preventative actions within the troubled regions they are deployed to.\textsuperscript{20}

The self-perpetuating conflict in Xinjiang between the Uighurs and the PRC causes the Uighurs to be ethnically targeted in two ways via the acting force of the PAP. The first method of ethnic targeting occurs via direct conflict with the PAP. PRC law gives the PAP the right to act as a police force when deployed into a certain region and to “control” certain people or groups when acting officers of the PAP deem it to be necessary.\textsuperscript{21} In Xinjiang, the PAP has consistently utilized military level force to control the populations of Uighurs without making a discrimination between Uighur activists peacefully protesting and Uighur activists involved in riots within capital cities.\textsuperscript{22} In December 2017, over 10,000 PAP officers were deployed to a rally in Urumqi, Xinjiang’s capitol, which was intended to be peaceful and led to the arrest of many protestors.\textsuperscript{23}

The second method of ethnic targeting occurs via the PAP’s digital Integrated Joint Operations Platform (IJOP) and impacts all Uighurs in Xinjiang regardless of their participation in any acts of dissension. IJOP is a growing PAP database that aggregates extreme amounts of data collected on Uighurs such as family history, biological data, online messaging interactions, and recorded daily behaviors.\textsuperscript{24} The PAP has multiple sources for the collection of this data from CCTV cameras with facial recognition, existing Uighur legal records, and Wi-Fi scanning systems.\textsuperscript{25} There are 31,000 convenience police stations in urban areas of Xinjiang since 2016 that enable the collection of this data and serve as security checkpoints which require Uighurs to place smartphones on a sensor in order to collect all the data from the phone.\textsuperscript{26} The aggregated data is utilized for predictive policing in order to flag individual Uighurs as potential threats to PRC and PAP control.\textsuperscript{27}

Both direct PAP force and PAP predictive policing in Xinjiang even further exacerbate Uighur tensions in the region. Actions done by the PAP in Xinjiang represent the direct
enforcement of the ethnic control policies that drove the conflict between the PRC and the Uighurs in the first place. The large-scale surveillance of Xinjiang further intensifies Uighur sentiments of ethnic oppression as the PAP utilizes IJOP flagged individuals to target these individuals before they have even violated an ethnic policy or displayed any signs of disloyalty to the PRC.\textsuperscript{28}

An unexpected consequence of the PRC’s broad definition of terrorism and strict dissenion policies is that the Uighurs ironically became more vulnerable to sympathizing with and joining ITGs than they were before (See Background Shift Analysis in \textit{Honors Appendix 1}).\textsuperscript{29} The PRC first made the connection between the Uighurs and terrorism in 2001, years prior to the first Uighur linked terrorist attack on the PRC’s homeland.\textsuperscript{30} ITGs are also inclined to support Uighurs in Xinjiang due to the PRC’s attacks against the Muslim faith in counterterrorism laws as profession of the Muslim faith outside of very few government sanctioned religious outlets is considered “illegal religious activity”.\textsuperscript{31}

The stringent counterterrorism policies that ethnically target Uighurs were eventually followed by terrorist attacks on the PRC’s homeland that were connected to ITGs. Before the 2008 Beijing Olympics, the Minister of Public Security for the PRC expelled 4,000 to 5,000 Uighurs from Beijing over fear that there would be a terrorist attack on the games.\textsuperscript{32} This prompted the Turkistan Islamic Party (TIP), an Al-Qaeda splinter group, to release a video claiming that Uighur fighters would attack the PRC and the Olympics due to harsh treatment.\textsuperscript{33} Following these events, the PRC began to experience larger and more frequent terrorist attacks on their mainland that were accredited to Uighurs as parts of universally known ITGs. Uighur foreign fighters were linked to several ITG claimed attack on China in the 2013-2015 time period. The most extreme being September 2014’s bomb attacks and clashes that killed 50 people and injured 50 people.\textsuperscript{34}

The Uighurs still do not currently pose a major terrorist threat to the PRC, though this connection between ITGs and Uighurs has grown as a result of the self-perpetuating ethnic conflict between the PRC and the Uighurs. Uighurs tend to participate in “disparate organizations” of ITGs with “differing goals” which makes it less probable that one larger, global ITG would maintain a continued interest in the region.\textsuperscript{35} Uighur utilization of terrorism against the PRC is currently hamstrung and aimed more at the goal of political autonomy in response to ethnic oppression.\textsuperscript{36} This goal does not align with the main goal of the ITGs; establishing a global caliphate of Islamic rule.\textsuperscript{37}

Without a major terrorist threat stemming from Uighurs in Xinjiang, the PRC’s claims that harsh control measures within the region are necessary to maintain order and protect their homeland security are not justifiable.\textsuperscript{38} Human rights groups, such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the World Uighur Congress, have continuously been filing protests with Western governments and international organizations over the PRC’s treatment of Uighurs for years. The PRC has thwarted this attention in the past by justifying their actions based on necessary counterterrorism operations but is no longer able to do so (See \textit{B8: PRC CT Operations Justifications in Appendix A}).
Pressure has recently been put on the PRC to give a better explanation for their actions which has invited more international attention to the situation in Xinjiang (See B6: UN Responds to Human Rights Violations and B7: PRC Unwanted International Attention in Appendix A). In 2018, the UN and other international organizations began to call attention to apparent human right violations in Xinjiang based on PAP actions and ethnic control policies. Threats of sanctions and diplomatic warnings have been utilized as tools to apply more pressure on the PRC. International pressure is currently mounting against the PRC as little action has been taken by the PRC to prove that they are not violating human rights. The PRC attempted to alleviate suspicions by welcoming delegations from multiple countries into the region in December 2018 and January 2019, however this increased suspicions.

Re-education camps in Xinjiang has emerged at the current forefront of international attention to the PRC’s alleged human rights violations. The Uighurs who have been detained by the PAP are being sent indefinitely to camps which were revealed via satellite imagery (Figure 3: Satellite Imagery Showing the Appearance of Re-Education Camps). The PRC claims are centers to reduce Islamic extremism by vocational training and teaching detainees traditional PRC concepts, dress, language, and law for better assimilation. Many US and European newspapers have referred to re-education camps in Xinjiang as “concentration camps”. Many nations and international human rights groups have called for a formal US investigation into the region, but the investigation has either not been completed or has not yet been publicized.

The current status-quo of the Uighur situation in Xinjiang is unsustainable. The future of the situation in Xinjiang will likely be driven by the extent to which ITGs and terrorism are involved in the conflict, the PRC’s perception of control over the region, and the extent to which the Uighur situation is visible to the international community (See Divergent Scenario Development in Appendix D). Currently, the conflict in Xinjiang is in a transitional period and there are a few possibilities for how the situation will evolve out to about 2023.

