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Celebrations of Mao Zedong's 120th birthday provide insights into the thinking of China's current leaders.

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For comments and questions about *China Brief*, please contact us at  
< [cohen@jamestown.org](mailto:cohen@jamestown.org) >

1111 16th St. NW, Suite 320  
Washington, DC 20036

Tel: 202.483.8888

Fax: 202.483.8337

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## In a Fortnight

### XI EVOKES “NEW LEFT” VISION OF CHINA’S FUTURE

By David Cohen

Chinese President Xi Jinping honored the 120th anniversary of Mao Zedong's birth on December 26, using the occasion to speak at length about the significance of the founder of the People's Republic in Chinese and Party history (Xinhua, December 26). The speech was generally laudatory but made brief references to his “mistakes”: launching the Cultural Revolution and, in a possible reference to the Great Leap Forward, “simply copying Leninist theory and imitating the experience of Russia's October Revolution, causing grave harm to the Chinese Revolution.” However, Xi quoted Deng Xiaoping's verdict on the legacy of Mao to argue that his failures came second to his achievements: uniting the Chinese nation and achieving its independence, solving “difficult problems about the relationship of the Party and the people,” and establishing the “basic socialist system.”

The speech is Xi's most detailed effort yet to explain the legacy of Mao, and it demonstrates two important aspects of his vision for China: first, that his alternating evocations of Mao and Deng do not represent vacillation, but an effort to reconcile the “two undeniabables” of Chinese politics. As Xi put it in the speech, deploying a slogan: “Without Reform and Opening, there could be no China today; if we abandon this path, China can have no tomorrow” (for more on the speech, see “Xi invokes Mao's image to boost his own authority” in this issue of *China Brief*).

Second, the speech—and, even more, its explication in the Party’s ideological journals—suggest strongly that Xi’s vision of China’s future has been shaped by the group of academics known as the “New Left.” The group is associated with nostalgia for Mao and especially with Bo Xilai’s experiments in Chongqing—making the resurgence of the New Left’s ideas after Bo’s downfall all the more interesting. In attempting to understand his plans for China’s future, his borrowings from Mao should be read not as ersatz efforts to justify policy, but as belonging to an established discussion about the future of China’s social and political systems.

The New Left—a controversial name rejected by many of the academics to whom it is applied—emerged in the 1990s as a criticism of unfettered capitalism, and emerged as a major player in the Hu Jintao-era debates about the idea of a “China model.” Essays such as Wang Hui’s (Tsinghua) “Contemporary Chinese Thought and the Question of Modernity” expressed reservations about the dislocations of rapid economic change, while Pan Wei’s (Peking University) “Toward a Consultative Rule of Law Regime in China” examined Hong Kong and Shanghai to envision a future without Western-style democracy (*Tianya*, Issue 5, 1997; *Journal of Contemporary China*, Volume 12, Issue 34, 2003).

While the movement contains a great deal of ideological diversity—including some adherents sympathetic to forms of representative democracy—it is generally defined by an effort to challenge the account of the Reform and Opening Era as one of salvation from failed policies. Rather, they argue, the legacies of Mao and Deng are complementary: where Mao provided equality and a strong, “spiritual” version of Chinese identity, Deng and his successors created a powerful economic base at the cost of social and spiritual dislocation. They deploy Marxist dialectics to argue for a reconciliation, describing Mao and Deng as a thesis and antithesis in need of synthesis. In a particularly ambitious version of this story, Wang Shaoguang’s 2010 article on “Socialism 3.0,” the author observes that Mao’s rule and the period of Reform and Opening initiated by Deng had each lasted for 30 years—inviting China’s leaders to declare a new era uniting the two (for more on this, see “Socialism 3.0 in China,” *The Diplomat*, April 25, 2011; original article republished in English in *China 3.0*, European Council on Foreign Relations 2012).

While this school of thought was closely associated with Bo Xilai’s policies in Chongqing—Wang proposed them as a model for the next stage of socialism in China, while the distinguished New Left academic Cui Zhiyuan joined Bo’s government as an official—the careers of its proponents do not seem to have been adversely affected by his downfall, in contrast to the recent firings of liberal intellectuals associated with Charter 08, such as Peking University Professor Xia Yeliang (*South China Morning Post*, October 20).

Explanations of Xi’s speech in Party ideological journals, and of his earlier mentions of the “two undeniables,” reflect this account of Party history. A November 8 article in *People’s Daily*, signed by the CCP Central Committee Party History Research Department, provided a guide to help readers “Correctly Deal With Both Historical Periods Before and After Reform and Opening,” a theme that has been heavily emphasized in the last weeks as journals such as *Qiusbi* (Seeking Truth) and *Hongqi* (Red Flag) have published articles on Xi’s speech, covering the historical appraisal of Mao, a “30-year Vision for China’s future” (an interview with Pan Wei), and “The China Road and the Chinese Communist Party” (*Qiusbi*, December 9, 2013; January 1).

Xi’s New Year’s address to the nation likewise played upon themes drawn from New Left literature, with the title “Making a More Just and Equal Society” (*Xinhua*, December 31, 2013).

The ideas of the New Left are visible not only in Xi’s rhetoric but in his political efforts—his emphasis on national confidence and the unique historical circumstances of the “China Dream” and his combining economic reform with Maoist rectification. Looking at Pan Wei’s 2003 article may even help to understand the conundrum of the rise of “rule of law” rhetoric coming at the same time as a crackdown on advocacy of “constitutional government.”

If Xi is using New Left theory as a political guide, the current ideological crackdown is unlikely to be lessened, and indeed we may expect to see greater efforts at mass participation. Democratic political reform and large-scale privatization of state-owned industries will likely remain off the table. However, a certain set of long-promised reforms, targeting social inequality, corruption, and the

privileges enjoyed by the Communist elite and state businesses, may play a central role in Xi's plans for the future.

*David Cohen is the editor of China Brief.*

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## Xi Invokes Mao's Image to Boost his own Authority

By Willy Lam

President Xi Jinping has used the celebration of Chairman Mao Zedong's 120th birthday on December 26 to legitimize his conservative policies—and the concentration of power at the apex of the party-state apparatus. While more than 100,000 people, mostly rural residents, converged on Mao's birthplace in central Hunan Province to honor the founder of the People's Republic, the festivities were relatively muted in major cities. In Beijing, however, all seven members of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Politburo Standing Committee showed up at the Mao Mausoleum in Tiananmen Square to pay their respects to the Great Helmsman (*Hunan Daily*, December 16, 2013; *People's Daily*, December 26, 2013). Xi's keynote speech at a lavish commemorative service in the Great Hall of the People threw light on not only his administration's plans to carry out the reform recently endorsed by the Third CCP Central Committee Plenum, but also on how the General Secretary and Commander-in-Chief plans to gather the reins of power in his hands.

