



China’s Human Rights Abuses in Xinjiang and the US Response

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1201 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 400
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December 18, 2019

TRANSCRIPT

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NINA SHEA: Good morning, everybody. Please take your seats. We're going to start our program. Welcome to the Hudson Institute. I'm Nina Shea. I direct the Center for Religious Freedom here at Hudson. And I want to wish everyone happy holidays. And I also want to draw your attention to the crisis in China against the Uighur Muslim population there. It is one of the worst human rights and religious persecution situations of our day, in fact, of our age. It is both a crisis of religious persecution and of human rights violations of epic proportions. And we'll be hearing more about that through the session today. All people should be concerned, for China as a rising power aims to make this a model not only for other groups within its borders but is exporting this model. It is of deep concern to me as someone who monitors religious freedom around the world. And I know it is to you here in this room, in the audience.

And it is my deep privilege to introduce ambassador-at-large for religious freedom of the U.S. State Department Sam Brownback. He is going to be giving our keynote address in just a moment. I have known Ambassador Brownback for about 25 years when he was in the Senate and we were working together on other human rights crises, including Sudan, which today is, actually, a source of hope in the world. So I'm very pleased to see him now in this position as the religious freedom ambassador, someone who has been empowered under this administration and through Congress. And he is really the institutional face of religious freedom as a priority in U.S. foreign policy. His ministerials that he has organized and innovated have brought hundreds, in fact, thousand people from all over the world who are deeply vested in religious freedom. These are of survivors of religious persecution, advocates, world leaders from across the globe. And please join me in welcoming Sam Brownback.

(APPLAUSE)

SHEA: It's good to see you. Welcome.

SAM BROWNBACK: Thanks, Nina. I appreciate that greatly. It's a pleasure to be back at Hudson. You'd find this interesting, more interesting than most. I was on the phone this morning with the prime minister of Sudan, which was not a normal thing for me 20, 25 years ago when we were fighting the Bashir regime and they were state-sponsoring terrorism that the United States experienced, unfortunately, firsthand. But I think it does show that if you keep after an issue and you're on the right side, you can win, and you will win. And that - I'm very hopeful it is one of the sources and the places of great hope in the world today. We hope things continue to move forward the right direction.

I also want to thank Hudson Institute for hosting the vice president and the secretary of state, Mike Pompeo, at different times to speak here in Hudson regarding China. I think those have been wonderful speeches. I've read - looked at both of those. And I think they offer a template on issues of China-U.S. policy towards China. This administration has been really the first in decades to take on China and the repressive regime. And they've done an absolutely, I think, brilliant, tough, good job in confronting China. And I think it's been important that we do that. I'm pleased to join that discussion now. And it's a key priority for this administration, the People's Republic of China, their government brutal - their brutal campaign of repression currently going on against Uighurs, ethnic Kazakhs, Kyrgyz and other Muslims in Xinjiang. Again, my thanks to Hudson Institute and the distinguished experts that are here today for keeping the conversation in Washington going.

This administration has recognized that it's important to analyze and respond to these abuses from all angles, so I appreciate the discussion and the insights at today's events. I've said it before, and I'm going to keep saying it until it, hopefully, one day is no longer true. China is at war with faith, but it is a war they will not win. In the meantime, while it continues, Chinese government continues to engage in a high-stakes game of subterfuge, attempting to cloak the truth in misdirection and deception about its true intentions and activities. But we will not be fooled. The Chinese government can refer to inhumane treatment of religious and ethnic minority groups in Xinjiang as war on terror, as countering religious extremism. It can label its internment camps as so-called vocational training centers and even claim that detainees have graduated. But the evidence is clear. Clearly, this is not just a war on faith but a war on truth and international norms. And we know the facts.

Earlier this year, Ambassador Nathan Sales and I co-authored an op-ed plainly stating that the repressive campaign in Xinjiang is not counterterrorism. It's one more chapter in Beijing's long history of oppression - oppressing Tibetan Buddhists, Christians, the Falun Gong, and there are others. Terrorism is a very real threat in many parts of the world, including in the United States and in China. But conflating peaceful religious practices and identity with terrorism is beyond disingenuous. It's unconscionable. Also unconscionable is imposing pervasive high-tech surveillance and the monitoring throughout the region. Now, this, unfortunately, I believe is the future of what much oppression is going to look like. I think you're seeing the front wave of it in Xinjiang. They're also preventing Muslims from doing their regular daily prayers or forcing them to consume pork and alcohol and shave their beards, preventing children from attending mosque or studying the Quran or removing them from their homes and placing them in orphanages, destroying - Chinese government is destroying mosques, cemeteries and other religious and cultural heritage sites and, of course, detaining more than 1 million members of Muslim minority groups in internment camps since April of 2017.

In our current-day world, in 2019, a million Muslim people in Xinjiang are in internment camps. That's really almost unthinkable in this day and age. And yet it exists right now. These are the abuses that the PRC government is trying to hide and deny. So I believe it was a game changer when the Xinjiang papers and the China Cables recently came to light. As Secretary Pompeo has said about it, these reports are consistent with an overwhelming and growing body of evidence that the Chinese Communist Party is committing human rights violations and abuses against individuals in mass detention. And in these papers, you saw the background and the thinking of it. These documents reveal that the CCP has orchestration - has orchestrated, and this is not random. It's intentional. Those who may have been inclined to believe the PRC government or who were bullied into believing it can now read these documents and see for themselves the depth and breadth of what's happening in Xinjiang.