The most plausible future for the Uighur – PRC conflict is the Uighurs becoming a security threat to the PRC by freedom fighter movements. The lack of direct involvement by
ITGs in Xinjiang coupled with international awareness of PRC human rights violations create an environment in which the PRC faces damaged international relationships and sanctions against it. The PRC faces international sanctions based on many issues and could potentially utilize the alleviation of forces and release of prisoners in Xinjiang to divert attention from other sanctions aimed at controlling the PRC’s economic and cyber actions.\textsuperscript{45} The continued lack of proof that ITGs are directly involved within the Uighur population makes it difficult for the PRC to explain their actions in Xinjiang. The Uighur population, however, has grown to be more vulnerable to large scale resistance movements and ITG tactics based upon the past twenty years of massive oppression operations by the PRC. The freedom fighter movement could also gain traction by the release of the around one million prisoners who have likely faced the worst human rights violations inside the re-education camps.\textsuperscript{46}

An alternative future for the Uighur – PRC that has a lower probability, but a higher impact is a radicalized Xinjiang as Uighurs could turn to ITGs for support. The environment would be similar to the one in the previous future with one major difference, ITGs are now directly involved in the conflict. The underlying ethno-religious tension in Xinjiang combined with the highly oppressive actions taken by the PRC in Xinjiang create a vulnerability in Uighurs to look to ITGs for support in the conflict which could be multiplied if the PRC pulls back security in the region. Xinjiang is geographically situated in a way that could create the conditions necessary for ITG cells to form within the region.\textsuperscript{47} ITGs could take advantage of this opportunity because it would give them greater access to destabilize a non-Islamic government that is a strong nation state unlike the ones terrorist cells typically exist within.\textsuperscript{48} This future scenario would plausibly be highly chaotic due to past underlying confusion as to the true nature of ITG involvement within Xinjiang and current focus on the PRC’s actions. Though highly impactful, this scenario is not very plausible given the lack of connection between ITGs and the Uighurs especially in the group’s differing motives.
Conclusion

A common theme emerging from the analysis is that the PRC is driving the Uighur issue forward. The PRC in recent years has been justifying the utilization of extreme counterterrorism in Xinjiang as a necessary step in reducing terrorist attacks aimed at their homeland as well as reducing the number and reach of global terrorist networks. The backlash against these policies are taken by the PRC as Western propaganda that is designed to damage US-China relations and the true extent to which Uighurs are unfairly prosecuted has somewhat been concealed until recently.49

- There is a **moderate level of confidence in the analytical conclusions** generated in this capstone project as they were well supported by multiple analytic methodologies as well as background research.

- There is a **moderate level of confidence in the sources** utilized in this analysis due to the nature of China as a research target. The PRC has a high level of control over journalists, political researchers, and reports coming from the region which can impact the information reported to the public. We were also limited in the sources that could be read as neither of us can read Chinese.
**Bibliography**


"China is Creating Concentration Camps in Xinjiang. Here’s how we hold it Accountable.”


Appendix A: Causal Analysis

Causal analysis is used to illustrate connections between actors with differing strategies which can highlight relationships between them and unexpected consequences of these interactions. Casual loop diagraming is a causal analysis methodology that focuses on creating a Causal Loop Diagram (CLD) to illustrate the mental models of the main actors in a system as well as the ways in which these mental models connect with one another.

Causal Loop Diagram

Figure 4: Causal Forces Influencing the Situation in Xinjiang.
Causal Loops Mentioned in the Paper

Figure 5: The Central Conflict (R2).
Figure 6: UN Responds to Human Rights Violations (B6).

Figure 7: PRC Justification of CT Operations (B8).
Figure 8: PRC Unwanted International Attention (B7).

Causal Loop Stories

Actor Mental Models

(B1) PRC: Han Superiority
For decades, the Han ethnic majority has dominated many aspects of Chinese life. The Chinese Communist Party utilizes and solidifies this through use of the “Zhonghua Minzu” (Chinese Nation) system, which encourages the idea of a single Chinese unity. Minzu encourages the idea that minorities are backward people who need Han assistance in order to move forward. To the Han central government, control over territories like Xinjiang will slip once the Han start losing their cultural supremacy. To counter this, the government imposes ethnic control policies that restrict the cultural freedom of the minority groups in China. Once the control policies take effect, Han superiority goes back up.

(B2) PRC: Regional Stability
The PRC also has a political goal for controlling their minority populations. For example, a prevented uprising in Xinjiang dissuades political dissidents in Tibet from trying something similar. A loss of regional stability decreases the PRC’s control over their territory. The PRC then implements its ethnic control policies in order to drive down ethnic feelings that don’t line up with the Minzu beliefs. Regional stability goes back up once the ethnic feelings are suppressed.

(B3) PRC: People’s Armed Police
The PRC has more tools available besides “soft” policy changes. The People’s Armed Police (PAP) stand ready to deploy and assist local police in suppressing dissent. As stability drops,
the PAP begins to carry out more missions to decrease the frequency of dissenting actions. As the acts of dissent occur less frequently, the stability of the region increases.

**B4: Violent Uighur Separatist Movements**

Some Uighurs feel that more extreme action is needed to get what they want. Uighur separatist groups have similar aims to their “non-violent” countrymen, but attempt to achieve them in extremely different ways. To them, more dissenters come about as the discontent rises. This leads to an increase in the frequency of violent political actions (riots, bombings, etc.). Eventually, the Uighurs will gain more political autonomy, which decreases the discontent.

**B5: Non-Violent Uighur Independence Groups**

The Uighurs don’t agree with the ethnic control policies and police actions being pressed upon them and look for ways to gain cultural autonomy. As the degree of discontent among the Uighurs increases, there are more people who feel like something needs to change. The more people that are involved in non-violent political movements, the more likely it is that political action (protests, working within the system, etc.) will take place. Ideally, the Uighurs’ use of non-violent political action will cause an increase in their cultural autonomy. This increase in cultural autonomy lowers the discontent that the Uighurs feel.

**B6: UN: Respond to Human Rights Violations**

The United Nations (UN) has a rigid stance on human rights. If a member nation breaks these rules, there are serious repercussions on the international stage. As there are more instances of human rights violations in the country, more people flee the country as political refugees. The more political refugees there are, the more likely it is that the international community becomes aware that violations are taking place. This increased awareness prompts the international community to start applying pressure on the violating country, through economic sanctions or other political tools. Ideally, this would lower the number of instances of human rights violations in the country.

**R1: ITG: Recruitment**

Islamic Terrorist Groups (ITG) broadly include groups such as the Islamic State (or ISIS), Al Qaeda, and the Taliban. The common motivation for the actors studied in this loop would be to establish a global caliphate through violent means. ITGs fit into the broader picture of the Uighur - PRC conflict because they utilize the tension felt by the Uighur Islamic minority as a recruitment tactic to increase their number of sympathizers and attacks that can be claimed as part of their missions. ITGs are focused on their degree of influence on a global scale. Influence campaigns, such as on social media, increase the popularity of the ITG and gives them access to more fighters. The more fighters the ITG has; the more terrorist attacks they can perpetuate and claim. This ultimately creates a reinforcing diagram as the degree of influence as increases which further perpetuates their recruitment model. The reinforcing dynamic goes back to the initial motivation of the group in that they will not stop until they have achieved a global caliphate.