Consistent with the series of exhortations that Xi made after becoming party chief at the 18th CCP Congress in November 2012, the 60-year-old supremo underscored the imperative of “faith in socialism with Chinese characteristics.” Praising Mao for having “creatively solved the major question of synthesizing Marxism-Leninism with Chinese realities,” Xi reiterated that Chinese should boost their “self-confidence in our path, our theories and our institutions.” The President and Commander-in-Chief paid tribute to Mao's principle of “independence and self-determination,” which, he said, ruled out China copying any foreign models, especially those from the capitalist West. “No single people or country have become strong and reinvigorated by relying on outside forces and

by strictly following in the footsteps of others,” Xi added. “This would only entail failure or result in [one country] become the vassal of others” (Xinhua, December 26, 2013).

There does not seem to be a contradiction between Xi's veneration of Maoism and the Xi leadership's advocacy of market-oriented reform, as demonstrated by the liberalization blueprint—*Resolution on Certain Major Issues in Comprehensively Deepening Reform (Resolution)*—endorsed by the party's Central Committee last November. Rather, he appears to be attempting to follow the path charted by reformist leader Deng Xiaoping—using capitalist reform as a tool to bolster the authoritarian model of “Socialism with Chinese characteristics.” Xi, who was responsible for drafting the document, has reiterated that reforms must be carried out orderly and incrementally—and will be monitored by centralized authority at the apex of the CCP. The reform document underscored the imperative of *dingceng sheji* or “top-level design” and the “organic integration of the leadership of the Party, the people mastering their own affairs and governing the country according to the law.” (Xinhua, November 15, 2013; China News Service, November 15, 2013).

Xi's carefully calibrated rhetoric is thus geared toward appeasing Chinese who want a continuation of economic reforms as well as conservative elements within the Party who agree with Deng's judgment that “if we abandon the standard of Mao Thought, we are in fact negating the party's illustrious history” (*People's Daily*, March 24, 2010). Indeed, in his now-famous internal talk last December on drawing the right lessons from the collapse of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), Xi noted that the CPSU made a fatal error in denigrating Lenin and Stalin. As a result of forsaking their founding fathers, Xi pointed out, “[latter-day Soviet party members] were wallowing in historical nihilism.” “Their thoughts became confused, and different levels of party organizations became useless,” he said. (Radio Free Asia, May 24; Deutsche Welle Chinese Service, January 25, 2013).

Despite Xi's expressions of confidence in the Chinese model, he revisited a theme that had appeared many times in his speeches the past year: the fear that the “dynastic cycle” will catch up with the 92-year-old CCP. He cited Mao's famous remark that “we will never become Li Zicheng.” Li (1606–1644) was the charismatic leader of a

peasant rebellion at the end of the Ming Dynasty; but even though he overran Beijing, the would-be emperor failed to keep power because he and his colleagues alienated the masses by adopting an aristocratic lifestyle. Xi also cited famous proverbs that Mao and other First-Generation cadres had often used: “a regime’s vigor may seem overwhelming; yet death could strike all of a sudden.” Again following Mao, however, Xi’s prescription for righting the wrongs of the Chinese situation was not to introduce novel concepts or institutions. “We must boost the party’s abilities in self-purification, self-perfection, self-renewal and self-elevation,” he noted.

Xi’s apparent obsession with Mao-style thinking is behind some of the contradictions in the *Resolution* that was approved at the Third Plenum. For example, while the *Resolution* indicated that “the market will play a decisive role in the distribution of resources,” it also laid emphasis on “strengthening and improving the party’s leadership over [different aspects of] reform.” “We must fully develop the party’s core leadership function in taking hold of the overall situation and coordinating different sectors,” the document said. And while the Third Plenum seemed to have enlarged the wiggle room for private as well as foreign enterprises, the *Resolution* urged the “ceaseless enhancement of the vigor, controlling force and influence of the state economy” (Xinhua, December 15, 2013; China News Service, December 15, 2013).

It is clear that Xi wants a tight personal control over the entire reform agenda. The ability of Xi to personally set the pace of reform will enable him to reconcile demands made on leadership by disparate power blocs in the polity. There is no doubt that Xi shares Mao’s penchant for authoritarianism governance. In his December 26 speech, Xi did not entirely ignore Mao’s monumental mistakes made, particularly those incurred during the Cultural Revolution (1966–76), but the contemporary leader largely followed the verdict delivered by Deng Xiaoping in the early 1980s, that “Mao’s contributions were primary, his errors secondary.” While Deng at least partly attributed Mao’s failings to the CCP’s weak institutions, including the absence of checks and balances, Xi made no reference to the party’s Leninist—and dictatorial—traditions. [1] One reason for Mao’s aberrations, Xi indicated, was simply that he was venturing upon new territories. “[When Mao tried] to construct socialism under China’s social and historical conditions, there were

no precedents,” Xi wrote. “It’s like a climber tackling a high mountain where nobody has been to before.”

While Xi did not say much about Mao’s strongman-style leadership, he has in practice done the dictator proud by successfully amassing power after having been in office for a mere 14 months. A year-end Politburo meeting announced that Xi had been named as the Head of the newly created Central Leading Group on Comprehensively Deepening Reform. Xinhua indicated that the leading group would be in charge of “designing reform on an overall basis, arranging and coordinating reform, pushing forward reform as a whole, and supervising the implementation of reform plans” (Xinhua, December 29). Moreover, another group set up at the Third Plenum, the National Security Commission, will also likely be headed by Xi. (See “Xi’s Power Grab Towers over Market Reforms,” *China Brief*, November 20, 2013). This development means that Xi will have the ultimate say over the economy, in addition to his ironclad control over the party-state apparatus, the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) and the police forces (Ming Pao [Hong Kong] December 30, 2013; Bloomberg, December 30, 2013). Times, however, have changed since Mao exercised near-totalitarian control. Despite the many titles he has assumed, the Xi needs at least the acquiescence of central and regional units in the vast party-state-military apparatus to get things done.