And if you know anything about China, you also know that the PRC government's campaign of repression is not unique to Xinjiang. In part, that's because the CCP first installed the region's party secretary, Chen Quanguo - and I want you to remember that name, Chen Quanguo - in Tibet, where he tested out a massive grid of physical and technological surveillance - cameras, police stations, databases, police and security forces. Life in Tibet, including religious life, was forever transformed. Considered a success, Chen took his playbook to Xinjiang, amplifying his tactics on an unfathomable scale. Earlier this week, The Economist magazine noted the parallels between Tibet and Xinjiang and Chen's role in replicating repression.

My fear - and I think of the Hudson Institute as well - is that these sorts of replications of repression are going to continue and increase around the world. They need to be stopped now. And so the document's strength - what we know about these abuses and this administration's ongoing resolve is to respond to them. Importantly, we continue to promote accountability for those who commit human rights abuses around the world. That is why the Department of State has previously designated China as a country of particular concern - under the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 - for engaging in or tolerating particularly severe violations of religious freedom. As we all know, such religious freedom violations are hardly the only human right abuse that the PRC government is perpetrating in Xinjiang and elsewhere. But when a country doesn't respect the right to freely practice one's faith and belief and everything that that entails, we often see other rights significantly imperiled. These include the freedom of association, assembly, speech and the freedom of movement. In addition to the country of particular concern designation that is specific to religious freedom violations, we've seen a multifaceted U.S. response.

The crisis in Xinjiang featured prominently at both ministerials that Nina mentioned as well as at the president's global call for religious freedom event at the U.N., the first ever by a head of state to call for the topic of religious freedom at the U.N. General Assembly. These - there was resulting powerful testimony from Uighur survivors and family members and two consecutive statements of concern underscoring the PRC government's escalating repression against members of religious groups in China. I'm going to stop here in just a moment and note as well - last week, there was another testimonial on Xinjiang on Capitol Hill. And I ran into three young people from Xinjiang who testified. Two of them told of family members convicted of seven to nine years and put in jail for seven and nine years for them, the younger family member out and speaking. So I - God bless the people from Xinjiang that are willing to speak out. This comes at a significant cost to them personally and to their families. A number of agencies have executed, as well, targeted actions.

The Department of State imposed visa sanctions on Chinese officials for their role in the campaign of repression in Xinjiang. The Department of Commerce added 28 Chinese governmental and commercial entities to its entity list, which prevents them from buying U.S. products or importing U.S. technology that could be used to repress religious and ethnic minorities in Xinjiang. And the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol issued a withhold release order to ensure that products made by a Chinese company in Xinjiang do not end up in American stores. We welcome the role that a growing number of international actors play in calling out these abuses. We want to see more of this in the months ahead, and we'll continue to encourage stakeholders to take up this mantle. A multilateral response is similarly vital. The United States and four other countries co-hosted a panel discussion on the margins of the U.N. General Assembly on the human rights crisis in Xinjiang. More than 30 U.N. member states attended, along with EU representatives, an OIC delegation and 20 NGOs. Ultimately, it was standing room only, a truly remarkable turnout. Importantly, several Uighur survivors and family members addressed the room, bravely sharing their harrowing stories.

They provide an eyewitness testimony. This is factual testimony that they provide. This is no longer allegations. These are eyewitnesses. The United States was among 23 signatories to a joint statement on human rights violations and abuses in Xinjiang delivered at the U.N. Third Committee in October. I'm also working with a group to launch a priority announced at this year's ministerial. It's called the International Religious Freedom Alliance. Once launched, it will

be the first-ever international body devoted to freedom of religion or belief, bringing together like-minded countries to confront religious freedom challenges. And this will be the first new international human rights organization in a generation - its focus, again, just on the issues of international religious freedom. We hope to have that stood up and launched the first part of this next year. I'm excited by this opportunity. I'm currently reaching out to a number of countries to bring them on board. As I close, I want to humanize the repression in Xinjiang and elsewhere in China.

These are innocent civilians peacefully practicing their faith as their conscience leads (ph), dreaming of prosperity and happiness for themselves and for their children. They do not need their way of thinking reprogrammed. They do not need their government controlling and monitoring every aspect of their lives. They need, they deserve freedom - freedom of religion to practice their faith peacefully as they see fit. That's what I and others in this administration are working towards. I want to say thank you again to the Hudson Institute for hosting this discussion today and inviting me and for previously hosting the vice president and for hosting the secretary of state to discuss human rights abuses in China. The expertise you bring to the discussion is tremendously helpful to this administration, continues to employ - that we continue to employ a variety of tools as we call on People's Republic of China, the Chinese Communist Party, to immediately release all those arbitrarily detained and to end its draconian policies that for more than two years have terrorized its religious and ethnic minority groups in Xinjiang. We will continue to push back on China's war on faith, and I hope you will continue to join us in that endeavor. Thank you very much. God bless you all.