**Interactions**

**B7: PRC: Unwanted International Pressure**

Islamic Terrorist Groups (ITG) broadly include groups such as the Islamic State (or ISIS), Al Qaeda, and the Taliban. The common motivation for the actors studied in this loop would be to establish a global caliphate through violent means. ITGs fit into the broader picture of the Uighur - PRC conflict because they utilize the tension felt by the Uighur Islamic minority as a recruitment tactic to increase their number of sympathizers and attacks that can be claimed as
part of their missions. ITGs are focused on their degree of influence on a global scale. Influence campaigns, such as on social media, increase the popularity of the ITG and gives them access to more fighters. The more fighters the ITG has; the more terrorist attacks they can perpetuate and claim. This ultimately creates a reinforcing diagram as the degree of influence as increases which further perpetuates their recruitment model. The reinforcing dynamic goes back to the initial motivation of the group in that they will not stop until they have achieved a global caliphate.

(B8) PRC: CT Operation Justification

This loop is the interaction between the PRC, the Islamic Terrorists Groups (ITGs), and the UN which creates a dynamic in which the PRC can leverage the involvement of ITGs in order to justify counterterrorism operations. The main interaction occurs when the frequency of terrorist attacks (or terrorist threats) on China’s homeland increases the frequency of acts of dissension on China’s homeland which decreases China’s regional stability. This creates a visible terrorist threat allowing China to justify harsher counterterrorism measures and lessen the degree of international pressure created in the B7: PRC: Unwanted International Pressure loop in order to act against ITGs. The PRC then utilizes the ethnic control policies as counterterrorism policies in order to act against the frequency of terrorist attacks claimed by ITGs. When labeled as counterterrorism policies targeted against a globally perceived threat, the PRC is able to justify their harsher control policies.

(R2) Central Conflict

The central conflict regarding the Uighur situation occurs between the PRC, the PAP, and both the violent Uighur separatist movements and nonviolent Uighur independence groups. Generally, the Uighur population perceives the PRC’s ethnic control policies and the PAP’s actions as instances of human rights violations targeted at them; increasing the degree of discontent amongst them. Uighurs who make the decision to act on these typically join either violent or nonviolent groups as seen in the B4 and B4 loops which end in political actions that are either violent or nonviolent. Both types of actions by Uighur groups are viewed as dissension by the PRC and often the PRC has trouble discerning when the political action is a violent threat which explains why the two different types of movements end up fueling the same conflict. As the acts of dissension increase, the overall regional stability decreases which directly activates PAP actions and simultaneously decreased the PRC’s control over the Xinjiang territory which creates the need for more ethnic control policies. These actions by the PRC and the PAP then feed back into the instances of human rights violations; continuously agitating the conflict. As the cycle continues and the degree of discontent continually raises amongst the Uighurs, more Uighurs will join either type of group.

(R3) ITG: Leveraging PRC-Uighur Conflict

This loop regards the interest that ITGs would have in the PRC-Uighur conflict. Since Uighurs who subscribe to the violent separatist movements are a Muslim population acting out against a non-Muslim ruling government through a violent manner, the number of dissenters are increasing the popularity of ITGs which in turn feeds into the ITG recruitment cycle. The struggle Uighurs face against the PRC can be leveraged by ITGs as propaganda through influence operations which can inspire more dissenters within the Uighur population.

(R4) ITG: Uighur Foreign Fighters

This loop regards the external support the violent Uighur separatist movements receive from ITGs. When Uighur dissenters look outwards towards ITGs, the popularity of the ITG rises within the violent Uighur population. At this point, dissenters can leave Xinjiang and become
fighters for various ITGs in various Middle Eastern nations. After a time delay, usually one or two years, the Uighurs whom became ITG fighters can return to Xinjiang and contribute the violent political actions. In turn, the radicalized foreign fighters who return to Xinjiang further agitate the population of violent Uighurs. This generates more discontent and more popularity of the ITGs; inspiring more Uighurs to leave to gain training at ITG camps. The ITG Uighur Foreign Fighters model is a reinforcing causal system because it works to continually raise the amount of fighters and dissenters and contains no balancing mechanism.
Appendix B: Outside-In Analysis

Outside-In thinking is used to frame subjects within a broader context. Looking into other areas besides the main “theme” adds to the background information surrounding the issue. In this project, the Uighur issue might be classified as a security problem, but the deep cultural aspect of the issue hits upon many different domains. Researching and analyzing the issue from the point of view of religion, economics, sociology, and demographics could help provide a better picture of the issue. Completing an Outside-In analysis added to the understanding of the main issue. Examining potential reasons for the Uighur problem through other subjects, such as economics and environmental, aided in viewing the main problem through a new light.

Most Prominent Factor: The Political Sphere

➢ The Uighurs impact the PRC’s politics on both an international and domestic level. On the domestic level, the PRC relies heavily on national unity according to a “Minzu System”; a system in which all ethnic minorities coexist peacefully with the majority to make up one strong unified China. The PRC diverts contentious issues towards local administrations in order to increase a sense of individual responsibility. This creates a multilevel system in which citizens who are loyal to the PRC are expected to play a role in promoting the government and controlling dissent.
➢ On the international level, the PRC mainly relies on the idea of “realpolitik” in order to serve the nation’s interests. As a Confucian society, the PRC will often overlook religious differences in order to forge a connection with Islamic countries in the East based off the PRC’s goal to keep Western Christian influence out of the Eastern sphere. The PRC also has the goal of maintaining non-confrontational relationships with bordering countries and five out of the fourteen of these countries are Muslim-majority.
➢ The Uighurs impact the domestic political system because they typically do not identify as a loyal minority to China and they demand separation. This diminishes the internal cohesion that the PRC seeks in domestic politics. PRC suppression of the Uighurs, as a Muslim minority, impact the international system by contradicting the cooperative relationship the PRC attempts to build with Muslim nations.