Moreover, glorifying what Xi called the “major contributions of our forebears” is an indirect means by which princelings—the offspring of party elders—claim “revolutionary legitimacy.” For Xi, unabashed celebrations of Maoism yield the added bonus of unifying princelings and rallying them behind himself, who are not a reliably united power bloc. “Today, what we can reassure Comrade Mao Zedong and other early revolutionaries is that ... we are closer than any other historical juncture to attaining the goal of the renaissance of the Chinese race,” said Xi, who is the son of late vice-premier Xi Zhongxun. It is not surprising that civilian and military cadres with “revolutionary bloodline” have in the past decade been the most fervent celebrants of the Maoist tradition. At more or less the same time that the disgraced Politburo member and high-profile princeling Bo Xilai launched his infamous “singing red songs” campaign, then vice-president Xi also re-hoisted the standards of Maoism. For example, while visiting the “revolutionary

mecca” of Jinggangshan in Jiangxi Province in 2008, Xi paid homage to the “countless martyrs of the revolution who used their blood and lives to win over this country.” “They laid a strong foundation for the good livelihood [we are enjoying],” he said. “Under no circumstances can we forsake this tradition.” Military princelings have also been fervid custodians of Maoist heirlooms. For example, the “Singing Troupe of 100 Offspring of Generals” has been active in organizing “red concerts” since the late 2000s. Senior members of the troupe include the sons and daughters of Marshals Chen Yi, Nie Rongzhen, Luo Rongzhen and He Long, respectively Chen Haosu, Nie Li, Luo Dongjin, and He Xiaoming (*Dazhong Daily* (Shandong), June 26, 2010; *People’s Daily*, October 15, 2008).

At the same time, PLA generals have vowed to push forward Mao’s aggressive military and foreign-policy precepts, particularly in areas such as “fighting imperialism.” In a seminar on Mao’s national defense doctrines that was held at the Academy of Military Sciences, Director of the General Political Department General Zhang Yang indicated that “Mao’s military thinking is a strong ideological weapon for vanquishing enemies and winning wars.” Linking Mao Thought with Commander-in-chief Xi’s “Chinese dream,” General Zhang called on officers and the rank and file to closely study the Great Helmsman’s instructions “so that we can boost our cohesiveness in realizing the Chinese Dream and the dream of a strong army” (CNTV.com, December 25, 2013; *People’s Daily*, December 24, 2013). Hawkish military commentators such as Generals Luo Yuan and Zhang Zhaozhong have the past few years saluted Mao’s readiness to “stand up to the Americans” particularly when compared to the conciliatory “keep a low profile” mantra of late patriarch Deng Xiaoping (360Doc.com [Beijing], December 16, 2013; [www.wyzxsx.com](http://www.wyzxsx.com) [Beijing], October 6, 2010).

The nation’s dissidents and liberal intellectuals, however, have a much different take on Mao and his relevance for 21st-century Chinese politics. In interviews with the Hong Kong and overseas-Chinese media, they warned that Chinese must draw the right lesson from Mao-style dictatorship if the country were to become a modern and just society. “The destruction of the market was one of Mao’s major blunders,” said Bao Tong, the secretary of the late party chief Zhao Ziyang. Bao saw

a contradiction between the authorities’ commitment to “comprehensively deepen reform” on the one hand, and “honoring tyrant Mao Zedong” on the other. Li Rui, the 96-year-old former secretary of Mao, recalled how the Great Helmsman regarded himself as a latter-day Emperor Qin (260-210 BC), the First Emperor well-known for his brutal suppression of the people. Li deplored the fact that the powers-that-be had to defend the despot’s legacy. “They were raised by the Communist Party, they grew up wearing red scarves,” said Li about the current leaders. “Away from Mao, the Communist Party and Marxism, then they are not legitimate. They have to safeguard their origin” (*South China Morning Post*, December 21, 2013; Radio Free Asia, December 13, 2013).

Thanks to the revolutionary bloodline, Xi seems significantly more sentimentally attached to Mao than ex-presidents Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao, whose Mao eulogies in 1993 and 2003 were politically correct but much less emotionally charged. It seems clear that Xi has to emerge from Mao’s shadow if he is to implement the kind of economic and political reforms that are more in sync with the requirements of the 21st Century.

*Dr. Willy Wo-Lap Lam is a Senior Fellow at The Jamestown Foundation, as well as an Adjunct Professor of China studies at Akita International University, Japan, and at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.*

## Notes

1. Deng’s verdict on Mao was contained in the *Resolution on certain questions in the history of our party since the founding of the People’s Republic of China*, a document approved by the 11th Central Committee in June 1981. In a famous August 1980 speech entitled “On the reform of the system of party and state leadership,” Deng noted that building viable institutions and rule by law was more important than picking saintly leaders to run the country.

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## Tiananmen Attack: Islamist Terror or Chinese Protest?

By Raffaello Pantucci

2013 was a violent year for China and Xinjiang. On December 30, at 6:30 in the morning, a group of individuals believed to be Uighur attacked a police station in Shache County (or Yarkand) near Kashgar with “explosive devices” (Xinhua, December 30). According to official reports, no security officials were killed in the incident, in which eight were killed and a ninth arrested. The official government report stated that the group was led by Wusiman Balati and Abuduaini Abudukadi (also written as Usman Barat and Abdugheni Abdukhadir), a pair who “held successive gatherings” since August in which they watched “violent terrorist videos” discussed “religious extremist thought” and formed a group that raised money, made explosives, tested these explosives out and planned violent activities (Xinhua, December 30, 2013).

The high point came on October 28, when a jeep crashed into railings in front of the iconic statue of Mao Zedong in the middle of Tiananmen Square. The incident was attributed to a Uighur named Usman Hasan (Xinhua, November 26). Usman, as well as two passengers reported to be his wife and mother, were killed, along with a Filipino tourist and a domestic Chinese tourist from Guangdong. Several more Filipino and Japanese tourists were also injured in the incident (Xinhua, November 3, 2013). The incident was praised in mid-November by Abdullah Mansour, believed to be the current leader of the Turkestan Islamic Party (TIP) (Reuters, November 23, 2013).

While these incidents were both connected to Xinjiang in some way, a double bombing outside government offices in Taiyuan in the first week of November demonstrated that terrorist-like violence in China is not always linked to the province. The Taiyuan bombing was ultimately attributed to a taxi driver “angry at society” for unspecified reasons (*China Daily*, November 9, 2013).

### Context in Xinjiang

Subsequent to the incident a series of five arrests were made of individuals from Hotan, Xinjiang. The

group was alleged to have gathered some 40,000 RMB in advance of the incident and had conducted three reconnaissance trips to the Square. They had established their group in September and came to Beijing by SUV and train on October 7 (Xinhua, November 1, 2013). Xinjiang military commander, Peng Yong, was also fired from the province’s Communist Party Standing Committee (Caixin, November 4, 2013). The sacking, while not officially linked to the incident in Tiananmen Square follows a pattern of dismissals in the wake of major security lapses. In the wake of the Urumqi riots in July 2009, Party Secretary Li Zhi and Xinjiang Public Security Bureau (PSB) head Liu Yaohua were dismissed in September, while under a year later province governor and long-time boss Wang Lequan was shunted sideways to be Deputy Head of the Political and Legislative Affairs Committee in Beijing. Explicit links to the trouble in province were not made, though the intent was clear.

