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ASA-19 1996  
EUROPE/RUSSIA

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## The Warriors for Uighurstan

TASHKENT, Uzbekistan

August 31, 1996

By Adam Smith Albion

### EASTERN TURKESTAN

Whenever I lost the thread of my thoughts while writing the text that follows, my eyes drifted to the "Map of the Turkish World" (*Türk Dunyasi Haritasi*) hanging above my desk. Printed in Izmir in 1994 under the auspices of the Turkish Ministry of Education, it shows the whole of Eurasia from the Atlantic to the Yellow Sea, highlighting the "independent Turkish states" in red and the "autonomous Turkish states" (*muhtar-ozerk Turk devletleri*) in salmon-pink. I cannot say whether this color scheme was deliberately adopted to suggest those maps of the British Empire that depicted one quarter of the globe in red. In any case, the visually striking shading conveys an analogous message about prestige and domain. By chromatically coupling huge swathes of territory spread over two continents, the map projects at a glance an impression of the range and multitude, hence power and influence, of the Turkic community of peoples.

Falling under the heading "independent Turkish states" are Turkey, Northern Cyprus, Azerbaijan, and the five Central Asian republics of the ex-USSR — including Tajikistan although the Tajiks are not Turkic but ethnically Indo-European. These make up the Turkic heartland, and are painted red. The Russian Federation looks as tattered as an old dishcloth, since large pieces of it have been excerpted and colored pink: eleven of the country's constituent republics and regions are picked out as "autonomous Turkish states."<sup>1</sup> Two regions of Georgia, Abkhazia and Ajaristan, are also pink. Finally — and most significantly for the purposes of this newsletter — one sixth of China's territory is designated part of the "Turkish world" and shaded accordingly. Like Nimrod, the Ministry of Education has driven 155 million people into its park, covering approximately 11 million square kilometers, and anointed them Turks.<sup>2</sup> Spanning the distance from the Caspian Sea to Mongolia, "Turkestan" is stamped across the map in bold capitals.

What is Turkestan? Lexicographers seem sure it is a place name, glossing the entry in their dictionaries with the abbreviated guide-word "*geo.*" However, like other superficially geographical terms such as "the Anglo-Saxon world" or Solzhenitsyn's Slavic Commonwealth, it is a resonant concept easier to invoke than to define. In essence, the idea points toward a supranational union of the *millet*, or Turkic community. This will come about when the Turks put away their heterogeneous identities centered on tribe, clan or sub-group, and focus instead on the profound monoethnicity that allegedly unites them. Unfortunately, precisely who would fall within the borders of Turkestan by that definition was never a question likely to generate consensus. Naturally, there has been a multiplicity of answers, reflecting the conflicting agendas of the various groups that have sought to capitalize on the idea's evocative power by harnessing it to their own cause. Pan-Turkists/Turanians, *Jadid*-Reformers, *Basmachi* rebels, "Turkestani" emigrant colonies, Central Asian scholars, administra-

1. Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, and Chuvashiya on the upper Volga; Dagestan, Chechnya-Ingushetiya, Kabardino-Balkar, and Karachai-Circassia in the Caucasus; Gorno-Altay, Khakas and Tuva on the Mongolian border; and Yakutia (Saha Republic) in the far east. (For more on the widespread misperception in Turkey that the Yakuts are "Turks" (and therefore Muslims) see ASA-6, "The Voice of the People," 20 March 1995.)

2. Bosnia-Herzegovina and Gagauzia (in Moldova) are mysteriously omitted.

tors of Islamic pious foundations, Tsarist and Soviet officials, or right-wing chauvinists in Turkey today have all advanced different criteria (linguistic, political, historical, etc.) to distinguish *bona fide* members of Turkestan from imposters.<sup>3</sup>

