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China Forcing Marriages Between Majority Han Chinese and Uyghurs

By The Siasat Daily, 2022.11.20

China mixes financial, educational and career incentives with coercive measures such as threats to families under state policies to promote intermarriage between majority Han Chinese and ethnic minority Uyghurs in the restive Xinjiang region, a new report by an Uyghur rights group has found.

The Uyghur Human Rights Project analysed Chinese state media, policy documents, government-sanctioned marriage testimonials, as well as accounts from women in the Uyghur diaspora to state that government incentives

with coercion to boost interethnic marriages have increased since 2014, RFA reported.

“The Chinese Party-State is actively involved in carrying out a campaign of forcefully assimilating Uyghurs into Han Chinese society by means of mixed marriages,” said the report.

The findings on forced marriages by the Washington-based NGO come as Western governments and the United Nations have recognised that Chinese policies in Xinjiang amount to or may amount to genocide or



crimes against humanity.

Forced labour, incarceration camps and other aspects of China's rule in Xinjiang have drawn sanctions from Britain, Canada, the European Union and the United States, RFA reported.

The study, 'Forced Marriage of Uyghur Women: State Policies for Interethnic Marriage in East Turkistan', draws on state media propaganda films, state-approved online accounts of interethnic marriages and weddings, state-approved personal online testimonials from individuals in interethnic marriages, as well as government statements and policy directives.

"The Party-State has actively encouraged and incentivized 'interethnic' Uyghur-Han intermarriage since at least May 2014," the Uyghur Human Rights Project said in the report.

Interethnic marriage policies gained momentum after Chinese President Xi Jinping announced a "new era" at the Xinjiang Work Forum in 2014, touting a policy of strengthening interethnic "contact, exchange, and mingling", the report said, RFA reported.

"Uyghur-Han intermarriage has been increasing over the past several years since the Chinese state has been actively promoting intermarriage," said Nuzigum Setiwaldi, a co-author of the report.

"The Chinese government always talks about how interethnic marriages promote 'ethnic unity' and 'social stability, but these actually are euphemisms for assimilation," she said, RFA reported.

"The Chinese government is incentivising and promoting intermarriage as a way to assimilate Uyghurs into Han society and culture. Carrots include cash payments, help with housing, medical care, government jobs, and tuition waivers," Setiwaldi said.

When it comes to sticks, "young Uyghur women and/or their parents face an ever-present threat of punishment if the women decline to marry a Han 'suitor'," the report said, citing experiences of Uyghur women now living in exile.

"Videos and testimonies have also raised concerns that Uyghur women are being pressured and forced into marrying Han men," said Setiwaldi, RFA reported.

Are the Media Responsible for the Uyghur Genocide, too?

By Bitter Winter, 2022.11.17

Media are what their Latin name says: means to connect two otherwise distant terms. Means of mass communication bridge sources and people through what we call "news," literally "novelties." Media bear a high responsibility: they are means (with others) that lead to knowledge and then to action.

So, accuracy should be the first duty of the media. This has of course to do with truth. Working in the media, with the media, and

through the media requires high moral standards and the will to search for truth.

This is totally evident when it comes to the Uyghur crisis, and more in general to the Chinese Communist Party's misdeeds. Media are, or should be, the means through which the general public knows about these topics, leading politicians and ultimately governments to act.



An Italian social commentator, the late Giovanni Cantoni (1938–2020), used wittily to say that if your history is wrong, your politics will be wrong as well. This is surely true, as it is true that those who receive bad or wrong information get distorted ideas on history and current affairs, and consequently act badly or wrongly in the public sphere.

Today, facts and comments on the Uyghur crisis are easily available through many sources. Most of this information is of high quality. There are reports, pictures, and videos; there are testimonies; there are political acts and pieces of legislation; there are entire dedicated web sites. Everyone can access this truth for free. This shows that NGOs, civil society, and researchers are doing a major work in bringing accuracy to the public, sometime even at a scholarly level. It also demonstrates that many journalists perform their duty with professionalism, conscience, and morality.

But one thing that does not cease to puzzle me every single day is that, in spite of this huge amount of important and well-researched information and public action, including by parliaments, the general public still does not know much about the Uyghur crises, or even about the Uyghurs themselves. Most importantly, too many politicians and governments do not act in the right way on this quite serious problem.

Why? I work as a journalist: so, my initial, partial answer today focuses on my colleagues in the media.