ERIC BROWN: Welcome, everyone. Thank you very much, Ambassador Brownback, and Nina for introducing. And thank you to all of you and to our C-SPAN viewers for being with here - being with us here today at Hudson for this afternoon's panel discussion on Xinjiang and U.S. policy response. The institute launched this program of seminars about Xinjiang in early 2017 to help challenge I think what can be best described as the U.S.'s post-9/11 political complacency over what the Chinese Communist Party has claimed as its own war on terrorism in the vast northwestern territory of the PRC empire known as Xinjiang. That U.S. reappraisal was urgently needed then, and in fact, it's been long overdue. For decades, the Uighur Muslim people have suffered from institutionalized repression and discrimination in their own homeland, which they call East Turkestan. In August of 2016, the installation of Chen Quanguo as the new party boss in Xinjiang made clear that Beijing would be ramping up its efforts to subjugate the Uighur and other peoples of East Turkestan. Secretary Chen was already known for his harsh policies in Tibet. And under his command over the last three years, Xinjiang has been transformed into the most heavily surveilled and oppressive garrison states that the world has arguably ever seen.

Communist Party has since gone to extraordinary lengths to suppress information and propagandize about what it is doing in Xinjiang both inside China and around the world, including here in the United States. Should say, back in September of 2018, Rushan Abbas, who's here with us today - she's a longtime Uighur human rights activist and also an American citizen - spoke here on a panel at Hudson Institute. Six days later, two of Rushan's family members in Xinjiang - her aunt and her sister, Gulshan Abbas - vanished. Gulshan's whereabouts are still unknown today. But we do know, thanks to the vital work of three of our panelists and countless others, many of whom have risked their lives, is that upwards of 1 million Uighurs, over 10% of the population, has been forced into mass internment camps for

ideological reeducation. The PRC's clear intent in its war on Uighurs fits the very original definition of decimation.

China's communist rulers have dismissed reports about the internment camps and the abuses inside them as fake news spread by Western journalists and think tanks. They have instead tried - and succeeded, I would say - at persuading a large part of the world - until now - that the camps are, in fact, vocational training centers, which Uighurs voluntarily attend. Last month, the leak of classified party documents obtained by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists revealed that the party's story about Xinjiang, like so much else, is a lie. The China Cables expose, in chilling detail, how the party has planned and implemented the largest-scale persecution of a distinct ethnic religious group since the end of World War II. In short, the papers provide us a glimpse into the party's blueprint for the destruction of a people. Here with us today to discuss all this and what it should mean for the U.S. policy are three leading U.S.-based experts. I'm happy to welcome back Bethany Allen-Ebrahimian, who's now with Axios. And anybody who reads anything about China these days knows her byline both from Axios and the International Consortium for Investigative Journalism and also from The Daily Beast and Foreign Policy.

Second, we'll have Dr. Adrian Zenz, who's now a senior fellow at the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation. Adrian's research, as many of you know, has been key in establishing the existence of the camps in the first place and in documenting the buildup of the PRC police state. And third, we will hear from Nury Turkel, who's a lawyer and the board chair of the Uyghur Human Rights Project, an indispensable organization that he founded in 2003. Nury, I wanted to add, was born in a communist reeducation camp in Kashgar at the height of the Cultural Revolution. It's important to keep that in mind. After we hear from our speakers, we will have a Q&A period this afternoon. We're going to be conducting that a little bit differently today. All of you are going to be receiving pieces of paper and pencils, so please write on them concise questions. And we'll be collecting them about halfway through this panel this morning so that we can address them when we have time for questions at the end. Thank you again. With that, we'll start with Bethany. Thanks.

BETHANY ALLEN-EBRAHIMIAN: Thank you so much for that introduction, Eric. And thank you again to Hudson Institute for hosting yet another panel on this important issue. I served as ICIJ's lead reporter for the China Cables project alongside 75 journalists around the world. About three months ago, I was handed a stack of documents that looked like this and said, here, you have two months. And when I first saw them, I thought, this is very important. But the more I looked into them, the more I realized how truly groundbreaking and important they were. I will briefly talk about each set of documents and then go into the key takeaways from each one. So first, we have what we call a telegram - or more colloquially, the operating manual for the camps - that was disseminated in November of 2017 by Zhu Hailun, who is Chen Quanguo's right-hand man.

We also have a set of classified intelligence briefings known as bulletins that detail, for the very first time, very detailed inside looks at the operations of the Integrated Joint Operations Platform, or IJOP, which is a mass data collection and artificial-intelligence-powered predictive policing platform that is behind much of the very advanced police state that we see in Xinjiang. And thirdly, we have a Uighur-language court document that shows the tragedy of what happened to one individual man who was sentenced to 10 years in prison simply for exhorting (ph) fellow Muslims to not watch pornography and to pray regularly. So first, the telegram, the

operations manual for the camps - this is, for the first time in the Chinese government's own words, an admission that the camps are not voluntary, but are, in fact, highly securitized prisonlike detention centers. In their own words, the first section, which talks about security, urges camp personnel to prevent escapes, to prevent abnormal deaths. Those two phrases and the instructions that are given to carry those out prove that the Chinese communist - the Chinese communist government's speaking points about the camps are lies.