The incident came in the wake of a long, brutal summer in Xinjiang that was marked by flare-ups involving multiple deaths and casualties. An unofficial tally by the author places the total number of deaths in the triple digits, though it is unclear whether this is a total accounting of what had taken place. [1] Videos have emerged showing Uighurs or Chinese-speaking individuals on battlefields in Syria. [2] In July 2013, the *Global Times* reported the case of Memeti Aili, a 23-year-old Uighur who claimed to have been studying in Istanbul, Turkey when he was approached by radical groups and recruited to fight in Syria. Memeti Aili was arrested as he tried to return to Xinjiang to complete his assigned mission to “carry out violent attack and improve fighting skills,” a task he had reportedly been given by ETIM (*Global Times*, July 1, 2013). The exact nature of his plot was not revealed, but it was held up as a specific instance of how the fight in Syria was becoming a direct problem for China.

It is clear from magazines, statements and videos showing people training and fighting somewhere in Afghanistan or Pakistan’s badlands that a group exists outside Xinjiang that threatens Chinese authorities—calling itself the Hizb al Islami al Turkestani (Turkestan Islamic Party, TIP). Occasional reports surface of individuals dying in drone strikes or of plots linked to networks around the group internationally (Dubai, July 2008 and Oslo, July 2010), and al-Qaeda leaders will mention the plight of the Uighurs in some of their speeches. [3] Most recently, their plight

was highlighted in a video released by the Somalia-based militant group al-Shabaab, with the group contrasting the Uighurs' plight and the international focus on Tibet as evidence of the West's not caring about Muslim suffering. But there is little direct evidence that outside groups have much direct connection with the incidents that take place in the province. In one incident from 2011, an individual identified as being involved in an incident by the Chinese authorities was shown in a video released by Islam Awazi (TIP's media wing), while more recently the group praised as jihad an incident in which 15 security officials were killed in the province though they stopped short of claiming the incident.

The government has not stopped linking the group to the threat, offering as evidence videos or other radical material in the possession of individuals involved in incidents. In the most recent case, authorities claimed the group had been watching extremist videos—presumably ones linked to the group or other al-Qaeda affiliates. But the directional link has been somewhat limited in its evidence, with incidents often seeming to have some local spark, though it is certainly notable that the manner in which these incidents break out is often similar.

The specifics around the group who ended up in Tiananmen remain equally unclear. According to government accounts, they were linked to ETIM and were in possession of radical material (Xinhua, November 26, 2013). Highlighting the degree to which the government continues to see ETIM and other Central Asian groups as a threat, news emerged shortly before the incident that China had pushed the Pakistani government to proscribe ETIM, the Islamic Jihad Union (IJU) and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) (BBC Urdu, October 23, 2013). The concern for China is that these groups may be drawing on their common Central Asian heritage and language to plot together—efforts so far mostly felt in Afghanistan, but that might be redirected towards China in the wake of NATO withdrawal. No released evidence about the Tiananmen incident demonstrated any specific link or direction from outside groups, but the proximity of the statements in the Pakistani press and Meng Jianzhu's categorical declarations about ETIM's links to the Tiananmen incident illustrate a willingness by China to draw links between instability at home and anti-state groups in China's near neighborhood.

## Violent Petitioners

A divergent account of the causes behind the incident emerged from an account in Radio Free Asia (RFA), that drew primarily on an interview with a former village chief from Yengi Aymaq village in Akto County, who claimed that the attack had taken place exactly a year from the time when Chinese authorities had torn down a mosque in the village. According to former village chief Hamut Turdi, the attack was revenge for the local authorities destruction of a mosque that the community had raised money to build, which was torn down when the government claimed it was an “illegal extension” to an existing prayer room (Radio Free Asia, November 6, 2013). Others cited in the RFA report claiming to know Usman Hasan said that he had lost a family member during the bloody July 2009 riots and another that his younger brother had died in a “mysterious traffic accident” that had been “blamed on the majority Han Chinese or the Chinese authorities” (RFA, November 6, 2013). None of the accounts were independently corroborated.

In the account supplied by RFA, the logic is that Usman was drawing on a Chinese tradition of petitioning the Emperor as a result of injustice at the hands of local authorities. This longstanding tradition is one that countless others have called upon through setting themselves on fire. To give only examples from the majority Han ethnicity: a group of five believed to be linked to Falun Gong set themselves alight in January 2001, a man from Anhui complaining about forced relocation did so in September 2003, and, most recently, in November 2011 a man from Hubei set fire to himself in anger “over the outcome of civil litigation” (Xinhua, September 15, 2003; *Daily Telegraph*, November 16, 2011). Tiananmen Square is also a draw for angry or deranged individuals of other sorts too. Two days prior to the jeep incident in Tiananmen Square, an argument in a staff canteen in the Forbidden City adjacent to the Square led to one man stabbing two colleagues before trying to kill himself (*South China Morning Post*, October 25, 2013). This followed a summer in Beijing in which a man went on a stabbing rampage in Carrefour killing one and injuring four (Xinhua, July 22, 2013) as well as another who had killed an American and a Chinese national in another shopping mall in the city (Agence France Press, July 18, 2013).

High profile incidents that might elsewhere be described

as terrorism, in China are instead seen as forms of petitioning. In July, Ji Zhongxing, a wheelchair-bound man, detonated an explosive outside the arrivals gate in Beijing International Airport's third terminal. Injuring only himself and a police officer, Ji claimed to be angry at the fact that he had not been adequately compensated for a beating by Guangdong authorities that had left him paralyzed in a wheelchair. He was later jailed for six years (Xinhua, October 15, 2013; BBC, October 15, 2013). In July 2011, disgruntled farmer Qian Mingqi detonated three large devices outside official buildings in Fuzhou, Jiangxi leading to four deaths (including Mr. Qian's) (Xinhua, May 31, 2011, 2013). This is the context in which Chinese media and the public viewed the attack in Taiyuan, in which a coordinated set of bombs armed with ball bearings were detonated outside an official building in the heart of the city.

### China's Response

Random individuals with the ability to build and effectively detonate multiple explosives in a coordinated and lethal manner might seem to be more menacing than an attempt to drive a car into a crowd. But from the perspective of the Chinese state, such "lone wolf" terrorism is less dangerous than Uighurs' attempts to speak for a community. Even without clear ties to an organized group, they offer a potential alternative source of legitimacy and an alternative power base.

For Beijing, the problem is clearly a complicated one. On the one hand, it is undeniable that some Uighur extremists exist and are connecting to global al-Qaeda-affiliated or -inspired networks. But it is not clear that these groups and networks are able to launch large-scale attacks within China. The incident in Tiananmen Square may have been substantial in its impact, but no evidence of external direction has been provided. But external direction or not, the growing tempo of violence emanating from the province in the past year highlights a domestic problem that seems to be growing worse rather than better.