The first half of my answer today is that basically many media miss the point. This is a polite way to put a daring question. What I in fact mean is that too many of my colleagues just shamefully repeat one version or another of the propaganda of the CCP. This brings discredit to the journalistic profession but is not an exaggeration. “Bitter Winter” often reports about this complicity between some Western



journalists (and even fake journalists) and the Chinese propaganda machine. At the end of the day, what we get here is some corrupted media people that on the uneven days of a week undo what other serious journalists try to achieve with information on the even days of the same week.

The second half of my answer of today is a more nuanced side of this same story. I point here to another form of unprofessional attitude common in media. Some journalists just renounce, out of laziness and sloppy habits, to challenge the ruling elite. I think this is the most important single point.

Repeating that media are the watchdog of democracy may seem a platitude. But platitudes often retain a grain of important truth at their core. A free society is based on a clear distinction among the powers of the state, the consent of the governed, the rule of law, a healthy and vital civil society, as well as a free press.

Now, the press is free if and when it challenges the powers that be. In face of the Uyghur crisis and the misdeeds of the CCP, a real journalist should never be tired to raise questions, to ask for more, to want details, to look for answers even if it costs labour and time and homework. Independent media should challenge governments and politicians every single day. They should systematically question trade agreements between whatever country and China, cooperation pacts with Beijing, partnerships with the Chinese neo-post-national-communist regime in all fields.

True journalism should raise the price daily, calling the CCP-led regime to respond clearly and immediately on its violations of natural law

and human rights, on the real state of religious liberty, on the fate of threatened cultural identities. Newspapers and news-services, especially in the West, should be filled with articles demanding truth from the Chinese regime, and asking democratic politicians why and how and what are the terms of the agreements their respective countries have signed with the tyrannical government of China, which has transformed East Turkestan/Xinjiang into a gigantic, open-air reeducation camp. In spite of the good work done, we still see too little of this.

I come from a country, Italy, whose government signed a "Memorandum of Understanding" with China in March 2019. In spite of many promises by subsequent governments, it hasn't been neither revised nor (as it should be) cancelled yet. Practically, it was and still is a blank check given by Italy to China at the expenses of my homeland and taxpayers. That Agreement has of course bound Italian politics but has also compelled Italian media, including Italian state media, to literally buy the most blatant propaganda fabricated by the Chinese regime. Things have partially changed recently, but is still largely a functioning shame.

Now, guess why many in Italy still say that using the term "genocide" for the treatment that the CCP reserves for Uyghurs is an unbearable exaggeration; that things all over China are instead transparent and good, even ideal; that independent media like "Bitter Winter" and others lie when they denounce the systematic breaking of Uyghur families, the many instances of rape, out of hatred, of Uyghur women, the staggering policy of sterilization imposed on Uyghur mothers

by the CCP, the shameful practice of organ harvesting that the CCP is lately bringing to the Uyghur people too, the concentration and slave labor camps where Uyghurs are sent, the systematic religious persecution of the Uyghur people and the vicious war against Uyghur cultural identity, and indeed all things Uyghur, that the “neo-Maoist for the New Era” President Xi Jinping is waging.

Guess why politicians are shy, guess why governments still ignore the problem, guess why policies are inadequate.

In his 1981 Inaugural Address, American President Ronald Reagan (1911–2004) said: “In this present crises, government is not the solution to our problem; government is

the problem.” Let me paraphrase that great statesman: in the present Uyghur crisis, media are often not the solution; media are the problem.

As long as they remain a problem, the Uyghur crisis would stall because the civil society would have an excuse for its uncivil ignorance. Governments and politicians, who potentially may hold the key to a solution, will not be properly poked and prodded. Today, November 9, marks the 33rd anniversary of the Fall of the Berlin Wall. It is the right occasion for many media professionals to wonder why, with the iron curtain gone, the bamboo curtain is still there, and ask themselves whether they bear any responsibility for that.

Taiwanese NGOs Express Support for Independence of Uyghurs

By The Daily Guardian, 2022.11.14

Focus Taiwan stated that a number of Taiwanese NGOs expressed their support for the Uyghur people’s fight to establish their own independent country and urged others to speak out against China’s persecution of the minority group.

“As human rights workers in Taiwan, the least we can do is speak out for the Uyghurs on the anniversary of the establishment of the East Turkistan Republics.” East Turkistan

On July 4, Ho Chao-Tung, the head of the Taiwan East Turkistan Association, staged a gathering outside Taiwan’s Legislative Yuan. He claimed that since the Chinese People’s Liberation Army invaded East Turkistan in 1949 and took away their sovereignty, the Uyghurs have been denied even the most

fundamental human rights.