It is not normal for boarding schools or vocational education - you know, vocational education centers to prevent the escapes of their students, to put up high walls, to command, to demand absolute secrecy of the personnel, to put up barbed wire and guards. Yet all these things are explicitly spelled out in this document. The command to prevent abnormal deaths is even more chilling. What it shows is that Zhu Hailun and the entire party state in Xinjiang knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that by putting these people in these facilities, they were putting their lives at grave risk. Now it is a very bare bones, minimal degree of good that the command is to prevent abnormal deaths and not to cause abnormal deaths. What that indicates to me is that at least as of November 2017, views were not at least intended to be mass murder camps. However, it is clear beyond a shadow of a doubt in the Chinese government's own words that the conditions are dire and that the security level and the lack of oversight in these camps is deadly or potentially deadly.

A few other highlights - or highlight is not the correct word - chilling statements from these documents is the use of a classification and point system inside the camps. That is sort of a miniature version of perhaps these social credit systems. So detainees are awarded or docked points based on their behavior and that part of those points are awarded based on test scores. And those points are used in part to determine when detainees are able to release - to be released. This could be stated as perhaps the world's most high-stakes testing when it determines your freedom or perhaps even your life, the life of your family members. And I will highlight once again that the final - one of the final commands in the telegram is to maintain strict secrecy.

This is very significant because it seems that the Chinese government has settled as their current talking point regarding the camps, on the efficacy of these camps as being positive, a positive way to create a peaceful, stable and prosperous Xinjiang. This is a good counterterrorism policy - counter-terrorism policy, that they are proud of it and that other countries should emulate it. However, as of November 2017, they were ashamed of it, and they knew that it would be condemned by the international community if it was made public, which is why they had special directions about how to keep these camps a secret. I will move on now briefly to the bulletins to IJOP. What you have here are the internal workings of how police officers on the - on the local levels in Xinjiang were communicating and even receiving orders from a artificial intelligence-powered pre-crime kind of policing system known as IJOP.

One part of this - there is one directive that I sat with for literally hours because I found it so shocking. In the period of one week, IJOP, which is again some set of algorithms - right? - spit out the names of more than 24,000 people and sent those names to local police departments. In the period of one week, more than 15,000 of them were detained and put into camps based on some unknown set of algorithms. This - you know, this system was determining that these people were suspicious. These people were being rounded up and put into camps based on some computer's designation of them. It is a total violation of human rights. This is not effective policing. It is, without exaggeration, a real-life manifestation of the movie, the movie "Minority

Report." And there - you know, there was no question - so the rest of that particular bulletin delved into issues regarding this mass, you know, detention in one week of more than 15,000 people. And the issues were not, how do we know they're really guilty? How do we know they were actually going to do something bad?

No, the issues that were raised were, why weren't we able to detain even more of those people? There were, you know, almost 9,000 people who escaped. Why weren't we able to detain them? So when you get an image of this machine that has been set in motion that - you know, a similar kind of industrialized, bureaucratic, highly technical way has enabled, as we saw in World War II, the separation between the morality and the moral obligation of individuals and the actual command. So the police officers aren't having to make decisions. They're removed from that. They're just - they're just following their orders. And it makes, you know, human rights violations on a massive scale much more possible for the human beings to have been tasked with carrying them out. And I will leave it at that.

BROWN: Fantastic. Real quick before we go to Adrian, do you have a sense of what the Chinese people themselves know about the China Cables and about the camps in Xinjiang?

ALLEN-EBRAHIMIAN: I will say that the Chinese government, in May, denied me a visa to go to China. Because of that, I have not been able to speak on the ground with Chinese people themselves. However, my understanding from reading many reports and having - you know, being able to read Chinese social media, which is obviously highly censored, etc., and from speaking with people who are on the ground, is that most Chinese people have no idea of what is going on in Xinjiang. Certainly, that was true one year ago, that they had no sense that there was any kind of regime of surveillance or mass detention there. Now, because the Chinese government has made - has come out with an official line of propaganda, some Chinese people are aware that there are perhaps, you know, facilities, some vocational education training centers, but they don't have any idea.

I did - in fact, I have spoken - I've had phone calls with people in China who have tried to spread the word. And their friends and their family members do not believe them because it seems unbelievable. On top of that, I will just very quickly add that there is a deep-seated prejudice and a sense of regularly practiced discrimination that Han Chinese, the majority, have long practiced against Uighurs. There are these prejudices and, you know, stereotypes of Uighurs being backwards, being dirty, being criminals. This is not true, of course. However, there is no force to push back against that. And so Han Chinese are - have a predilection to think that perhaps Uighurs deserve whatever was coming to them.

BROWN: Thank you. Adrian.

ADRIAN ZENZ: Thank you. Thank you. It's a privilege to be invited for the first time at the Hudson Institute. It's my pleasure to be here and to give you a very short presentation titled "Internment Intergenerational Separation And Involuntary Labor In Xinjiang." The attempt here that I'm going to make is to string together and tie together the three unprecedented aspects of Beijing's internment camp in Xinjiang and to look at the long-term implications. The first is internment for re-education, which we all know about and just heard about. The second is intergenerational separation of parents and children, which is a long-term plan. And the third is coercive labor, which is also part of the long-term scheme. Internment - besides the China Cables and the Xinjiang papers, which gave the overall idea of the internment strategy, more

localized information gives us some very specific insight into how internment works, but also what it does.