2nd Most Prominent Factor: The Economical Sphere

➢ Xinjiang is an economic powerhouse for China. Xinjiang is the country’s biggest producer of oil, natural gas, and cotton, among other products, which make the central government extremely interested in maintaining control over the region. However, the economic success of the region is not shared evenly between the Han majority and other ethnic groups and leads to more ethnic tensions.
➢ Xinjiang has large natural stores of natural gas, coal, and other minerals, which is greatly desired by the developed eastern part of the country. Much of the province also relies on an agriculturally-based economy, predominantly cotton. In turn, the Uighurs mainly work in these industries. Economic problems arise for the Uighurs in these fields, as the government is attempting to limit coal production to decrease pollution and water scarcity causes huge issues for the cotton industry. The government attempts to provide subsidies for these industries, but many farmers and miners feel that the given funds are not enough.
Due to the issues in Xinjiang’s main industries and the general under-development of the region, the Chinese government attempted a massive investment campaign to modernize the region’s industry and living conditions in 1999. Overall, many residents of Xinjiang feel the benefits of this initiative, as living conditions have greatly improved across the board in the cities. The problem is, many Han Chinese have immigrated to Xinjiang to participate in the economic growth. In turn, they are the ones who have felt most of the benefits. Many Uighurs struggle to compete for jobs and still rely on less prosperous jobs in the countryside. This further proves to the Uighurs that the Han majority are favored in China and further exacerbates the ethnic tensions.

The environment has suffered in Xinjiang due to decades of resource exploitation and poor management. Poorer Uighurs in particular suffer from smog, poor water quality and supply, and radiation exposure, among other problems. This environmental degradation, when combined with the poverty many Uighurs live in, greatly increases the ethnic tensions in the region, as the Han have better employment and do not feel the negative environmental effects as strongly.

3rd Most Prominent Sphere: The Military Sphere

- Xinjiang is militarily important to China due to border control, maintaining the status quo, and regional dominance. Xinjiang contains a very large portion of China’s Western border and acts as a buffer region to Central Asia. Exerting control over the region serves the double purpose of maintaining the “ethnic unity” of China and keeping China’s strategic options open in Eurasia.
- The border of Xinjiang spans across a wide area, touching Mongolia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and several other countries. If Xinjiang attempts to gain more autonomy or independence, Beijing could lose access to all those borders, as well as the buffer zone that Xinjiang provides. If a crisis were to emerge at one of the borders, the Chinese army would have problems accessing troubled areas.
- The central government also has concerns with ethnic unity that center around Xinjiang. The Uighurs represent one of the more vocal ethnic minorities in China, which concerns Beijing. If such feelings of “nationalism” or ethnic tensions spread to other areas, like Tibet, the government would have a large amount of issues to handle across the country. The government has handled ethnic or separatist issues with military force in the past. A countrywide military crackdown would have devastating repercussions for China on the international stage.

4th Most Prominent Sphere: Religion
➢ The PRC is ideologically linked to Confucian, Buddhist, and Taoist religions. China is an atheistic state with worshipping communities mostly being linked to different local saints with no unified. This type of community worship differs greatly from that of other religions in which the focus is on a higher power(s). The PRC values science and communism as truths over religion; it has long held the belief that religion breeds gullibility and superstition. Those who associate with the traditional practices of China believe religion is more so a way of living life, rather than being a theological construct.

➢ The Uighurs are of predominantly Islamic faith and hold to traditional Islamic views. This creates a religious clash with the PRC and breeds tension. Though the PRC has attempted to show that they align with Islamic religions, Uighurs believe that they are religiously oppressed by Chinese rule.

➢ The factor of religion, however, does not really dominate the discontent the Uighurs have with the PRC. Though religion fuels the tension, the conflict does not revolve around it. Instead, religion can is mostly construed as an ideological weapon to achieve foundationally nationalistic goals.

5th Most Prominent Sphere: The Geographical Sphere

➢ Xinjiang covers one-sixth of China’s territory and a large portion of the Western border. The autonomous region borders eight different countries and is integral in cultural and economic exchanges occurring across the border between the East and the West. Through Pakistan, Xinjiang has access to the Arabian Sea which is key in transporting goods and oil. Xinjiang also has access to railways, pipelines, and roads that are crucial to China’s New Silk and Road Initiative.

➢ Xinjiang is important in 3 main goals of the PRC: border stability, stopping separatism, and access to key energy resources. China historically places a lot of value on “territorial unity” and believes that strong control over all of their territory will keep the nation strong. Xinjiang is also an important aspect of the PRC’s “geographic contiguity”: a concept that allows China to expand political and economic ties with Central Asian nations. This plan is highly contingent on Xinjiang bordering three Central Asian republics and historically remaining in good relations with these republics.

➢ Uighur militancy or separatist actions in Xinjiang is of concern to the PRC due to the importance of Xinjiang in the PRC’s strategic plans.
Appendix C: Red Team Analysis

Red team analysis is a method utilized when an issue needs to be understood from the perspective of an adversary. The method requires that the analyst view the issues as though they were analyzing it for the adversary’s leader or decision maker. This method can be utilized to give multiple interpretations of an issue and understand other forces or dynamics driving the issue forward. Official red team analysis is typically conducted by a cell of analysts within an agency that solely view issues from the perspective of the adversary. Red team analysis was adapted to this project by flipping the first two methodologies to be from the perspective of PRC as well as researching and identifying how the PRC tends to make political decisions. This methodology was utilized to challenge assumptions and conclusions made in other methodologies and provide a more complete picture of the many different sides of the issue.

### Causal Analysis from PRC’s Perspective

- Chinese political decision-making revolves around their belief of cultural superiority. International law and minority rights are secondary to the security and stability of the state. Chinese officials likely view this system with a focus on loops B8 and B7.
- The PRC’s goal is to legitimize their domestic counterterrorism operations and subsequently their ethnic policies. In recent years, China’s CT operations have come under international scrutiny as more Uighurs flee China with reports of human rights violations (Loop B7). Beijing has been forced into a balancing act, where they strive to maintain their domestic security while limiting diplomatic pressure from Western countries. As more terrorist attacks occur on Chinese soil, the more ammunition Beijing has to justify their counterterrorism methodologies to the rest of the world (Loop B8).

### Outside In Analysis from PRC’s Perspective

- The PRC tends to be focused primarily on the political dominance of the Han Chinese ethnic majority. Within the outside-in domains for looking at the Uighur problem, it is likely that the PRC would focus heavily on the political domain considering the perceived threat a culturally immersed minority would pose towards the Han majority. As a sub-category to the political sphere, the PRC as an atheist state likely views the religious domain as a factor that divides the Uighur minority from the Han majority. The PRC also has the political goal of maintaining non-confrontational relationships with Islamic minorities in order to maintain non-confrontational relationships with bordering Islamic nations. In order to overcome this discrepancy, the PRC can either focus heavily on ethnic control policies unrelated to religion or on broader security concerns.
- When national unity cannot be achieved through political means, the conflict with the Uighurs becomes a greater threat that the PRC. The Xinjiang region is significant in connecting the PRC to bordering nations; giving it both military and economic significance. Unrest or uprisings within the Xinjiang region constitute the involvement of the People’s Armed Police to maintain territorial control. At the point that the People’s Armed Police gets involved, the conflict between the Uighurs and the PRC then gets classified within the central government as a terrorist conflict and suppression tactics follow from here.
The Uighurs from the Perspective of the PRC