For years, Uyghurs have fought to create an independent East Turkistan. The Uyghurs were successful in founding the East Turkistan Republic in 1933, but it only existed for a brief time. The East Turkistan Republics were then re-established in 1944, but Focus Taiwan claims that this one also didn’t last for very long.

According to Michelle Bachelet, the UN human rights commissioner, China has violated the rights of the Uyghur and “other mostly Muslim populations” in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region this year, according to a report she released in August (XUAR).

The report, which was released on the last



day of Bachelet's four-year term in office, stated that the violations occurred in light of the Chinese government's claim that it is using so-called vocational educational and training centres (VETCs), also known as re-education camps, as part of a counter-extremism strategy to target terrorists among the Uyghur minority.

According to Ho, the CCP's oppressive rule over the Uyghurs in Xinjiang is intended to make them conform to Han Chinese culture and has increased their mistrust of the Chinese government.

A democratic system would grant the people of China the right to self-determination, according to Wu'er Kaixi, a Uyghur national

who served as a student leader during the 1989 Tiananmen Square pro-democracy protests. This was reported by Focus Taiwan.

East Turkistan Republic might be able to achieve independence if China one day adopts democracy, according to Wu'er Kaixi, secretary-general of Taiwan's Parliamentary Human Rights Commission.

The majority of NGOs concerned with Hong Kong and Tibet's human rights attended the remembrance event in Taipei. According to Focus Taiwan, it also included the raising of the national flag of the East Turkistan Republics and the playing of the national anthem.



Trudeau Quick to Use Genocide When Speaking of Canada but Slow on China

By Brian Lilley, Toronto Sun, 2022.11.14

To Justin Trudeau, Canada is a genocidal state, but the jury is still out on China. On Sunday, Trudeau refused to describe China's treatment of its Uyghur minority a genocide, even though Parliament has, saying such a designation requires international experts.

Trudeau famously said that Canada had committed genocide in 2019 in response to the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls inquiry. When the final report of the inquiry was delivered, Trudeau said he accepted all of their findings, which included a conclusion that Canada committed genocide, but Trudeau didn't use the word himself.

Under political and media pressure, that all changed.

"We accepted their findings, including that what happened amounts to genocide," Trudeau said in June 2019.

He and his government have also accepted that the Residential School system was a genocide as well, meaning more than once, the Trudeau government has declared Canada guilty of genocide. Yet, on Sunday, Trudeau was asked about China's treatment of Uyghurs which Parliament voted 2660- to declare as a genocide in February 2021.

"The Canadian Parliament has already called



China's treatment of the Uyghurs a genocide, why haven't you?" Trudeau was asked by CTV reporter Annie Bergeron-Oliver.

"The word genocide, acts of genocide are things to be taken incredibly seriously as a world. We have objective, historical, expert processes to put in place those words or designations," Trudeau said. "Designations of genocide need to be made by proper international authorities."

That's definitely not what happened when he called Canada a genocidal state. It's also not what happened when earlier this year, Trudeau said people were "absolutely right" to be calling Russia's actions in Ukraine genocide.

On China though, he takes a softer approach, definitely softer than the process in place for declaring the Canadian government a genocidal actor. He's afraid of China, afraid of insulting the great power and their basic dictatorship.

It's infuriating, it's insulting, it's downright wrong but it's also par for the course with Trudeau.

"There are many debates ongoing around words and use of words. Our focus as a country, as leaders, as citizens must be on the steps we take to put an end to this situation," Trudeau said in 2019 as he used genocide for the first time.

It's interesting that Trudeau said there was a focus on words, he wanted action. He's shown

through his actions that the opposite is true.

Far too many First Nations communities still don't have clean drinking water, they don't have access to basic services the federal government is responsible for such as proper, functioning schools. Fixing those problems would show Trudeau wanted action, instead, he speaks of those issues but doesn't act.

Neither has his government attempted to hold anyone responsible for issues like residential schools. There are four living prime ministers – Clark, Mulroney, Campbell and Chretien – who oversaw the residential school system. Each of these leaders ran governments that ran the schools. Why have they not faced prosecution or even official condemnation? If Trudeau believed his words, surely he would have done something.

The last residential school closed in 1996 but the last one to open was in 1976 under Pierre Trudeau. Why do we continue to honour Trudeau Sr. with an airport, mountain, schools and a foundation bearing his name?

Trudeau's lack of action on measures concrete or symbolic should tell Canada's First Nations communities that it's just words to him. That Trudeau is afraid to use a word to describe China's actions while so glibly using it to describe Canada's actions tells the whole country all we need to know about the PM and his character, or lack thereof.

It's all just words, until he becomes afraid of the rulers in Beijing.



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