What is really the purpose of the internment for re-education? Interestingly, the available data shows - and this is published in my paper that came out on November 24 at the same time as the China Cables leak - that the internment campaign for re-education has clearly targeted influencers in society. We already know about academics, party members, musicians, artists and intellectuals being targeted. On the ground, it's really household heads, typically, males, especially ages 30 to 59, with a higher representation than they are represented in the overall population. In minority villages, certain villages, there has been internment shares of up to 50% for household heads, meaning every other household head is taken into internment. For sons, it's 20% again, sons, males are, in Uighur culture, more influential - wives and daughters only 3 to 4%. Total interment shares in select Uighur regions in Yarkand County range between 8.4 to 28.4%, a wide range, a massive share, underlining what we had been surmising and suspecting and thinking and believing.

We have here, in internment, a clear strategy of a long-term coercive change of minority societies. So even though parts of the internment are winding down and as China itself says, some persons are being shifted out of internment to the next phase, which they call release, there's a long-term plan behind - it's important to keep in mind a long-term plan behind internment and who they have targeted, who they have been breaking because re-education is really a breaking of people on the inside and trying to change them forever, if that should be possible to break to human soul. The second aspect - I have to go very briefly here - is intergenerational separation, a massive increase in the government's capacity and ability to shelter children, minority children, full-time in boarding facilities from young ages. And a third one is involuntary labor. This particular spreadsheet entry showing the construction notice for 16 factory blocks on the grounds of a vocational internment camp, over 30,000 square meters, approximately 300,000 or 290,000 square feet.

These factories, of course, come in all kinds of shapes and sizes, they might be inside internment camp compounds. They might be next to them. In fact, in industrial parks, you might be in completely different locations. But the interesting aspect here again is how involuntary labor is a tool of coercive social reengineering, including through intergenerational separation. One example touted by state propaganda is satellite factories who have nurseries for even infants. And in this particular example, a mother of three young children - the youngest, only 13 months old, was put to full-time labor. And her kids are being taken care of in the caretaking system, which starts at infancy. Conclusion - the next step for us in the West, I believe, is to move into the divestment from China's business of oppression in Xinjiang. I'll give one particular example. H&M, well-known garment-maker, looked into their supply chains and decided to continue to procure yarn from Huafu Fashion Corp., a well-known Chinese large textile-maker who supplies H&M and several other Western companies. But then they said, OK, we don't want your yarn from yarn mills located in Xinjiang because they know - we know there might be some kind of problem.

I'd like to just very briefly - this is a very complex topic that would require an in-depth presentation of its own. But due to shortage of time, I just want to highlight through the mutual pairing assistance, flows of involuntary labor are not limited to Xinjiang. Government reports state that one county in Xinjiang alone sent over a hundred rural minority surplus laborers to Huafu's factories in Anhui province in eastern China. 2017 - Huafu itself sent 2,000 poor person

from Xinjiang's minority regions to work and receive training in factories, which is a very complex thing, right? Mutual pairing assistance facilitates increasingly mandatory transfers, state-planned and scheduled transfers of minority laborers to the 19 paired cities and provinces in Eastern China. Therefore, foreign companies must divest supply chains not only from Xinjiang but also from Chinese companies with significant operations in Xinjiang. With that note, I conclude. Thank you.

BROWN: Thank you, Adrian - Nury.

NURY TURKEL: Thank you, Eric. I'd like to begin by thanking the Hudson Institute for organizing this terrific panel. I believe this is the fourth time that the Hudson Institute organized a public event to shine a light on the ongoing crisis. It is real honor to be up here with Adrian and Bethany. They are heroes to me and many others who care about human rights. My remarks will focus on three key issues related to the recent leaks to The New York Times and ICIJ. The first - did we learn anything new about the nature and scope of the internment camps in the Uighur region? Second, what is party leadership signaling about its ambition at home and abroad?

And finally, what has the international response been since the leaks? The trove of government documents offers an unprecedented look inside China's highly organized, systematic, targeted repression of the Uighurs and other Turkic peoples. In one speech, China's Communist Party General Secretary Xi Jinping gives orders to use organs of dictatorship and show absolute no mercy. To the communist parties - to the Communist Party, Uighurs are different, and being different is bad. Therefore, a forced transformation is absolutely necessary. The Chinese government does not publicly admit this, but its leaders clearly see both Uighur - Uighur identity and religion as inherently disloyal; as such, a potential threat to the state security and Communist Party's continued rule. So what is the significance of the leaked documents? Here are my five takeaways. First, the orders come from the very top. Out of 403 pages in The New York Times leak, 96 pages are internal speeches by Xi Jinping himself. Interestingly enough, the papers also show that there was resistance to the policies from lower ranks within the party. There are 44 pages of material documenting internal investigations and punishment of local officials who did not carry out the detention with sufficient zeal. It is breathtaking and illuminating to see the level of fear not just in the Uighur population but also among officials who carry out - who have to carry out the atrocities.