From the Russian point of view, in the nineteenth century Turkestan referred to the Tsar's ill-defined and ill-mapped conquests in Central Asia, overseen from Tashkent by a Governor-General. Under the Soviets, these were organized into the Autonomous Turkestan Republic (1918-1924).<sup>4</sup> Thus, for a brief period at least, Turkestan did have a definite administrative and territorial meaning, although it was not one that most Turkic peoples would have chosen for themselves. In the final analysis, perhaps it is best not to think of Turkestan as a physical location at all, but as part of the imaginative landscape of Turkic intellectual history. On some conceptual plane, it is the meeting-place for all the Turkic nations, symbolizing an ethno-cultural common denominator supposedly more binding than the loyalties that divide them. But who can specify what constitutes a "Turkic nation"? Is the hoped-for union a territorial idea, a political bloc or a broad commonwealth of interests? Turkestan is a vague and protean idea that cannot be reconciled with the real world since, like most metaphysics, any stab at clarity tends to produce an explanation obscurer than the thing it is explaining, *ignotum per ignotius*. At various times, Turkestan has been a rallying cry; a political banner; a religious mission; a racial theory; a sense of shared history and common purpose; a linguistic umbrella; a tactic of educational reform; a cynical bid for power; an administrative convenience; a principle of foreign policy; and a mystical union.

One should add to the list that it has proven a cruel disappointment to its supporters among the educated elites, as useless at mobilizing the masses as any other appeal to supranationalism. It was also an utterly discredited notion both in the USSR and Kemalist Turkey until 1991, since when it has enjoyed a revival among the Turkish intelligentsia's religious and political hard right.<sup>5</sup>

Although it is futile to try to define Turkestan as a whole, it is a paradox reminiscent of quantum physics

that one half of it can be delimited quite precisely. While the boundaries of Western Turkestan remain in doubt, Eastern Turkestan is the historical designation for China's westernmost province, the traditional homeland of the Uighurs. Known also as Chinese Turkestan (as opposed to Russian Turkestan) in the breathless accounts of nineteenth-century travelers and explorers, it was reorganized into the rather more pedestrian-sounding Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China in 1955.<sup>6</sup> Culturally and historically, the area forms a continuum with Central Asia from which, however, it is geographically isolated by formidable mountain ranges, the Tien Shan, Kunlun, and Pamirs.<sup>7</sup> It is the only province of China save Tibet where the Han Chinese are numerically in the minority, although that balance is rapidly changing.

From the point of view of the majority Uighurs, who speak a language very similar to Uzbek and are Sunni Muslims to boot, Xinjiang represents the easternmost outpost of the Turkic world; their political subordination to Beijing is an historical accident and a national tragedy. Probably more than any other Turkic group, the Uighurs (who still refer to their land as Eastern Turkestan) retain a sense of spiritual belonging to a Turkestani collective. From the point of view of the Chinese, Xinjiang has been a nominal part of the Middle Kingdom since the Han dynasty in the third century BC, despite its name (*xin*, "new," *jiang*, "frontier"). In fact, Chinese control and colonization did not really begin until the mid-eighteenth century under the Manchus (Qing), and Beijing lost its grip more than once since then. In short, Xinjiang is a deeply divided place, with half the population looking east and the other half looking west.

I visited Xinjiang "in interesting times," as the Chinese curse goes. Two and a half months had elapsed since the Shanghai summit on 26 April 1996 — a day when, to the minds of many Uighurs, their Western Turkestani cousins sold out to the Chinese and betrayed them. Furthermore, a ruthless police crackdown against "Uighur splittism" was barely a fortnight old and fresh in everyone's minds. The worst floods this century in Xinjiang took place while I was there. The rains began 20 July, sweeping away bridges and paralyzing commu-

3. The *Jadids* (Reformers) at the beginning of this century, for example, envisaged a Turkestan that would unite the northern nomadic Turks (collectively, "Kirghiz") with the settled southern oasis Turks (primarily Uzbeks, "Sarts"). In that view, Turkestan would be approximately coterminous with modern Central Asia. But that would leave out Azerbaijan, which must be included in today's Pan-Turkic conceptual framework. It would include Tajiks, on the other hand, since earlier censuses failed to distinguish them from the Uzbeks. Tajiks are Persian from the ethnic and linguistic points of view, so cannot qualify as Turkestani by those criteria. Yet the Ministry of Education map does include them (though not Iran), explaining in a note that the Tajiks are Muslims and "almost Turks" (*Turkluge yakin*). But it is this word exactly, *Turkluk*, "the quality-of-being-a-Turk," that is causing all the confusion in the first place.