The Uighurs represent a serious security threat to the PRC due to their connection with Islamic extremist groups, non-Han identity, and positioning in Xinjiang. Uighur extremist targeting of soft civilian populations has largely increased along with their affiliation with Middle Eastern terrorist organizations such as ISIS or Al-Qaeda since 2013. Uighur minority uprisings threaten the central government’s ability to maintain unity and order through one strong, unified China. It is also possible that any uprising in Xinjiang of a nationalistic manner could inspire other minorities in other regions, such as Tibet, to do the same.
Appendix D: Divergent Scenario Development

Divergent scenario development is a futures analysis method utilized to generate a range of plausible future scenarios for an issue or topic. The method works by identifying three prominent causal drivers from causal analysis and two possible endpoints that the drivers could go to in the imagined future. These drivers and endpoints can be seen on Figure 9 below. After the drivers and endpoints are identified, there are eight plausible future scenarios for the issue analyzed based upon different combinations of endpoints. All eight scenarios are explained in an additional chart by stories generated by the analyst on how the future would look with the three specific endpoints. For this capstone project, divergent scenario development was useful in identifying major themes for the future of the Uighur situation in Xinjiang since it was already apparent that the issue was not going to remain the same. Divergent scenario development aided in identifying a plausible future for the conflict as well as alternatives to pay attention to. Divergent scenario development was also useful in identifying implications.

Divergent Scenario Chart

Figure 9: Divergent Scenario Chart.
Divergent Scenario Stories

Scenario 1: “China’s Hidden Intentions”
Islamic Terrorist Groups (ITGs) have been actively engaging in attacks within Chinese borders, especially in Xinjiang. Beijing isn’t concerned about these or their effects on national stability and moves troops into Xinjiang to deal with the ITG cells. Beijing continues to keep a tight lid on social media use by Uighur civilians, however, and uses the extra forces in Xinjiang to continue to implement the PRC’s ethnic control policies without the rest of the world knowing.

Scenario 2: “China Plays the Terrorism Card”
*Most Unprepared For:* The international community is aware of the PRC’s actions against the Uighurs in Xinjiang and confronts Beijing on the international stage. Beijing is not fazed by this, as the frequent ITG terrorist attacks on Chinese soil more than justify heavy handed means to ensure the country’s stability.

Scenario 3: “China’s Worst Nightmare”
It is not a good day to be in Beijing. ITGs are carrying out frequent attacks in China and the international community is applying pressure over the PRC’s treatment of the Uighurs. Rumblings of discontent with the government have spread beyond Xinjiang and the government is worried that they are looking at the beginnings of a major crisis.

Scenario 4: Radical Xinjiang
*Most Dangerous:* Fighting between ITGs and the PRC’s forces have led to a massive swing in public opinion against Beijing. Uighurs begin siding with ITGs and local secessionist groups as separatist feelings sweep across the region. The PRC has been able to lock down social media usage about the Uighurs’ treatment for now but fears of the radicalization spreading are prominent in Beijing.

Scenario 5: “Business as Usual”
Not too much has changed regarding the Uighur - PRC conflict. The PRC was able to suppress media usage and redirect international attention in order to continue their ethnic control efforts in Xinjiang. The ITGs continue to show indirect involvement in the conflict with little on the ground support.

Scenario 6: “China’s Relationship Crisis”
An international spotlight on the PRC’s treatment of the Uighurs causes massive tension in the PRC’s relationships with both neighboring Muslim countries and western nations. As the PRC continues to perceive themselves as stable, their ethnic control policies and counterterrorism operations are way over the line in regards the Uighur’s human rights. The PRC continues to face little existential threat from ITGs and has no way to justify their policies to the international community. The PRC experiences a strong economic and political pushback as more and more countries cease trade with the nation.

Scenario 7: China’s Paranoia
*Most Likely:* Despite no direct involvement from ITGs, the PRC continues to perceive activities in Xinjiang as a direct existential threat to their countries and carries out strong ethnic control and counterterrorism measures in order to control the Uighurs. There harsh policies cause the PRC to experience harsher human rights sanctions and slowly deteriorates the PRC’s relationships with Western and bordering countries. Meanwhile, the PRC slowly loses political control expending resources on controlling a non-issue.

Scenario 8: “Black Mirror”
Xinjiang arises as a police state with Uighur citizens living similar to those in North Korea. With extreme technical resources deployed towards controlling the lives of Xinjiang’s citizens, all Uighurs are virtually forced within the confines of the Xinjiang region with no external help or international outreach. The PRC is able to suppress the international community's awareness of the Xinjiang police state. At this point, there is little direct involvement from ITGs as it would not even be possible for them to cross over the border in Xinjiang or reach Uighurs via the media.
Honors Appendix 1: Bridget Read

My honors component is comprised of three specific intelligence analysis methods that were identified as necessary throughout the intelligence analysis capstone but did not fit the scope and time constraints of the original project. This honors appendix is divided into three parts: background shift analysis, decision significance comparison, and key assumptions check. Each of the three pieces introduces the method, displays the method, and provides a conclusion as to how the method was used. All three methods were used to supplement and re-analyze the main methods used in formulating key judgments within the scope of the IA capstone report.
**Background Shift Analysis**

Background shift analysis is a causal analysis method that can be utilized to identify how an agent’s actions contributed to a potential unexpected consequence. The method first requires establishing the time period that the consequence existed in and a time period before the problem existed. The two time periods are then compared to each other to identify how the later time period with the unexpected consequence differs from the time period without the unexpected consequence. Next, the agent’s actions are examined for how they may have contributed to current environment with the consequence. These results are used to decide whether or not the agent’s actions could have caused the unexpected consequence.

**Background Shift Analysis Method:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Agent</th>
<th>The People’s Republic of China</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Problem</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible unexpected</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consequence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uighur acts of religiously</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>motivated terrorism and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>strengthened connection to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Islamic Terrorist Groups (ISIS,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Al Qaeda, Taliban)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 1: Later Time of</strong></td>
<td>Late 2000s - Current</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Problem</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With the consequence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 2: Time Before</strong></td>
<td>Late 1980s - Late 1990s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Problem</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without consequence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 3: The Shift</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How the later background</td>
<td>* From 2008 on, the PRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(the causes with effect)</td>
<td>experiences more legitimate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>differs from the early</td>
<td>terrorist attacks on their</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>background (cases without</td>
<td>homeland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>effect)</td>
<td>* ITGs begin to utilize Uighurs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and Xinjiang in propaganda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and recruitment videos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Prior uprising or acts of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aggression stemming from</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uighurs tended to occur in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Xinjiang and related to the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>control of cities or the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 4: Agent’s Actions</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributing to the shift</td>
<td>* In late 2001, the PRC shifted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of the later background</td>
<td>rhetoric from regarding the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uighurs as a separatist threat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to regarding Uighurs as parts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of active terrorist organizations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 5: Possible Cause?</strong></td>
<td>Yes. There is evidence that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>after the PRC targeted the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uighurs as a population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sympathetic to terrorist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>organizations and enforced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>counterterrorism measures in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2008, there was an increase in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the size and frequency of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>terrorist attacks in China.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion

The PRC’s actions in the late 2000s – current time frame contributed to the rise in Uighur acts of religiously motivated terrorism in connections to Islamic Terrorist Groups (ITGs) such as the Taliban, ISIS, and Al Qaeda. The PRC’s shift in rhetoric in 2001 describing Uighurs as parts of active terrorist organizations proceeded legitimate terrorist attacks on the PRC’s homeland in 2008 and beyond. This background shift analysis provides a greater understanding of the causal forces attributing to an increase in vulnerability in the Uighur population to sympathizing with ITGs. It also provides a better understanding of how the PRC’s actions contributed to their issues with the Uighurs and more specifically the connection between Uighurs and ITGs.
Decision Significance Comparison

Decision significance comparison is a strategy assessment method used to interpret the potential outcomes of a strategy against an identified key uncertainty. The method first requires that two outcomes to a key uncertainty are identified. These two outcomes are then compared to the list of potential strategies to determine what the environment would look like if the strategy was implemented with each possible uncertainty. This first part creates a matrix that is then utilized in interpreting the strategies. All strategies are interpreted as dominant options, maximin options, maximax options, and minimax options. These interpretations give a more diverse understanding of how implementing each strategy could play out in the future environment.

**Decision Significance Comparison Method:**

Potential Outcomes of a Key Uncertainty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The Uighurs ARE a Radicalized Population</th>
<th>The Uighurs ARE NOT a Radicalized Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>No Action Taken</strong> (over human rights violations in Xinjiang)</td>
<td>No action taken &amp; the Uighurs are a radicalized population</td>
<td>No action taken &amp; the Uighurs are not a radicalized population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Firm Economic Sanctions on the PRC</strong> (targeted at key PRC economic interest; other nations encouraged to do the same)</td>
<td>Firm economic sanctions &amp; the Uighurs are a radicalized population</td>
<td>Firm economic sanctions &amp; the Uighurs are not a radicalized population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Firm Political Stance Against the PRC’s Actions</strong> (directly increasing international pressure and prompting other parties to act)</td>
<td>Firm political stance against the PRC’s actions &amp; the Uighurs are a radicalized population</td>
<td>Firm political stance against the PRC’s action &amp; the Uighurs are not a radicalized population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Forced Land Presence within Xinjiang</strong> (for full investigation of human rights violations)</td>
<td>Forced land presence within Xinjiang &amp; the Uighurs are a radicalized population</td>
<td>Forced land presence within Xinjiang &amp; the Uighurs are not a radicalized population</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Decision Significance Comparison Method Continued:

**Key Uncertainty: The Uighurs ARE a Radicalized Population vs. The Uighurs ARE NOT a Radicalized Population**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option: No Action Taken (over human rights violations in Xinjiang)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>How might it be interpreted as a dominant option?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How might it be interpreted as a maximin option?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How might it be interpreted as a maximax option?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How might it be interpreted as a minimax option?</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option: Firm Economic Sanctions on the PRC (targeted at key PRC economic interest; other nations encouraged to do the same)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>How might it be interpreted as a dominant option?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How might it be interpreted as a maximin option?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How might it be interpreted as a maximax option?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How might it be interpreted as a minimax option?</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Option: Firm Political Stance Against the PRC’s Actions (directly increasing international pressure and prompting other parties to act)

| How might it be interpreted as a dominant option? | No matter what, the US is responding strongly to human rights violations in Xinjiang. |
| How might it be interpreted as a maximin option? | Even if the Uighurs are radicalized and the firm political stance does not restrict human rights violations, then at least the US did not take direct strong action against the PRC. |
| How might it be interpreted as a maximax option? | If the Uighurs are not radicalized and the firm political stance worked to restrict human rights violations, then the US will have strongly supported Uighur human rights with the support of allied nations. |
| How might it be interpreted as a minimax option? | If the Uighurs are radicalized and the firm political stance worked to restrict human rights violations, while the US and allied nations helped liberate the Uighurs, still the US would have greater information to intervene in the region. |

### Option: Forced Land Presence within Xinjiang (for full investigation of human rights violations)

| How might it be interpreted as a dominant option? | No matter what, the strong direct presence will aid in eliminating some of the human rights violations and will provide the US with actionable information. |
| How might it be interpreted as a maximin option? | Even if the Uighurs are radicalized and the US is directly present in Xinjiang without alleviating the human rights violations, then at least the US will have accurate insight into the conflict. |
| How might it be interpreted as a maximax option? | If the Uighurs are not radicalized and the US is directly present in Xinjiang, then the US will have strongly supported Uighur human rights and directly contributed to the alleviation of the human rights violations. |
| How might it be interpreted as a minimax option? | If the Uighurs are radicalized and the US is directly present within Xinjiang, while the US will be forced to confront the conflict, still the US would be prepared to do so and would have an accurate perception of the situation in Xinjiang. |
Conclusion

Firm economic sanctions or a firm political stance could plausibly aid the US in addressing the PRC’s human rights violations in Xinjiang. Action that does not involve the use of force carries less of a risk in the event that the worst case scenario for the key uncertainty is true and the Uighurs are a radicalized population. Both firm economic sanctions and a firm political stance will allow the US to respond to human rights violations no matter what. Assessing strategies fell outside the scope of the IA capstone project, but aided in the process of identifying implications for the conclusion of the main project. The decision significance comparison method specifically pointed to the implications for not responding in the face of the human rights violations in Xinjiang and subsequently the different risks associated with different types of responses. Decision significance comparison also helped highlight a key uncertainty for acting in the future environment.
### Key Assumptions Check

A key assumptions check is a technique utilized to identify certain key assumptions that are important to the final judgments and were assumed throughout the analytical process. The key assumptions are assessed based upon the evidence used in the analysis. The key assumptions check was updated periodically throughout the course of the capstone project and always re-evaluated after creating a new method or starting a new draft. The technique was used to challenge underlying assumptions at several steps throughout the process as well as consider alternative possibilities to the key assumptions.