The second - a party insider took a tremendous risk in leaking these documents. The whistleblower specifically told The New York Times that they hope that Xi Jinping would not escape culpability for mass detention. Just two days ago, new reporting documented an intense investigation and tightening of information since the leak. Abduweli Ayup, a Uighur linguist in exile, and his wife's entire family were taken away. Just days after The New York Times' piece was published, he said that family had no connection to the leaks. The third - the leak is hard evidence of the Chinese government's intentions. Uighurs have been telling the world about their experience for more than two years, but their stories were met with skepticism in some cases.

Now we have proof of China's intent on systematic punishment and indoctrination. And also, the papers prove that the all-out assault on the entire population is an explicit order. Xinjiang Party Secretary Chen Quanguo says, round up everyone who should be rounded up. This is a plan for wholesale and mass crimes. The papers also document a pattern of dehumanization, a well-

known precursor for crimes against humanity and genocide. Xi Jinping defines all normal, everyday expression of Muslim identity as extremism, which he likens to thought viruses and a contagion. So basically, what they are saying is that the Uighur population has this disease that require a cure from a periodic painful treatment through intervention. Fourth, the Chinese government methodically tried to hide what it was doing from the Uighurs in the region. The government knew that the Uighurs would be horrified and desperate to find their missing or detained relatives, so the government prepared a script and made sure that students know their missing family members would face even worse torture and misery if they were to complain. The government also tried to hide what it was doing from the world because it knew that the world would be horrified to find out what was happening.

As early as May 2014, Xi Jinping anticipated international criticism and told officials to ignore it. He said, don't be afraid if hostile forces complain or if hostile forces malign the image of Xinjiang. Fifth, and finally, the documents use the word (speaking Chinese), meaning concentration, showing that the Communist Party intended to detain individuals for the purposes of collective punishment, transformation because of their race, ethnicity, religious practices and political beliefs. This makes it reasonable and appropriate for us to use the term concentration camps. So what has the international response has been? Sadly, not much - the main reason is that China has been successful in buying silence through diplomatic pressure, economic incentives and course of methods. Governments, businesses and international organizations fear the consequences of annoying the Communist Party.

Last week, the Turkish foreign minister told the parliament that his government won't stay silent on the Uighur issue. The United Kingdom, Germany, the EU and Australia have spoken out, requesting unfettered access to the camps. And that's pretty much about it. No country has announced sanctions. No country has recalled an ambassador. No country has cancelled a trip or tabled a resolution at the U.N. In this horribly inadequate response, the United States has been most vocal country on the Uighur crisis. Many officials from the vice president to the director of national intelligence to the U.N. ambassador have expressed concerns or condemnation. Secretary Pompeo alone has made about 20 public statements, including comments to the press about Uighur crisis just in the last five month. Just yesterday, Secretary Pompeo come out in support of a German soccer star Mesut Ozil for his criticism of China's treatment of Uighurs. He said that Beijing can censor Mr. Ozil and his team's soccer game but cannot hide human rights violations.

On December 3, the House of Representatives passed a Uighur Human Rights bill by a vote of 407-1. During the followed floor debate, members cited leaked documents as evidence of persecution on a scale not seen since the Holocaust, to quote Congressman Chris Smith of New Jersey. The Uighur bill has a decent chance of becoming law because of its bipartisan support. It has also - it also has a strong support in the Senate that passed a slightly different bill by unanimous consent in September. In conclusion, I'd like to point that the leaks give us a trove of evidence that should be on the desk of policymakers, legislators and prosecutors for collective and individual responses to the crisis. These documents should compel skeptics, apologists to get on the right side of the history. This is not only about Uighurs but the nature of the Communist Party in China. It is about who we are as free people and civilization. Nobody can say we did not know. What more will it take for governments and companies to end business as usual with China? Will it take mass killing for the world to take a decisive action

when it's too late? Their responsibility to respond cannot be wished away or addressed with a few words of concern, as in the past. This is a genocidal intent in black and white on our watch.

BROWN: Thank you, Nury.

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: Adrian, while I try to digest some of these questions, I know you've done some recent analysis about the actual infrastructure behind the camps. And how many camps are we talking about today in your assessment?

ZENZ: The classified document about the mention of the camps mention the establishment of an administrative infrastructure of vocational training center management in every county administrative unit of Xinjiang, regardless whether Uighur minority or Han majority. And based on all kinds of other evidence, I put in my first estimate from 2018, for which we now have more data points, that on average, at least every township in Xinjiang has some extra judicial internment facility, be it a education through transformation camp or a vocational training education center. And in some cases, we have evidence that townships have at least both of them. And I would add the irregular detention centers on top of that as institutions of extrajudicial internment, giving us a rough count of 1,300-plus.

BROWN: Thirteen hundred-plus.

ZENZ: Yes, and that does not include prisons because those are part of the formal criminal system. So these are only institutions of extrajudicial internment, where people are put without formal court proceedings or a means of appeal.

BROWN: Thank you. A question, I think, for Bethany. What do you think about the similarity of the crackdown against Falun Gong and Uighurs? Has CCP been perfecting their tactics in their continued persecution of minority groups?

ALLEN-EBRAHIMIAN: I think that the U.S. and other governments have made - and not just governments, but analysts and journalists have made a pretty significant mistake in mostly ignoring what has happened in the past 20 years to the Falun Gong and also to Tibetans both in Tibet and outside of Tibet. What you saw were some early indications and early patterns and practices that the Chinese Communist Party used to suppress entire people or religious groups. And by ignoring that, we ignored valuable information about the workings and the thinking of the Communist Party. And we also kind of essentially gave them a green light, saying, oh, we don't care that much what happens to small groups or minority groups. There are some similarities to what happened to the Falun Gong. But what you did not see with the Falun Gong in China were the mass construction of, you know, camps in this way. So there are some differences.

