

Countermeasure of Activities abroad of Chinese Terrorists from the Perspective of Social Movement Theory

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Abstract. Chinese terrorists have engaged in terrorist activities in Central Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, other countries, and regions around China since a long time, which is becoming increasingly fierce after the civil war in Syria in 2011. The study mainly discusses the countermeasures from the perspectives of the political opportunity structure, frame narrative, and resource mobilization based on social movement theoretical research. The countermeasures include: to establish a new international political order, improve the governance capability of all countries; strengthen ideological education, and to establish and propagate antiterrorism frame narrative; to intensify intelligence work based on the big data to enhance the capabilities of forecasting, pre-warning and prevention; to improve international law enforcement cooperation promoting overseas counterterrorism action capability; to create a prevention and control network to control the returning of flight personnel, preventing the terrorism risk at home and abroad.

Keywords: Chinese terrorists; activities abroad; countermeasures; Social Movement Theory.

1. Introduction

Since 2011, with the upheavals in the Middle East, especially the rise of ISIS, the Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF) has sprung up on an unprecedented scale under the support of various factors like extremism. Tens of thousands of FTF have entered the Iraq and Syria to join the ISIS, Jabhat al-Nusra and other terrorist organizations who went to the front. In addition to severely jeopardizing the security and stability of recipients, the transferring and returning of FTF terrorists also pose a severe threat to the safety of their home countries and the third country. The UN Security Council Resolution 2178 (2014) pointed out that FTF poses an increasingly severe threat to the security and stability of the globe. At present, 80,440 fighters from 80 countries, including a high number of Chinese terrorists, joined the ISIS from April 2013 to June 2018, among which 7,366 ones have returned to their homelands[1], showing the largest scale and highest mobility rate in history. This study analyzes the situation of the Chinese terrorists' activities abroad from the statistics published by the Internet and other media since 2011, Combining the theory of social movement to explore the countermeasures of Chinese terrorists' activities abroad.

2. The Brief Situation of Chinese Terrorists' Activities Abroad

Since the official antagonism between the Chinese regime and the Eastern Turkistan Organization in the 1930s, the East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) has established a puppet regime to engage in the cross-border secessionist activities. For example, the flight event of border citizens in the 1960s is a cross-border riot and secessionist actions planned and implemented by hostile forces at home and abroad. At that time, the Eastern Turkistan Organization mainly engaged in separation of nationalities. Since the late 1970s and early 1980s, some fighters from the Eastern Turkistan Organization participated in War in Afghanistan. In the 1990s, fighters from the Eastern Turkistan Organization took part in the "Jihads" in some areas like Chechnya and launched terrorist attacks against Xinjiang and other regions around China. At that time, the Eastern Turkistan Organization was mainly a religious fanaticism organization, having a place among international terrorist organizations. The "jihadists" from China attracted the attention from all over the world during the war in Afghanistan in 2001 after the "9.11" event. Under the command of ETIM, they cooperated with Taliban and Al Qaeda intimately to pose terrorist activities in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The remaining forces of the Eastern Turkistan Organization survived from the counterterrorism action against them and other

terrorist organizations by international counterterrorism alliance. They were sharply differentiated into mainstream force of the Eastern Turkistan Organization and extremist forces represented by ETIM [2]. However, such differentiation is just an internal strategy adjustment for the Eastern Turkistan Organization, namely the two-pronged strategy to evade the international pressure [3]. In 2006, some anti-China militants and members of ETIM established the Turkistan Islamic Party (TIP) acting as a subsidiary organization of Al Qaeda, together with Jabhat al-Nusra. In 2011, with the upheavals in the Middle East, especially the rise of ISIS, the Eastern Turkistan Organization called on domestic terrorists to participate in the global Jihad in Syria and Iraq via countries in Central Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, for the purpose of enhancing its own strength and widening its space to survive. The foreign jihadists of Eastern Turkistan Organization include: some members of ETIM joining the TIP in Syria to cooperate with various subsidiary organizations of Al Qaeda (such as Jabhat Fateh al Sham (JFS)); some members joining ISIS in Syria and Iraq and other terrorists joining the local terrorist organizations in Indonesia [4]. Nowadays, the Eastern Turkistan Organization is mainly a radical international extremist organization and a violent terrorist organization.