4. Also known, confusingly, as the Federative Soviet Republic of Turkestan (FSRT), or the Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (TASSR).

5. Uzbek President Islam Karimov has recently been pushing the motto "Turkestan — Our Common Home," but it is only a bland slogan, implying no policy prescriptions whatsoever, and certainly no Pan-Turkic pretensions.

6. Xinjiang (Pinyin transliteration) might be more familiar as Sinkiang (Wade system).

7. The region's geography is described at more length in ASA-17, "Through the Torugart Pass," 7 August 1996.



nications. On top of all this, the Chinese had just exploded a nuclear device about 250 km away beneath the Taklamakan desert. I am grateful to my sister Alexis for helping me through, for her manifold services as traveling companion and translator, and to whom this newsletter is affectionately dedicated.

## SUNDAY MARKET

It was the first time I ever witnessed a traffic jam consisting entirely of donkey carts. Straining, wheezing, braying, sneezing from the dust, they had been pouring into the bazaar since before dawn. The crunch started the moment they crossed the muddy red Tuman river and got jumbled choosing cross-directions at the foot of the bridge. Every Sunday in Kashgar, thousands of donkeys pulling carts laden with goods converge on this spot. They arrive in an endless stream, and debouch into twenty acres of market area on the edge of town. Ninety thousand shoppers flood in behind them. The whole population of Kashgar is only 300,000. The result is mayhem.

The Kashgar Sunday market — to lift a phrase from Steinbeck — while not a model of neatness, was a miracle of supply. Muskmelons, blankets, clothing, hardware, timber, grain and fodder, handicrafts, practically anything you could think of, exchanged hands at this astonishing outdoor emporium. In the central grid area there were streets of stalls devoted exclusively to skull-caps, boots, embroidered fichus, or daggers with inlaid handles (the latter being a traditional accessory to male Uighur dress, attached to the belt and worn openly).

One clearing was reserved for piles of capacious wooden chests faced with hammered metal. They were burnished and shone like gold: it was high season for bridal trousseau boxes since summer is the preferred time for weddings. Along the banks of the river were the livestock arenas where the ground had been churned to mud and you had to watch your feet. This was the most interesting part of the market for many of the people in from the countryside, and the cacophony of brays, baas, whinnies, moos and whatever noise a camel makes (aarghs?) was almost drowned out by the raised voices of hominids bargaining.

The market activity swarms around and over an attractive arcaded building that looms in its midst like the forgotten citadel of a ruined civilization. Its front wall reads, "Stock Exchange Market of the Kashgar International Market of Central and West Asia" in Chinese, Uighur, English and Russian. But these booming words, like the boasts of Ozymandias, wilt among the vegetables and sweetmeats spread out on the building's front steps. Private shops have invaded its arcades, and its west wing is now a billiard hall. Once upon a time a race of technological modernizers raised this edifice as a temple to the new gods, investment portfolios and computerized transactions. But they were ahead of their time: their visions of electronic capitalism were premature and unfruitful. Like Atlantis, they sank and were forgotten; yea, the waves of sand closed over them, and Kashgaris got on with doing business pretty much as they had done since time immemorial.<sup>8</sup> My mythology may be fanciful, but it captures one side of Kashgar: a city in many ways untransformed since the Middle

8. The official *History of the Han Dynasty*, written over two millennia ago, mentions Kashgar's market. (Kashgar was the capital of Shule State, one of the 36 comprising the "Western Regions" in the third century BC.)

Ages, moving to a rhythm Marco Polo would not have found unfamiliar.