BROWN: Thank you. Question for perhaps all of you because I know all of you have experienced this - any advice for countering Chinese pro-regime trolls in social media who seek to deny the facts about the internment camps or at least cloud the issue and muddle it?

ALLEN-EBRAHIMIAN: I was just tweeting about that yesterday, literally. I have seen a remarkable uptick in the number of accounts - of Twitter accounts who - now, every time I post about Xinjiang, which is all the time, it's just - most of the responses are by all these different Twitter accounts that are denying that they exist or doing, you know, whataboutism with the United States or things like that. I don't think that that can be dealt with on any kind of individual

level. What needs to happen is that Twitter - and Facebook as well - need to continually do what they announced that they did a number of months ago, which is to track and shut down these accounts and to be public about it and to make announcements every time they do that. That's really the only effective way to counter this kind of obvious disinformation campaign.

ZENZ: I think Twitter's already having some success. I see a noticeable - at least for myself, maybe it's different for us, but maybe they get onto you late. But they latched onto me starting interestingly with a parent-child separation article in July. I think that hit a particular nerve. And I think Twitter's been very successful in actually deleting - eliminating. I get - every week - no - yes, every week, I lose about 60 or more followers. Of course, I gain many more. And at least two-thirds of them are temporarily - are closed by Twitter. And I think they're very easy to discern. They have a limited number of followers. They don't use real IDs. They often copy and paste the same thing. Like, if you search Xinjiang in Twitter, linear in time, you spot them in no time. And I think these - Twitter and others are getting much better in targeting these bots with automated scripts, which really shouldn't be that difficult.

TURKEL: Can I make a...

BROWN: Please.

TURKEL: Two additional thoughts. One is be mindful about the Chinese government's effective disinformation campaign. When you go on to Facebook or Twitter, any time when somebody's published something, they just unleash whataboutism and the counter-terrorism claim. Even just last Friday, when this soccer player that I referenced in my speech tweeted out a very powerful message, he had been trashed left and right all over the place. He has 25 million followers on Twitter. So that's one thing to be mindful. And the second, I think tech companies have responsibilities. They should find a way to filter out messages helping the Chinese to disseminate misinformation.

BROWN: For Nury, how do you evaluate President Trump's policy toward CCP on human rights issues? An add-on question is, Uighur human rights bill - what are your hopes and concerns about that and its success in the Senate?

TURKEL: I get this question quite often. I've learned to pay attention to what Trump administration does than what President Trump says in public. The records are very clear. As I pointed out, secretary of state mentioned Uighur issue in public - major speeches and media interviews - at least 20 times in the last five months. So everyone from the senior leadership level, including Sam Brownback that we saw today and hear powerful messages, have been speaking out in unprecedented level. So I don't focus too much about what President Trump says or do on his - in his capacity. On the Uighur bill, the United States Congress has been extremely supportive in the last two years, specifically under the leadership of Senator Rubio and Representative Christopher Smith. The bill that is being considered currently has a pretty good chance because as you look at the record sponsorship and the enthusiasm, the genuine interest to get this bill passed - it's just a matter of time. I think the United States Congress should have more than one bill. There should be other bills covering the other issues, including the forced labor. So if you wanted to help the Uighur bill to pass, call the Senate majority leader, Mitch McConnell, and Minority Leader Chuck Schumer to ask them to put this bill on the - voting.

BROWN: Thank you. I had mentioned what I believed to be the political complacency about China's war on terrorism after 9/11 at the beginning, but my question, I think, for all of you - this question for all of you is, why is the world not recognizing this as a genocide? Also, why is the world ignoring the fact that repression is a result of China's occupation of East Turkestan and its systemic colonization of that region? Adrian?

ZENZ: OK. I get started. The problem is - what China's doing in Xinjiang is in some ways very sophisticated - not a lot of bloodshed, although some for sure - I mean, a lot more than should. But the world has yet to truly and fully define genocide in the form of the extinction not just of physical lives, but also of identities. There are some help terminology, such as cultural genocide, et cetera, some other terms like ethnic cleansing that are quite difficult to use because they can refer to huge population transfers, to mass killing or to other things - to a whole range of inconsistent things. And I think it's high time - it's really the job of multilateral institutions, such as the United Nations and others, to really take this seriously and to come up with clear definitions, and terms, and lists and then to apply them, to match them and to also follow up - to keep track with what's going on in the world. If there's new forms of atrocities that are new mass attacks on identity and humanity, the multilateral community and these institutions, they have to keep on top of this and not just be a red-tape (ph) bureaucracy that sort of trails behind by 10 to 20 years.