In parallel to this, China faces a problem of petitioners angry at the state who are using increasingly violent means to express their rage—from random acts of self-immolation, to random stabbings, to massive explosions that have so far killed mercifully few. In some ways these seem similar to the Xinjiang-related incidents, but the

background context is fundamentally more alarming to authorities given the potential for a single incident related to Xinjiang to be seen as part of a broader separatist movement. Thus, the Chinese government seeks to distinguish between violent protest and terrorism, and ensure that the response is one that is moderated in ways that do not simply inflame tensions in Xinjiang further.

*Raffaello Pantucci is a Senior Fellow at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) and the author of the forthcoming *We Love Death as You Love Life: Britain's Suburban Mujabedeem* (Hurst/Columbia University Press).*

### Notes

1. The author has been maintaining an unofficial tally based on official reports that can be provided on request.
2. One video showed a possibly Uighur individual: < <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VjrUhb7Lx1o> >. Another highlighted ethnically-Han Bo Wang talking directly to the Chinese people in Mandarin: < <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=maccGe9MSMY> >
3. On the Dubai and Oslo plots, see *Terrorism Monitor*, July 22, 2010; and "Manchester, New York and Oslo: Three Centrally Directed Al-Qa'ida Plots," *CTC Sentinel*, August 1, 2010.

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## The Language of Terrorism in China: Balancing Foreign and Domestic Policy Imperatives

By Nicholas Dynon

In late October, central Beijing tasted terror when a flaming SUV rammed a crowd of tourists at the city's iconic Tiananmen gate, killing the three alleged perpetrators and two bystanders. Authorities were quick to label the attack an act of jihadist terror.

The ensuing media commentary and controversy prompted questions around how terrorism is defined—and how terror incidents are framed—by Chinese



authorities. Were the perpetrators of the attack radicalized Uighur Islamist insurgents or were they just normal folk marginalized and driven to extreme measures by an arbitrary and belligerent state?

Ultimately, the Turkestan Islamic Party (TIP), an extremist group with purported links to al-Qaeda, praised the attack in a speech given by its leader posted online—a move that seemingly vindicated official finger pointing. While this perpetuates Beijing’s narrative of China as victim of international terrorism, it takes the focus away from a more inconvenient truth. Self-immolation, bombings and other indiscriminate attacks have abounded in China in recent years, and most have been carried out by citizens with no known terrorist, separatist or ethnic minority links. Yet as frequent as these attacks are, the use of “terrorism” to describe them in official media reportage has been noticeably absent.

Contemporary official language about terrorism and terrorist-like attacks serves different, and sometimes contradictory, purposes with different audiences:

1. In the international sphere, it serves to legitimate Chinese policies toward restive ethnic groups such as Uighurs and Tibetans as part of the “Global War on Terror.”
2. In Han-majority China, it serves to draw a line between the grievances of ethnic minorities and those expressed with similar forms of violence by Han petitioners.
3. In propaganda directed at members of ethnic minorities, it aims to cast the perpetrators of attacks as foreign and exclude the possibility of their representing a wider ethnic community. In particular, Chinese official language must walk a tightrope, warning of violence from Uighur separatists while casting Uighurs and their land as an integral part of China.

### **The International Community: Foreign Policy Imperatives See China Cast as Victim of Global Terror**

Amid Deng Xiaoping’s Reform and Opening policies, the 1980s saw an increase in separatist violence in Xinjiang. By all accounts, the 1990s was a particularly violent decade, punctuated by a string of deadly clashes between Uighur insurgents and authorities. Yet it was only late in

the decade that Beijing ultimately made the decision to start referring to separatist violence as terrorism.

You Ji, writing for the Jamestown Foundation’s *China Brief* in 2004, commented that according to the Chinese characterization, the Ghulja incident of February 5, 1997 marked “the beginning of active terrorism in the country” (*China Brief*, November 5, 2004). Prior to this, ethnic and separatist violence in China had been referred to as separatist or “splittist” activity, and punishable under criminal law as “counter-revolutionary” crime or crime against the state.

Precipitating this change was China’s push to dominate the Central Asia regional security agenda with the establishment of the Shanghai Five in 1996. Both China and Russia had envisaged the grouping as a multilateral mechanism for countering growing bilateral sway of the United States with governments within the region. An effective regional security structure might fill the void left by Soviet disintegration and provide the region’s fledgling states with an attractive alternative to U.S. hegemony.

Although practical anti-terrorism cooperation was slow to develop, Beijing moved quickly to have its concept of the “three evil forces” (*sange shili*) of “terrorism, separatism and religious extremism” adopted as the focus of counterterrorism policy for the Shanghai Five and its successor, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Reframing as a regional issue what it had hitherto described as an internal matter was a major switch in rhetoric for Beijing.

Then came the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States. In a message to President George W. Bush on September 11, Chinese leader Jiang Zemin condemned the attacks, pledging cooperation to combat terrorism. Pointing to the training of Uighur insurgents by the Taliban, the Chinese foreign ministry stated that, “the fight against separatists in Xinjiang is part of the fight by the world against terrorism.” Beijing declared its support for U.S. retaliatory strikes on Afghanistan, and the United States in turn acceded to Beijing’s request to classify a handful of Uighur organizations as terrorist groups (*The Hindu*, November 16, 2001).

Despite this, it was not until at least two years after 9/11 that China initiated the SCO’s first active anti-

terrorism initiatives. Using this timeline—and the lack of significant practical cooperation between Beijing and Washington—as a guide, it would appear that not even 9/11 itself had the effect of energizing China’s anti-terrorism efforts beyond symbolic posturing. China’s ostensible support for the United States appeared driven by key foreign policy goals: (i) to thwart international criticism over human rights issues in Xinjiang and (ii) to establish security-based leadership credentials within its Central Asian neighborhood.

Beijing’s employment of the term “terrorism” in relation to Uighur violence had increased commensurate with its efforts to externalize or internationalize what it had hitherto insisted were internal matters. Whatever foreign links Uighur or other ethnic minorities have, Beijing has done its best to embellish the foreign connection or influence. The problem thus shifts from being one of disaffected domestic actors to one of unscrupulous foreigners who influence or coerce locals to do bad.