All in all, terrorist organizations, represented by the Eastern Turkistan Organization, are the organizational foundation of Chinese terrorists who trigger overseas terrorist activities. Of course, the extreme thought represented by "Hijirat" is the thought foundation to instigate Chinese terrorists to participate in overseas terrorist activities. The close relation between Chinese terrorists and surrounding terrorist forces is the cooperation foundation for them to participate in overseas terrorist activities. The terrorism seedbeds in surrounding countries provide a realistic foundation for Chinese terrorists to participate in overseas terrorist activities.

3. Countermeasure of Activities abroad of Chinese Terrorists

According to social movement theory, the collective behavior with the following characteristics is regarded as a social movement: (1) informal network; (2) based on shared belief and unity sense; (3) mobilization based on conflicting issues; (4) using various protest means frequently [5]. Terrorism is a collective behavior and a particular social movement. The following three aspects in its process of generation and development are the main topics in the study of social movement theory. First: the political opportunity structure of terrorism; Second: a frame narrative of terrorism; Third: the resource mobilization of terrorism.

On the one hand, because the political opportunity structure of terrorism is based on the system (changes of international governmental authorities, polarization between the rich and the poor in the globe), region (regions with concentrated terrorist attacks) and country (state power, the will of repression of the state on terrorist activities).

3.1 Establishing a Fair and Reasonable New International Political Order and Improving the Governance Capability of Countries

3.1.1 In the Aspect of the System, a Fair and Rational New International Political order Should be Established

The current development of globalization enlarged inequitable and unfair elements existing in the increasingly-widened international community, especially in politics. The United Nations, as the universal inter-governmental international organization, should play a leading role in establishing a fair and reasonable new international political order. Countries all over the world should reach a consensus on developing a fair and equitable new political order to settle the international disputes peacefully, eliminate hegemonism and power politics, disclaim great-power chauvinism, and regard each country equally. The international community should take relevant counterterrorism measures in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international legal standards [6].

3.1.2 In the Aspect of Regions, Enhance the Effective Governance to Surrounding Areas

Some countries and regions around China are faced with unrest and dangerous counterterrorism situations. The international community should pay more attention to the development of these regions

to achieve peace and effective governance there. The Chinese Government will further strengthen the counterterrorism cooperation with relevant countries in Central Asia and South Asia through SCO. China also should build a counterterrorism cooperation mechanism with countries in Southeast Asia, enhance the counterterrorism cooperation between border provinces and Southeast Asia, increase efforts to protect its overseas interests in Southeast Asia, including Chinese personnel and investment, restrain the development of terrorism in Southeast Asia while preventing the international terrorism from permeating into China via Southeast Asia[7].

3.1.3 At the National Level, Each Country Should Endeavor to Improve its Governance Capability

The international community must increase its aid to the developing countries, to ensure these countries' safety service their citizens. Under the guidance of the overall national security outlook, China will strengthen the integrated governance by treating both root causes and symptoms. General rules of Counterterrorism Law of the People's Republic of China specify that: "the nation should include the counterterrorism into the national security strategy, take comprehensive measures to address both the symptoms and root causes, strengthen the construction of capacity to fight against terrorism, apply approaches in the respects of politics, economy, laws, culture, education, foreign affairs and military affairs to carry out the counterterrorism work."

Secondly, the frame narrative of terrorism is mainly reflected in achieving its actions and demands of the discourse framework through discourse resources and ideology giving its efforts "rationality" and even "justice," while spreading information and recruiting personnel to expand support, weakening opponents' legitimacy and expressing its strategic preferences [8].