## INSURRECTIONS AND MIGRATIONS

Kashgar (Chinese: Kashi) is the proper starting point for any discussion of the Uighurs. Urumqi is the administrative capital of Xinjiang, but it was never a Uighur city. Kashgar is the spiritual heart of East Turkestan, despite its remote situation on the province's south-eastern periphery. It is located in a cul-de-sac, at the sharp end of a "V" where two mountain chains collide. To the east it is cut off by the ferocious Taklamakan ("Go-in-don't-come-out") desert. Nevertheless, as the last oasis between the Tarim basin and the Pamir plateau, it has always been a major trade hub. The two branches of the Silk Road skirting the desert to north and south forked in Kashgar. Marco Polo, following the route in the thirteenth century, became the first European to visit the city.

The character of Kashgar, and of Xinjiang as a whole, has been Turkic since the Uighurs migrated into the area from the north in the eighth century, originally as allies of the Tang Dynasty against Arab, Tibetan and other Turkic invaders. Turkic peoples of one stripe or another held sway in the area for a thousand years until the Manchus took Kashgar in 1755. Kashgar became an important commercial and cultural center early on and never lost its preeminence, surviving the onslaughts of both the Mongols and Tamerlane, who sacked it. Islam was introduced into the region in the tenth century, and one of the Islamic world's most famous intellectuals, the eleventh-century cartographer and linguist Mahmud al-Kashgari, is buried a little south of the city in Upal.

From the start, the control exercised by the Manchus over their Muslim subjects was tenuous at best. The 1860's and 70's saw the beginning of a cycle of insurrections and repressions that continue to this day. From 1865 a Tajik officer from Khokand called Yakub Beg entered the fray with a small band of followers. I doubt he had heard of Cortez or the Aztecs but I would really like to believe he turned for inspiration sometimes to Bernal Diaz's extraordinary account of victory against all odds, because in two years he emerged improbably as ruler of "Independent Kashgaria," a huge fiefdom covering most of Xinjiang and diplomatically recognized by Turkey and Great Britain. (Yakub Beg was visited, sitting in state in Kashgar amid full imperial panoply, by one Robert Shaw in 1868, the first Englishman to see a city that had remained wreathed in mystery for the five centuries since Marco Polo.)

Kashgaria lasted only a decade, but the repercussions have an impact on developments in Xinjiang even today. First, the episode is an example from modern history that the Chinese are not invincible. Now, taking on the People's Republic of China is a much tougher propo-

sition than defeating the Manchus. Nevertheless, rather a few Uighurs I have talked to, especially the revolutionary-minded émigrés in Tashkent, who like all theoreticians have the luxury of the long view because they are not the ones getting cracked over the head by the People's Liberation Army, are more interested in historical precedent than first-hand experience. Sitting at a safe distance from Xinjiang, they think Yakub Beg's achievement could be duplicated if the conditions were right.

Second, the demise of Kashgaria and the savage Chinese reconquest of Xinjiang led to a wave of refugees into present-day Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. The people fleeing were mainly Uighurs, Kazakhs and Hui (also known as Tungans).<sup>9</sup> This emigration from Xinjiang into Central Asia in 1882 was the first of many during the last century, and established the first islands of Eastern Turkestan malcontents in exile, the precursors of organizations such as the one in Tashkent and others that I discuss below.

Other emigrations out of Xinjiang followed, enriching the ethnic mosaic of Central Asia but at the cost of great human suffering. At times the refugee flow has been reversed, depending on which side of the border seemed less inhospitable to the group in question. There were many occasions when Tsarist/ Soviet policies proved more rebarbative than fear of the Chinese. Many Uighurs who had moved to Russia toward the beginning of the century because of Chinese political repression found themselves returning when the Russian revolution broke out. Perhaps half a million Kazakhs fled to Xinjiang in order to escape reprisals after the failure of the Kazakh revolt in 1916. Many returned after the Bolsheviks took power, only to flee back to China again when the Soviets instituted land redistribution, confiscated their livestock in the 1920's, and forcibly began settling them during collectivization in the 1930's. A large number of defeated White Russians also crossed the border into China in 1920 to hide from the Red Army, and a small community of their descendants lives there to this day.