To-date, China lacks comprehensive anti-terrorism legislation, with terrorism defined in Chinese law only as recently as October 29, 2011, when the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress (NPC) passed the *Decision on Issues Related to Strengthening Anti-Terrorism Work* (Xinhua, October 29, 2011). This new definition addressed the lack of clear definition in domestic law, which had hampered international cooperation in anti-terrorism efforts (*Library of Congress*, April 11, 2011). Consistent with the proposed (and still hotly debated) UN *Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism*, the definition avoided reference to political, religious or ethnic motivations, apart from mentioning that terrorist activities possess “the goal of creating terror in society, endangering public security, or threatening state organs and international organizations.” As detailed below, this departed significantly from domestic Chinese discourse, which heavily emphasizes terrorism’s political motivations. **The Chinese People: Distinguishing Between Terrorism and Terror**

In recent years China has experienced an upsurge in suicide attacks involving the sometimes indiscriminate killing of bystanders. They are perpetuated far from China’s restive borders in cities along the country’s eastern seaboard by individuals driven to desperation over their dealings with the country’s arbitrary and often corrupt

bureaucratic and legal systems.

A July 27 *People’s Daily* interview with Wu Boxin, a professor at the Chinese People’s Public Security University and renowned criminal psychologist, picks up on the theme of “individual terrorism” (*People’s Daily*, July 27, 2013). In this interview, Wu distinguished between individual or “lone wolf” terrorism (*geren kongbuzhuyi*) and what he refers to as “individual suicidal terror crime” (*geti zissha kongbu fanzui*).

Exploring examples of individual suicidal terror crime, Wu cites two well-known 2013 incidents, a small fraction of the growing overall number. The first involved itinerant worker Chen Shuizong, who set himself on fire in a public bus in the coastal city of Xiamen in June, killing a staggering 47 commuters and injuring 34. The second featured frustrated petitioner Ji Zhongxing, who in July, having been left paralyzed as the alleged result of a bashing by over-zealous security guards in his home province, detonated a homemade bomb in Beijing Airport’s Terminal 3, causing injuries only to himself and a police officer. Among China’s netizens, these attacks have elicited both condemnation and, ironically, unprecedented levels of sympathy.

Wu classes these attacks as “individual suicidal terror crime,” as apposed to “lone wolf terrorism.” According to Wu, the former is non-organized and motivated by personal issues, whereas the latter is part of something organized and often motivated by matters of religion or belief. Following this distinction, the Tian’anmen SUV incident might be classed as “individual terrorism,” given its alleged jihadist links. Accordingly, anything to do with Uighurs or Tibetans could be called “terrorism” while anything else is a “terror crime.” This is a subtle, yet important, definitional distinction that appears to be reflected in reportage by China’s state media broadly.

Self-immolation is often described within Chinese social chatter as a form of terrorism. Among Chinese blog sites there are abundant references to self-immolations and explosives and knife attacks carried out by crazed individuals as “one man’s terror” or “one man’s terrorism” (*yigerende kongbu/kongbuzhuyi*). However, apart from reportage on foreign incidents, such as the 2011 Norway attacks, the use of the expression in official media in reference to domestic incidents is rare (obscure

mentions in reporting on a 2005 Fuzhou bus torching and the Beijing International Airport terminal incident being exceptions).

Official media appears to reserve the label of “terrorism” to self-immolations by individuals where they are seen as politically motivated and connected with an identified dissident/splittist organization, such as the “Dalai clique,” Falun Gong, or Uighur independence groups. A February 18 *People’s Daily* editorial slamming Tibetan self-immolations categorizes such incidents as a type of terrorism due to their political purpose, use of violence and the havoc they wreak. According to Chien-peng Chung, the term “terrorist” is usually reserved for separatist and unofficial religious groups in Xinjiang and Tibet (*China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Volume 4, No. 2, 2006). This is the case, writes Chung, because Beijing sees terrorism as a “zealous religiosity on the part of minorities that threaten to displace the state as an object of adulation.”

### The Uighurs of Xinjiang: Foreign Terror Versus Local Beauty

The blaming of whole ethnic groups or religions for the violent acts of individuals or organizations is a social phenomenon found the world over. China is by no means an exception. Yet as Beijing seeks to put terrorism in a conceptual quarantine by associating it exclusively with ethnic and religious minorities, it simultaneously needs to describe Uighurs and the territory of Xinjiang as integral to the Chinese nation.

According to state media, separatism has always been driven by foreign influence and, in particular, by religious extremism. By these accounts, the early 20th century had seen Uighur separatists absorb pan-Islamism, and then late in the century Afghanistan was identified as the source of religious extremism flowing into Xinjiang (*Guoqing*, July 1, 2013). More recently, reports of separatist forces attempting to sneak into Xinjiang following involvement in the Syrian War have led to calls for tighter policing of borders.

According to the logic of the “three evil forces” model, religious extremism stirs up separatist sentiment, which, in turn, manifests as terrorist insurgency. Religious extremism, is defined in a recent *Xinjiang Daily* report

as “a product of religious transformation” involving the “politicization of religion” (*Xinjiang Daily*, November 24, 2013). Extremism is thus characterized as an anti-religious force, and in convincing adherents to do bad (i) in the name of religion and (ii) in the furthering of a political cause, it is singled out as the root cause of terrorism.

State media editorial lines assert that religious extremism and its activities “confuses and wins people over with simple religious sentiment so that they are led astray and ultimately down the path of violence and terrorism” (*Xinjiang Daily*, November 24, 2013). The three evil forces “confuse” (*gaoluan/gubuo*) the population, exploiting “extreme religious superstition and ignorance” and praying on the youth and those most vulnerable to radicalization (*People’s Daily*, July 1, 2013).

Identified by the state as a foreign force, religious extremism is cast as not only anti-religious but, importantly, “anti-Uighur”—a point demonstrated by a July 16, 2013 *Xinjiang Daily* article titled “Who would want to conceal the beauty of Uighur sisters?” In this piece, a perceived increase in Uighur women wearing black veils and robes and men growing long beards is linked to radically conservative practices from the Arab world. These practices, it is argued, are foreign and irreconcilable with Uighur culture. “Our ancestors never wore black veils and never walked in black robes, and our young handsome men never kept long beards”, writes the article’s author, Xinjiang Normal University Professor Mambet Turdi. He continues, “black makes people feel frustrated and gloomy, it undermines the will of the people, reduces people’s passion for life, and can even make a breastfeeding baby feel psychological fear.”

Reports indicate that local authorities have set up posts in neighborhoods to monitor the wearing of religious headdress and to encourage women to cease the practice. Concurrently, beauty contests titled “Project Beauty” have been staged throughout the autonomous region, which, according to journalist Palash Ghosh, are designed to highlight the attractiveness of women’s “uncovered faces” (*International Business Times*, November 27, 2013).