3.2 Strengthening Ideological Education Against Terrorism, and Establishing and Propagating Antiterrorism Frame Narrative

In June 2019, the SCO summit in Bishkek emphasized that the comprehensive measures shall be taken to fight against terrorism, to increase efforts to combat terrorism and its ideas and to identify and eliminate the causing factors of terrorism and extremism. The ideology of terrorism reflects its views. By killing the terrorists, we merely kill the "worker bees." The "queen bees" are precisely the missionaries [9]. Under the banners of theocracy, national independence, religious supremacy and Jihadism, the terrorists of Eastern Turkistan Organization at home and abroad have used ethnic and religious issues to slander and accuse China's political system, ethnic and religious policies and education and training centers in order to delude people who do not know the truth and defend for their terrorist actions. That is the most acute problem faced in the counterterrorism struggle in China. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the counterterrorism ideological education, especially the mainstream ideological education in ethnic minority areas.

3.2.1 From the International Point of View, Each Country Should Stick to Respecting the Other Countries' Sovereignty and Discard the Binary Opposition Thought.

Terrorists emphasize the so-called value of conflicts between different civilization systems. The root of international conflicts mainly lies in political and economic interests rather than culture. By what means of getting along with different civilizations or cultures, we can reach the state of "harmony in diversity." The way to achieve this goal is to establish and cultivate a cultural tolerance towards "others."

3.2.2 From the Domestic View, the Following Measures Should be Taken

Firstly, adhere to the basic position of Marxism, and combine Marxist religious theory and ethnic theory with the characteristics of the times and China's national conditions to publicize the party's ethnic and religious policies. Educate people to clearly realize that violent and terrorist activities ignore fundamental human rights and trample on human morality. What it challenges is the conventional bottom line of human civilization. It is neither an ethnic problem nor a religious problem, but a common enemy of human civilization [10].

Secondly, intensify the civic awareness, Chinese national consciousness, state awareness, cultural awareness, weaken national differences, religious identity, and regional differences. These Chinese nationals join in different organizations with different goals. They think their nation, culture and religion are different from those of the Han people, emphasize on their identities of religious people, nationalist and statist, and engage in the terrorist activities to establish their own country of East Turkestan. That is the discourse framework built by terrorism for its demands and actions using ideology and discourse resources to give legitimacy and justice to its actions [8]. Therefore, we should strengthen the publicity and education of Chinese civic awareness, Chinese national consciousness, Chinese cultural awareness and state awareness, carry forward the spirit of patriotism, enhance the education of national unity in China, and carry out anti-narrative against the frame narrative of terrorism. Since 2018, the State Council Information Office has issued the white papers of *China's Policies and Practices on Protecting Freedom of Religious Belief, Cultural Protection and Development in Xinjiang, Counterterrorism, Anti-Extremism and Human Rights Protection in Xinjiang* and *Some Historical Issues in Xinjiang*. In particular, three white papers on Xinjiang systematically introduce Xinjiang's efforts in the fight against terrorism and extremism and clarify some historical issues in Xinjiang from the following aspects: "Xinjiang is an integral part of China's territory", "Xinjiang has never been an 'East Turkestan'", "all ethnic groups in Xinjiang are constituents of the Chinese nation", "all ethnic cultures in Xinjiang are constituents of the Chinese culture", and "Xinjiang has always been a region where various religions coexist".

Finally, carry out the anti-extremism education in depth. As for the international community, the essentials of counterterrorism governance lie in promoting the anti-extremism rather than mutually reinforcing wars between the enemy and ourselves [11]. Firstly, adhere to the direction of sinicization, and establish confidence in our path, religion and culture. We should improve the power of discrimination, and reject the extreme thoughts confusing religion with politics. Secondly, enhance the interpretation of religious classics. We should cultivate a group of religious teaching staff, experts and scholars who love their country and religions to explain their religions correctly. At last, carry out the work of anti-extremism by laws and regulations, respect citizens' rights to the freedom of religious belief, and protect the legal religious activities. Psychological methods and high-end psychological testing instruments can be used to study the historical evolution of extreme religious thoughts and do painstaking and careful ideological work for those with extreme thoughts [12].