TURKEL: I think it has also - has something to do with people not knowing actually what is happening to the Uighurs in a general sense in general public. And also, I think there's a lack of leadership in various capitals to take up this cause. At the height of the Nazi Germany, they were holding about 700,000 people. So comparing to that number to what is happening to the Uighurs, it is bone-chilling. And yet it has not driven any necessary attention. Legal scholars should look at the actual definition and the thought, the thinking and the practices of the Chinese government, and drawing that conclusion is not that difficult. So we're looking for some leader to take up this cause. And the - as I pointed out, what we have is evidence. The method is clear. Their thought process is clear. Formulation of these policies and implementation is pretty clear. I think this is a serious crime that has been substantiated with the recent leaks that provided hard evidence.

BROWN: Bethany?

ALLEN-EBRAHIMIAN: I'd like to add a couple points to that that highlight the - there's different, I would say, systemic causes for the lack of government reaction to China's campaign of cultural genocide. First of all is that the Chinese - is that China itself has massive economic might, and the Chinese Communist Party has spent the last 15 years and especially the last perhaps 10 years waging explicit campaigns to turn that economic power into political power and into geopolitical power. The most obvious manifestation of this is Xi Jinping's signature foreign policy initiative, the Belt and Road, which they present as an economic initiative. But it is, in fact, more importantly, a heavily geopolitical initiative to make many governments around the world economically dependent on China, then to turn that leverage into political leverage. And that has been - China has leveraged that in this specific case. The question has frequently been asked, why are the governments of Muslim-majority countries not speaking out about this? It's not because they hate their own people.

It's because those countries in particular are particularly dependent upon China for infrastructure investment, for trade, for loans, et cetera. So this is, I would say, perhaps the most

important difference between this particular campaign of cultural genocide and, say, you know, Myanmar's, in which they actually did kill at - one number I've seen is 24,000 people, and hundreds of thousands were forced to leave their homes. It was easy for many governments to condemn that because no one looks to Myanmar as a political model, and no one - and basically no one is economically dependent on it. So there is that level. Another thing is not - has not very much to do with China itself and has much more to do with Islamic terrorism. I believe that Uighurs are, in a way, of a victim of Islamic terrorism because what, you know, Islamic extremist groups - who I consider to be extraordinarily selfish, in addition to being violent - what they have done - in part what they have done is to cast aspersions over the entire Islamic religion, which is wrong, which is entirely wrong. And if you look at what Xi Jinping said in some of his speeches, he, in his mind, at least in part, views this as counterterrorism.

That is deeply wrong because that is not a - that is not a problem in Uighur society particularly. That's not what this is, but that is what he has in his private speeches presented it as. So what I'm saying is that one reason that many Chinese people hold deeply Islamophobic sentiments towards Uighurs and one reason that many countries in the world and just generally populations in the world have been less inclined to leap to the defense of Muslims is because of the deeply harmful things that Islamic extremists in the world have done.

BROWN: Nury, this is a good question for you as a lawyer from our audience. A certain percentage of people in the camps have already been sentenced with heavy imprisonment, like my nephew and my brother-in-law. Now my brother is facing a court trial. Therefore, should the U.S. government or for that matter, other international legal entities, highlight this issue or not? And if so, what are the options?

TURKEL: I'd like to note that it's an important question. The Chinese government has been even violating its own counterterrorism law if their claim holds any water, and, too, the U.N. should look into this because I get this kind of question quite regularly. Sadly, the U.N. general secretary general has not even publicly speaking out. Even the U.N. charter specifically mandates protection of human rights. So I don't - I don't believe that the Chinese government will provide any mechanism or channels for those detained Uighurs to have a legal representation. As noted that the U.N. subpanel panel in August 2018, this - the Chinese has created no-rights zone, no nothing, no right to - no access to lawyers, courts or even family members. So it is something that the policymakers around the world, particularly the U.N., should look at addressing. I don't think there's anything that can be done in China.

BROWN: Of course, no law rises above the power of the party. Would any of you like to have some final concluding thoughts?

ZENZ: Yes, I think it clearly is time to move focus, not the effort, but the focus away from questions about evidence, which we now have abundantly, of what exactly is going on and to really shine the spotlight on the international community - international community, on national governments, including this one here, on unions or leagues of nations, be it NATO, but especially the United Nations, be it leagues within the Islamic world. And this is not something I'm an expert on or can advise on, but I think it's deeply frustrating to see the extent to which what's going on in Xinjiang is testing the true conscience of the world. It is deeply frustrating to see the choices that these leaders have been making in - oftentimes, in not making certain choices. And I think this is something that should trouble us deeply. And anybody who speaks or claims to care about human rights should pause and think what is going on in the global

community. Anybody asking for more evidence has no further excuse at this point in time. And I think that should be squarely pointed out.

TURKEL: It is not only disappointing, but disheartening that some Muslim countries have been on the side of the Chinese government, where their religion has been likened to mental illness. And there is evidence now that they have been wholesale attack on Uighur Islam. And, too, this needs to be understood that the United States government did not create this problem. The Chinese have been very effective creating this false division for a camp-against-camp situation, as you have noticed in the joint letters published in July. Those 50-some countries need to understand that this is not helping the Uighurs who are speaking up. It's in the interest of their religious belief. It's a matter of conscience. So I call on those countries to get on the right side of history.

BROWN: With that, thank you, particularly to our panelists. Thank you all for being here. We'll do more of this. And I want to have all of you back. And thank you to all of you again, also to C-SPAN for joining us today. We look forward to continuing the conversation. Thank you.