Facing off against the three evil forces are propaganda and educational activities promoting the “four identities” and “three inseparables.” According to the Xinjiang education department, the four identities refer to “identification

with the motherland, the Chinese nation's identity, the identity of the Chinese culture, and the road of socialism with Chinese characteristics." The three inseparables refer to "the Han nationality as inseparable from the ethnic minorities, ethnic minorities as inseparable from the Han nationality, and ethnic minorities as inseparable from each other" (Liu Yabei, September 30, 2011).

Combating extremist tendencies thus involves appeals to the Uighur identity, the demonization of non-Uighur Islamic influences and an emphasis on national unity. Education reinforcing state sanctioned views of cultural identity, argues Professor Turdi, equips youth with the ability to say, "I am Chinese, I am Uygur, I am not an Arab" (*Xinjiang Daily*, July 16, 2013).

### Conclusion

While acknowledging the existence in China of terrorism, official discourse maintains that the forces behind terrorism are exotic to China and its ethnic minorities. Although conceding that minorities such as Uighurs and Tibetans are particularly vulnerable to such forces, they are presented as mere pawns in foreign conspiracies to split the Chinese state.

More potentially problematic to official discourse has been the rise of terror crimes perpetrated by Han Chinese within China's geopolitical heartlands. Their "non-political," non-coordinated nature precludes them from being considered terrorist acts, despite the fact that their targets are invariably institutions of government—the judiciary, the bureaucracy and the Party.

Before 1997, "terrorism" as a word was an off-limits in China. Beijing's acknowledgement of terrorism within its borders in that year was late in coming, and even then driven by foreign policy imperatives. Since then, terrorism has become a word of choice in characterizing any form of violence perpetrated by members of China's Uighur and Tibetan ethnic minorities. Despite this, it is evident that terrorism remains a taboo word in relation to the increasingly frequent crimes of terror carried out by members of China's majority Han nationality.

While Beijing has become comfortable in acknowledging terrorism within its ethnic peripheries where blame can be attributed to external forces, acknowledging terroristic

tendencies among the *laobaixing*, or common Chinese people, remains just a little too close for comfort.

*Nicholas Dynon is an academic and former diplomat specializing in Chinese media and soft power, currently at Macquarie University. He coordinates the Line 21 Project, an online resource on Chinese state propaganda and public diplomacy.*

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## China-US WMD Cooperation: Progress within Limits

By Richard Weitz

The Sino-American security tensions of recent years, including over WMD issues, has tended to overshadow the substantial if quiet cooperation between China and the United States in countering horizontal WMD proliferation to aspiring nuclear weapons states, preventing terrorists from gaining access to WMD material, and enhancing the safety of civilian nuclear power. The end of the year provides an opportunity to review recent progress as well as identify continuing challenges that should be addressed in 2014.

### Countering Nuclear Proliferation

According to its landmark White Paper on Non-Proliferation, "China has always taken a responsible attitude toward international affairs, stood for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of all kinds of WMD, including nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, and resolutely opposed the proliferation of such weapons and their means of delivery. China does not support, encourage or assist any country to develop WMD and their means of delivery (Information Office of China's State Council, December 2003). A subsequent white paper insists that, "Proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery is conducive neither to world peace and stability nor to China's security. China firmly opposes proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery." The Chinese government regularly submits statements at UN and other meetings calling for more effective measures to curb nuclear proliferation (Information Office of China's State Council, September 1, 2005).

While both cooperation and conflict regarding Iran and North Korea have been ongoing themes of the U.S.-China relationship, the Syrian chemical weapons issue has added a new element to their WMD exchanges. China and the United States differed regarding how to respond to the growing evidence of chemical weapons use in the Syrian Civil War. Chinese officials questioned the evidence that the Assad government, rather than the rebels, was responsible for the chemical incidents and strongly opposed foreign military intervention in the Syrian conflict.

But China and the United States set aside these differences to support the September 2013 Russia-U.S. framework agreement for eliminating Syria's chemical weapons. China has joined other members of the international community in assisting this multinational effort. At an October 8 meeting of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the Chinese government pledged money and manpower to the Syrian elimination mission (Xinhua, October 28, 2013). Two PLA chemical weapons experts then went to Syria as part of the OPCW destruction and verification mission (Xinhua, November 4, 2013). On December 19, the Foreign Ministry announced that the Chinese Navy would send a vessel to help protect the specially-adapted U.S. ship on which some of Syria's most dangerous chemical weapons will be eliminated.

### Preventing Nuclear Terrorism

In September 2012, the U.S. National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) Principal Deputy Administrator called China "an invaluable partner in nuclear security" (NNSA, September 27, 2012). Chinese analysts recognize that, "Although no nuclear terrorist attack has been reported so far, nuclear and radioactive materials and related technologies are widely used and the possibility of a nuclear terrorist attack does exist" (*China Daily*, March 23, 2012). Li Wei, director of China Institute of Contemporary International Relations, has joined other Chinese and U.S. scholars, as well as Chinese official media, in expressing concern that terrorists will attack civilian nuclear power plants (CCTV, March 25, 2012; Xinhua, March 27, 2012).

The Chinese government has backed U.S. and other initiatives aimed at preventing terrorists or criminals

from acquiring or using dangerous nuclear materials. For example, for several years China assumed a lead role in the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT), joining its leadership group and participating in its work plan. More recently, China has supported the Obama administration's successful drive to convene multiple nuclear security summits to support measures aimed at denying terrorists' access to fissile material. Since all states share with China a desire to avert such an outcome, supporting the objective has offered an easy way for Beijing to cooperate with the United States, Europe, Russia, and other countries on an important but uncontested objective.

Within the framework of these summits, China and the United States announced several joint initiatives. Implementing an idea originally proposed by Chinese President Hu Jintao at the 2010 Summit, in October 2013 China and the United States began constructing a Center of Excellence on Nuclear Security at the Changyang Science and Technology Park in Beijing. Designed to improve nuclear materials security throughout Asia, the regional center will have scientific, training, and testing facilities for physical protection technologies and practices (Xinhua, October 29). Furthermore, China and the United States are collaborating to convert a miniature research reactor in China from using highly enriched uranium (HEU) fuel to low-enriched uranium (LEU) fuel, which is harder to use for making nuclear weapons. China will apply the expertise and experience acquired through this program to assist other countries in the switch from HEU to LEU (Seoul Nuclear Security Summit Preparatory Secretariat, "Highlights of Achievements and Commitments by Participating States as stated in National Progress Reports and National Statements").

As the world's leading trading state, China has cooperated extensively with U.S.-led initiatives to prevent nuclear threats to international shipping. A major nuclear incident anywhere could inflict a crippling blow to the international economy, upon which China's prosperity depends. If the weapon arrived on a Chinese ship or from a Chinese port, China's trade would suffer catastrophic losses. Bans would likely be imposed on Chinese exports and imports due to doubts regarding Beijing's ability to police its ports and thus ensure the safety and security of cargo.