Thirdly, the mobilization of terrorism resources is reflected in need to raise funds, recruit personnel, establish organizations or networks, use technical means, etc., and to achieve their goals through terrorist attacks.

3.3 Strengthening the Domestic and Overseas Counterterrorism Big Data Intelligence Work and Enhancing the Capability of Prediction, Early Warning and Prevention

3.3.1 Strengthen Domestic and Overseas Cooperation in Counterterrorism Intelligence

Further expand the channels of counterterrorism intelligence and data sources, and establish intelligence and data collection sites or intelligence stations with our neighboring countries and countries along the "Belt and Road." To develop a mechanism for sharing early warning information on terrorist attacks for our overseas institutions and personnel, and urge relevant countries to notify our country of intelligence information promptly. Major foreign-related enterprises and organizations should actively provide a platform to support the "going global" of counterterrorism intelligence work.

3.3.2 The SCO Counterterrorism Intelligence Cooperation Mechanism Should be Improved

A confidential communication system should be established to guide the SCO secret database's further interfacing with the domestic intelligence investigation and actual combat departments. SCO members should strengthen international political and intelligence cooperation, including building a more efficient information exchange network to control better transferring and returning terrorists, supervising their movements, and formulating more efficient extradition mechanisms of foreign terrorists according to their national laws[13].

3.3.3 Professional Operation Teams Focusing on Intelligence Analysis, Evaluation, Investigation and Case Solving, Should be Established Both at Home and Abroad

Efforts should be made to enhance the construction and distribution of law enforcement forces at abroad by sending additional police liaison officers, immigration censors, military intelligence representatives, and to promote the dispatch of security liaison officers to airports in key countries. By doing so, secret forces of high quality will be formed at home and abroad.

3.3.4 Promoted the Systematic and Standardized Development of the Data on Counterterrorism

Work with enhanced gathering, sharing and governance of information and data concerning counterterrorism intelligence. To boost the effectiveness of big data and artificial intelligence (AI) in counterterrorism data analysis, cutting-edge technologies, such as mobile networks, IOT and AI, should be utilized to weave intelligent terrorism sensing networks that cover key regions and locations and to build a decision support system with the function of forecasting and early warning based on intelligence.

3.3.5 Focus on Other Intelligence Information

Aside from using the "Big Data" intelligence platform, it's also essential to emphasize traditional intelligence-gathering methods, including human intelligence collection, open-source intelligence analysis, second-hand intelligence evaluation, and interception of overseas radio stations for the terrorism-related intelligence that facilitates "insiders' information, early warning, timeliness and operations" in an all-round, multi-angle manner, so as to locate possible terrorist incidents that may occur at home and abroad and destroy them in the premeditated stage as much as possible.

3.4 Enhancing International Law Enforcement Cooperation Against Terrorism to Promote Overseas Counterterrorism Action Capability

General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out: "The leading role of the United Nations must be put into great play to form a united front against terrorism, and further strengthen counterterrorism cooperation." "The domestic and international fronts should be advanced in parallel for stronger global cooperation against terrorism."

3.4.1 Cooperation in International Law Enforcement Should be Strengthened to Crack Down on Terrorism

In this regard, mechanisms for counterterrorism cooperation and bilateral counterterrorism consultation and collaboration within multilateral frameworks of the United Nations, SCO and Interpol should be fully leveraged to build a counterterrorism barrier with a focus on neighboring countries. By strengthening the negotiation and conclusion of treaties on bilateral criminal justice assistance and extradition, improving the cooperation on repatriating, extraditing and transferring "jihadists," there will be an effective legal framework for international cooperation against terrorism. The reinforcement of "counterterrorism mechanism by Afghanistan, China, Pakistan and Tajikistan" [14] will lead and become a crucial platform for regional counterterrorism. Combining the international counterterrorism cooperation system with anti-piracy and aviation safety system will result in a comprehensive, regional security cooperation system differing from traditional ones [15].