#### Key Assumptions Check Method:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Assumption</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The PRC does and will feel pressured to explain its actions in Xinjiang.</td>
<td><strong>High likely</strong>, given the amount of external pressure being put on the PRC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Uighurs in Xinjiang do not currently constitute a major terrorism threat to the PRC.</td>
<td><strong>Likely</strong>, but there is still the possibility that they could potentially pose a larger threat due to their positioning in Xinjiang, ITG recruitment opportunities, and a few past terrorist attacks on the PRC’s homeland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The PRC is primarily concerned with the strong non-Han identity of the Uighur minority.</td>
<td><strong>Highly likely</strong> given ethnic control policies and their past behaviors towards active minority groups. However, the PRC also highly prioritizes keeping its regions free of terrorist activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are re-education camps in Xinjiang that violate Uighur human rights.</td>
<td><strong>Likely</strong> given the satellite imagery and news stories coming from Uighur refugees, but there is still a possibility that the camps do not exist to the extent to which is claimed in the media or that they solely provide vocational training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The main conflict between Uighurs and the central PRC government began over harsh ethnic control policies and the PAP’s actions.</td>
<td><strong>Highly likely</strong> given the lack of consistent evidence that the Uighurs had a strong connection to Islamic Terrorist Groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The PRC intentionally overestimated Uighur connections to Islamic terrorist organizations in the early 2000s.</td>
<td><strong>Possible</strong>, but there was a lot of fear over terrorism at the time. Though the Uighurs may not have posed a terrorist threat, the PRC could have perceived them to pose a serious terrorist threat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Uighurs in Xinjiang are a major concern in PRC policies.</td>
<td><strong>High likely</strong> given the amount of policies the PRC created to force assimilation of the Uighurs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The PRC is intentionally deceptive in their public documents and news sources.</td>
<td>** Likely**, given past behavior. There are true policies and intentions woven within the white papers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion

A majority of the key assumptions were based upon the Uighur – PRC conflict being primarily an ethnic conflict and not a terrorist threat. These key assumptions influenced key judgments within the paper. The key assumptions check was used to highlight and consider the alternative that the Uighurs could pose a valid threat to the PRC against all judgments made in analyzing the methods. The key assumptions check also highlighted the possibility that main piece of evidence for the existence of re-education camps in Xinjiang could not be sufficient enough to prove that there are human rights violations occurring in these camps. This key assumption led to the collection of more news sources to proceed with the analysis of the current situation in Xinjiang.
Honors Appendix 2: Ryan Walters

An Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield (IPB) is a military intelligence process used to direct intelligence and planning efforts through analysis of enemy threats and the operating environment. Normally, the work is conducted by an Intelligence section within a battalion or brigade over the course of several months using various technologies and techniques to compile as comprehensive an idea of the enemy’s composition and potential plans as possible. Despite having months of intelligence to use, the IPB is short and to the point, as the commander does not normally have a lot of time to listen to hours of information. Normally, an IPB is presented in a PowerPoint format so the intelligence officer has more flexibility to provide details as needed.

An IPB is broken up into five sections. Each section is short, only a couple paragraphs at the most with some images to back up the assessment given. The first section is the friendly unit’s mission. Including this ensures that the intelligence section is aware of what knowledge their unit requires in order to accomplish their assigned tasks. In the case of this IPB, the friendly unit will be NGIC. Next, the “Area of Operations” section details where the enemy force is currently stationed and working. Pertinent details can include location of natural resources, average weather conditions, and the terrain in the area. The “Enemy Situation” section discusses what the intelligence section knows about the enemy. Here, the exact location, armament, disposition, and other factors regarding the enemy’s current state are detailed. After that is the “Enemy Capabilities” section provides estimates on what the enemy forces are potentially capable of. This section predominantly focuses on potential courses of action that the enemy could take and provides examples of possible indicators that would hint at each course of action. Finally, the last section is a conclusion that summarizes the previous sections and provides the commander with recommendations.

An IPB fit well as my Honors component for two main reasons. First, my focus of the IPB was the People’s Armed Police (PAP), China’s national paramilitary police force. The PAP is extremely active in Xinjiang, so learning more about the organization operates would greatly increase my partner and I’s understanding of the PAP’s role in the main project. The IPB methodology can easily be applied to the PAP, since the PAP is a military target. Second, IPBs are extremely common in the Army. Doing an IPB for my Honors component made sense from a professional standpoint, as getting a familiarization of the method and how it is conducted would benefit me as I start my career as an Army officer.
MISSION

NGIC focuses on the capabilities of foreign conventional and unconventional ground forces. Analysis on the PAP’s capabilities and role in counterterrorism operations provides US analysts and decisionmakers with information on how the PRC might react to terrorist actions within their borders. Additionally, intelligence could be gathered to gain a further understanding of how the PAP could be used to support conventional military operations within Chinese borders.

AREA OF OPERATIONS

The People’s Republic of China is a large country, spanning 9,596,960 sq km with mostly mountains, plateaus, and deserts in the West and plains and low-lying areas to the East. Most of the population resides in heavily urbanized areas in the East. The sparsely populated areas in the West are also home to large amounts of natural resources, such as oil and coal. As a police force, the PAP maintains operations within Chinese borders. The PRC’s Area of Interest and Influence extend further, but do not influence PAP operations as much.

ENEMY SITUATION

Chinese foreign policy is often quite defensive in nature due to the perceived vulnerability of their borders. China’s borders are easier to attack than defend, leaving openings for invasions or, in the counterterrorism perspective, infiltration. Many of the western mountains and ridges would provide high ground for defending PAP forces to stage or defend, while relying on China’s intricate railway system to transport troops and supplies all over the country as needed.

Some key terrain for the PAP during counterterrorism operations would be the Tarim and Junggar basins, the Three Gorges Water Project locations along the Yangtze River, and critical infrastructure, such as the railways and powerplants. The basins are among the PRC’s key sources for oil and coal, while the Three Gorges Water project provides electricity and water supply to urban and rural areas along the lower and middle Yangtze River. Critical infrastructure allow for life to continue as normal for both the defending forces and the Chinese civilians. Damage or seizure of any of these locations could potentially cripple the Chinese defenses, so the PAP will likely have responsibility for guarding and fortifying these sites.

ENEMY CAPABILITIES

The PAP’s fourteen divisions and the PRC’s railway system allow for plenty of flexibility in deployment around the country. The PAP also has exceptional signals intelligence (SIGINT) collection technology, which has already been deployed in Xinjiang and other troubled areas to limit spread of dissenting discussion. SIGINT capabilities are one area where the PAP has significant opportunity for growth. Through control of the railways, the PAP can slow the approach of any opposing forces that attempt to use the systems to travel across China quickly.
The PAP has not always reacted well to emergency scenarios. Examples like the Wenchuan earthquake in 2008 pinpointed weak areas in the PAP’s ability to respond quickly, such as insufficient supplies and slow distribution. Errors in response could lead to a drop in public opinion within the PRC, as could heavy handed tactics during PAP actions. Any fragility in the confidence of the Chinese people could be weaponized by the opposition to halt wars or government action, which forces Beijing to weigh options very carefully. The strengths of the Chinese infrastructure also highlight the railways and SIGINT structures as potential high-profile targets.

**CONCLUSIONS**

The PAP has three general strategies to utilize when faced with domestic counterterrorism operations. The most likely one is that the PAP maintains a constant presence in their AO. Likely indicators of this would be the existence of patrols and checkpoints to maintain order and encourage civilian participation in community policing, hardening operations of both military and civilian targets, and PAP staging zones would be active with troops, vehicles, and supplies moving in and out frequently.