For these reasons, China joined the U.S. Container Security

Initiative (CSI), designed to prevent dangerous items from entering the United States via shipping containers, soon after it was launched. Through the program U.S. Customs and Border Protection personnel operate in Shanghai, Shenzhen, and Hong Kong (U.S. Customs and Border Protection, July 29, 2003). In July 2007, the Chinese port of Hong Kong agreed to allow the U.S. Departments of Energy and Homeland Security to implement its Secure Freight Initiative on a pilot basis (July 30, 2007). China also has partly joined the Department of Energy's Megaports Initiative, which installs radiation detection equipment at major ports to detect material that could be used to make nuclear weapons or dirty bombs. Although Megaports-related disputes continue over data and cost sharing, China does allow U.S. scanning of its exports at the Yangshan Port and other coastal cities ("The Nuclear Security Summit: Progress Report," Arms Control Association and Partnership for Global Security Report (July 2013), p. 21). At the July 2013 SED, the NNSA and the General Administration of Customs of China (GACC) signed an agreement to increase their cooperation to deter, detect, and interdict illicit nuclear smuggling. The envisaged measures included expanding the coverage of radiation detection stems to other Chinese ports of entry and providing more training to GCC personnel to operating these systems. In September 2012, with the support of the NNSA, the GACC opened the Qinhuangdao Radiation Detection Center, which aims to train Chinese customs officers to detect and interdict nuclear smuggling through Chinese ports and borders (NNSA, September 27, 2012).

### Strengthening Nuclear Safety

The Chinese government's strong commitment to developing nuclear energy has resulted in Beijing's supporting international programs designed to improve the safety and security of civilian nuclear plants and reactor fuel. Chinese authorities are eager to press ahead with a massive expansion of the country's nuclear power production despite security and safety concerns raised by foreign experts due to the use of outdated or questionable technologies, weak regulatory enforcement, pressure to cut costs by using cheaper components, corruption, inadequate training, and other problems that the Chinese government has been seeking to rectify. China is unique in the magnitude of its domestic nuclear energy expansion plans, which PRC officials see as essential for achieving

their energy security, climate change, and other goals.

Despite the March 2011 disaster at Japan's Fukushima Daiichi plant, China has kept 17 reactors in operation and is building 28 more, which account for two-fifths of all the reactors under construction in the world (Xinhua, December 9, 2013). The government still hopes to raise its capacity from 12.5 gigawatts (GW) today to 58 GW by the end of 2020 (Reuters, December 17, 2013). The 30 GW of new capacity now under construction in China represents more than 40 percent of the world's total. In addition, China's nuclear industry, which has been making substantial technical progress in designing more advanced nuclear reactors and related components, wants to expand its role in global nuclear exports. In addition to continuing controversial nuclear energy sales to Pakistan, which is not a member of the NPT and is under an NSG export ban, China recently reached a landmark deal to support a new nuclear power plant in the United Kingdom and aspires to sell nuclear technology to many developing countries that are now contemplating new nuclear power programs. China is even supplying components to several U.S. nuclear power plants in South Carolina and Georgia (Xinhua, December 9, 2013).

Another major nuclear accident anywhere in the world would threaten these domestic and foreign expansion plans, while a hypothetical catastrophic nuclear incident occur inside China, it could threaten the government's hold on power (*People's Daily*, April 2, 2012). Last July, demonstrators concerned about their safety forced the cancellation of a planned \$6 billion uranium processing plant in Guangdong (Reuters, July 18, 2013).

In July 2013, China announced an updated national nuclear emergency plan that incorporates some of the lessons of the March 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster. Compared with the previous 2005 draft, the new emergency response plan requires greater information transparency, employs a four-tiered nuclear emergency response mechanism, and applies to all China's nuclear facilities and activities, including fuel transportation, as well as China's operating nuclear power plants (*Global Times*, July 4, 2013).

China-U.S. cooperation in the area of nuclear safety and security is even more long standing, building on a landmark 1998 U.S.-China Peaceful Uses of Nuclear

Technology (PUNT) Agreement. Through binational working groups and other means of bilateral technical cooperation, PUNT enables Chinese and American scientists to cooperate on developing civilian nuclear energy technologies; promoting nuclear safeguards and security; pursuing environment and waste management; facilitating nuclear emergency management; enhancing radioactive source security; and protecting nuclear operations from sabotage, theft, or unauthorized access (NNSA, April 17, 2013).

China has also been expanding its collaboration with other countries on nuclear safety. For example, despite their territorial dispute, China, Japan, and South Korea agreed in early December 2013 that they will establish a dedicated email and telephone communications network to provide for the rapid exchange of data in cases of a nuclear incident. The exchange would cover major nuclear emergencies, such as the 2011 Fukushima-Daiichi accident, but also minor mishaps and anomalies. Although the nuclear activities of the PLA are excluded from the exchange, the system could supply vital information in the case of nuclear terrorism, providing critical and timely information that could allow emergency responders and counterterrorist officials to take preventive measures against follow-on or copy-cat attacks (Wall Street Journal Online, December 4, 2013).

## Conclusion

Preventing WMD proliferation, terrorism, and accidents is an obvious area for the “win-win” diplomacy favored by China. Chinese political analyst Xie Tao said that contributing a ship to support the Syrian chemical weapons elimination mission was “a kind of free riding” since other governments had already arranged the deal and the operation, which was also authorized by the UN, making Beijing’s involvement essentially cost-free (VOA, December 30, 2013). As another Chinese scholar notes, most security issues are zero-sum games, but increasing the security of nuclear materials benefits everybody (Li Bin, “Nuclear Security Cooperation,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, March 20, 2012).

Furthermore, Chinese support for U.S. nonproliferation initiatives help dampen Sino-American disputes over other proliferation issues. In addition to perennial U.S. complaints about China’s ties with Iran and North

Korea, where other economic and other security goals appear to have more influence on Chinese policies than non-proliferation, U.S. officials consider much of China’s nuclear assistance to Pakistan as inappropriate since Pakistan has not signed the IAEA or joined to the NPT. In fact, while China and the United States have been making progress in reducing their differences over other important nuclear nonproliferation issues, many contemporary Sino-American WMD proliferation disputes concern China’s export of non-nuclear “dual-use” items—those having both potential civilian and military application—rather than sales clearly intended for military purposes. China is still one of the world’s largest sellers of dual-use technologies and materials, especially in the chemical, biological, and missile sectors, but, to Washington’s annoyance, its willingness to constrain its exports is still less than in the nuclear domain.

*Richard Weitz, Ph.D., is a Senior Fellow and Director of the Center for Political-Military Analysis at the Hudson Institute in Washington, DC.*

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