3.4.2 It is Necessary to Improve the Actual Effectiveness for Combating the "ETIM" through the Coordination of the Work of Security Assistance in Counterterrorism Law Enforcement in Key Countries

The support to key countries, including Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Iran, Syria, and Egypt, is supposed to be coordinated and implemented at national levels, in which law enforcement assistance should be correlated with fighting against the Eastern Turkistan Organization.

3.4.3 The Capacity Building of Counterterrorism Institutions in SCO Regions Should be Enhanced

By perfecting the pragmatic cooperation mechanism and facilitating the integration of the competent authorities of SCO members with the emergency response force for counterterrorism, so that SCO can be stronger in combating the "three forces." Also, it is essential to elevate SCO's border defense cooperation mechanism to prevent and respond to the returning and penetration of the "three forces." Improving the competence to act against online terrorism among SCO members can lead to a more powerful voice in terms of international information security.

3.5 Constructing the Prevention and Control Network Against Returning and Flight Personnel to Prevent the Terrorism Risk at Home and Abroad

The "World Island" theory put forward by Mackinder, an English scholar, believes that: "a larger area will be under effective control so long as a hub region is controlled." Based on this theory, it can be found that there are also several "hub points" along the routes in China, by which "Igilat" gangsters may flee, mainly two lines heading northwest and southwest that they may "migrate" along.

3.5.1 A Line of Defense, Including All the Hub Points, Should be Drawn and Made Clear, and Thereby Preventing Terrorists from Sneaking in or Out

In the northwest route, a defensive line protecting Xinjiang shall be drawn with Kashgar and other places as the "hub points" to "hinge" the major thoroughfare to the corridor regions in Afghanistan, for the purpose of strictly guarding against Chinese nationals' "returning" with arms after the collapse of ISIS or "Hijirat" gangsters' sneaking out; along the southwest route, in which a defensive line protecting the mainland is clarified, places such as Guangxi, Yunnan, Henan and Zhejiang are regarded as "hub points", where additional counterterrorism forces should be allocated to screen and monitor major suspects involved in terrorism; police liaison personnel can be dispatched to countries like Burma, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, Philippines, Indonesia and Turkey, so as to strengthen international water patrols, intercept "returning" suspects involved in terrorism or terrorists smuggling by sea, and block the channels that "ETIM" utilizes for recruiting, infiltrating or returning in Southeast Asia, together with local police.

3.5.2 China may Establish a Database on Personnel Restricted for Entry to Prevent the Returning of Terrorists

Universities and other scholars believe that it is necessary and expected to give further priority to improving international information sharing, including special attention to biometrics, and thereby helping identify potential terrorists such as the FTF (returned) [16]. To this end, China, using passports & visas, can generate a "database on personnel restricted for the entry" based on the evaluation of the outbound personnel database established by the comprehensive collection of biometric information such as three-dimensional portraits, irises, fingerprints and DNA. Foreigners who tend violent terrorism or had ever participated in such organizations (including the Chinese who have obtained foreign nationalities) will be rejected for entry.

3.5.3 New Trends on the Returning or Infiltration of Foreign Terrorists Should be Closely Followed up

By consistently implementing the "four defensive lines", including strict visa review, port inspection, entry control, and border block, to effectively enhance the inspection and control of personnel that have entered the country for earnestly solid acquisition, interpretation and analysis of basic information, and thereby preventing terrorists from returning.

4. Conclusion

The terrorist activities, done by Chinese terrorists in surrounding areas which are transnational crimes, pose a serious challenge to international order and human peace. Facing global problems resulted from such transnational crimes, no country is immune. Countries all over the world constitute

a community of shared future for humankind. Each country should take reasonable concerns for other countries into account while pursuing its own interests, and strive to promote mutual development during its growth, and thereby working for a fair and reasonable international order.

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