---

1. China Map Provinces (WP Map, June 14, 2011)
2. Aurora E. Bewicke, Silencing the Silk Road: China’s Language Policy in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (San Diego International Law Journal, 2009), 138; Colin P. Clarke and Rexton K. Paul, Uighur Foreign Fighters: An Underexamined Jihadist Challenge (ICCT Research Papers, 2017), 6
6. Shaohua Lei and Richard Green, Sublimating Contentious Chinese Politics into Local Public Administration: A Polity-Centered Analysis of Authoritarian Governance and Administrative Responsibility (Public Integrity, 2017), 625
7. James D. Frankel, Chinese-Islamic Connections: An Historical and Contemporary Overview, (Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs, 2016), 573
9. Aurora E. Bewicke, Silencing the Silk Road: China’s Language Policy in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (San Diego International Law Journal, 2009), 137; Sean R. Roberts, The Biopolitics and China’s “War on Terror” and the Exclusion of the Uyghurs (Critical Asian Issues, 2018), 233
Michael Clarke, China’s “War on Terror” in Xinjiang: Human Security and the Causes of Violent Uighur Separatism (Terrorism and Political Violence, 2008), 278 & 295
Michael Martina, In China’s Xinjiang, Economic Divide Seen Fueling Ethnic Unrest (Reuters, 2014)
Douglas Green, Xinjiang: Economic Realities Behind Civil Strife (Stratfor, 2017)
China Map Provinces (WP Map, June 14, 2011)
Maria A. Soloscheva, The Uighur Terrorism: Phenomenon and Genesis (Iran & the Caucasus, 2017), 418-426
Freedom of Speech and Human Rights in China (Voices of Dissent, 2009)
Mark Kielsgard and Tam Key Juan Julian, Autocatalytic Models of Counter-Terrorism in East and Southeast Asia: An International Comparative Analysis of China, Indonesia, and Thailand (George Washington International Review, 2018), 474
Ivan Y. Sun and Yuning Wu, The Role of the People’s Armed Police in Chinese Policing (Asian Journal of Criminology, 2009), 108-109
Yuning Wu, Ivan Sun, and Aaron Fichtelberg, Formalizing China’s Armed Police: The 2009 PAP Law (Crime, Law & Social Change, 2011), 252-254
Eric Hyer, China’s Policy Towards Uighur Nationalism (Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs, 2006), 79-80
Sean R. Roberts, The Biopolitics and China’s “War on Terror” and the Exclusion of the Uyghurs (Critical Asian Issues, 2018), 249
China: Big Data Fuels Crackdown in Minority Region (Human Rights Watch, February 26, 2018)
Sean R. Roberts, The Biopolitics and China’s “War on Terror” and the Exclusion of the Uyghurs (Critical Asian Issues, 2018), 247; China: Big Data Fuels Crackdown in Minority Region (Human Rights Watch, February 26, 2018)
China’s Predictive Policing and Digital Totalitarianism (Uyghur Human Rights Project, March 2, 2018); China: Big Data Fuels Crackdown in Minority Region (Human Rights Watch, February 26, 2018)
Mark Kielsgard and Tam Key Juan Julian, Autocatalytic Models of Counter-Terrorism in East and Southeast Asia: An International Comparative Analysis of China, Indonesia, and Thailand (George Washington International Review, 2018), 480; Kendrick T. Kuo, Revisiting the Salafi-jihadist Threat in Xinjiang (Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs, 2012), 537-538
Mark Kielsgard and Tam Key Juan Julian, Autocatalytic Models of Counter-Terrorism in East and Southeast Asia: An International Comparative Analysis of China, Indonesia, and Thailand (George Washington International Review, 2018)

Mark Kielsgard and Tam Key Juan Julian, Autocatalytic Models of Counter-Terrorism in East and Southeast Asia: An International Comparative Analysis of China, Indonesia, and Thailand (George Washington International Review, 2018), 480; China’s Anti-Terrorism Legislation and Repression in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (Amnesty International, 2002)

Sean R. Roberts, The Biopolitics of China’s “War on Terror” and the Exclusion of the Uyghurs (Critical Asian Issues, 2018), 241

Sean R. Roberts, The Biopolitics of China’s “War on Terror” and the Exclusion of the Uyghurs (Critical Asian Issues, 2018), 242

Colin P. Clarke and Rexton K. Paul, Uighur Foreign Fighters: An Underexamined Jihadist Challenge (ICCT Research Papers, 2017), 3

Colin P. Clarke and Rexton K. Paul, Uighur Foreign Fighters: An Underexamined Jihadist Challenge (ICCT Research Papers, 2017), 3

Kendrick T. Kuo, Revisiting the Salafi-jihadist Threat in Xinjiang (Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs, 2012), 533-535

Kendrick T. Kuo, Revisiting the Salafi-jihadist Threat in Xinjiang (Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs, 2012), 533-535


UN: Act to End China’s Mass Detentions in Xinjiang (Human Rights Watch, February 4, 2019)

Sophie Richardson, China’s Xinjiang Tour Should Have Fooled No One (Human Rights Watch, January 7, 2019)

China Has Turned into a Police State Like No Other (The Economist, May 31, 2018)

Jessica Batke, What Satellite Images Can Show Us about ‘Re-Education’ Camps in Xinjiang (ChinaFile, 2018)

China’s Uighurs: Xinjiang Legalizes ‘Re-Education’ Camps (BBC News, October 10, 2018)

Editorial Board, China is Creating Concentration Camps in Xinjiang. Here’s How we Hold it Accountable. (The Washington Post, November 24, 2018)

Zack Cooper, The Right Way to Sanction China (National Interest, February 23, 2016)

Wang Zhicheng, Xinjiang’s ‘Vocational Training Centers’ (Or Concentration Camps) Will be Closed. Sooner or Later (Asia News, March 13, 2019)

Maria A. Soloscheva, The Uighur Terrorism: Phenomenon and Genesis (Iran & the Caucasus, 2017), 418-426

Adrien Morin, Is China’s Counter Terrorism Policy in Xinjiang Working? (The Diplomat, February 23, 2017)


CIA Tradecraft Primer (US Government, 2009)

Emma Reynolds, Welcome to the Red Cell: The CIA Unit that Asks Awkward Questions (Australia News, November 5, 2015)
52 Sarah Cornelison, Conditions and Mechanisms for Terrorist Mobilization: Applying the Chechen Case to the Uighur Question (Review of Faith and International Affairs, 2015), 25; Dawn Murphy, China’s Approach to International Terrorism (United States Institute of Peace, 2017), 3; Colin P. Clarke and Rexton K. Paul, Uighur Foreign Fighters: An Underexamined Jihadist Challenge (ICCT Research Papers, 2017), 7