There have been two major uprisings in Xinjiang in this century. The first was a bloody jacquery that lasted four years, beginning in Hami in 1930. The population revolted against the tightening of political control from Urumqi, the capital of Xinjiang; the imposition of new taxes; and the displacement of Uighurs from their land that was being redistributed to Han from the neighboring province of Gansu. The uprising quickly became general and a Hui warlord called Ma Zhong-yin took command. Ultimately the rebellion was defeated in 1934 with covert help from tanks and bombers sent in by Stalin. (The Red Army soon pulled out but the idea of a Soviet Republic of Kashgaria was still being mooted as late as 1944.) But it led briefly to the declaration of a "Turkic-Islamic

9. Hui are the "Muslim Chinese," ethnic Hans who have been converted to Islam. Very often their names begin "Ma," which is what the Mandarin language makes out of "Muhammad."

Republic of Eastern Turkestan" before it was crushed.

The second occasion led to the foundation in 1945 of an independent "Republic of Eastern Turkestan" centered on Kashgar. The Nationalists were distracted at the time with by Civil War with the communists, but made short work of the rebels the moment they had a hand free. Nevertheless, the memory of the short-lived republic is another faggot feeding the fire among today's Uighur revolutionaries. Both insurrections caused new population flows into Central Asia. The last such movement occurred in April 1962, when Uighurs took advantage of a brief thaw in Sino-Soviet relations to slip across the border into Kazakhstan. I encountered them in the Barakholka district of Alma-Ata, where I was told most of this migration ended up.

As a result of all these oscillations, there is a Uighur émigré population approximately 300,000 strong living in Central Asia, the majority in Kazakhstan. There are also significant concentrations in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.<sup>10</sup> It is difficult to estimate the situation in Xinjiang accurately since both Han and Uighurs have a vested interest in distorting the statistics. According to Chinese officials, the population of Xinjiang is 16 million and the ethnic breakdown is as follows: 8.5 million Uighurs (53%), six million Han (40%), 1.1 million Kazakhs (6%), 375,000 Kyrgyz, and 20,000 Tajiks. The Chinese are anxious to point out that Uighurs comprise the majority nationality in their own autonomous region because it seems to reinforce the fairness and justice of Beijing's minority policy.

The Uighurs, on the other hand, like disgruntled minorities the world over, claim their numbers have been vastly underreported and cite new numbers ranging as high as twenty million. Yet in the same breath they contend that they have virtually become a minority in Xinjiang, due to Beijing's systematic resettlement of Han into the province. The aim is to swing the ethnic balance in the Han's favor and weaken the position of the Uighurs. My contacts in Tashkent judge that 250-300,000 arrive each year, many from poor provinces looking for work.<sup>11</sup> Xinjiang officials admit to moving in laborers, farmers and forestry workers, but say the workforce is part of the communist party's new economic development plan for the region. Many Western observers do in fact believe that the Han are now in the majority.<sup>12</sup>

Whether or not this is so, Beijing's perceived attempts to swamp the Uighurs with Han are heartily resented.

## KASHGAR BEHIND THE TIMES

There was no question which ethnicity was dominant in Kashgar. The old men wore Uzbek-style *tubeteika* skullcaps and when they took them off their shaved heads looked like boiled eggs half-dipped in dye above their darkly tanned faces. They sat on raised platforms to drink tea, wearing their long black coats and curling their high boots beneath them. Women would pass with their eyebrows penciled together, which is considered beautiful also in Uzbekistan. Quite a few were veiled. A Uighur veil is a large, brown, knitted wool cloth thrown over the whole head and reaching to the shoulders. The women peeked through the stitches, or raised it from their faces like a curtain when they wanted to observe anything carefully.

There were no Chinese signs in the Old Town. Everywhere else in town Chinese and Uighur — always written in Arabic script — were given strict equality, appearing in parallel above all shops or restaurants. But here there was patently no need for Mandarin, because hardly a Han was to be seen. There was a great deal of building going on. The scaffolding was always made of roughly lashed wood. One could recognize where a new building or an addition was about to go up by the bundles of peeled poplar trunks, thirty feet long, propped against a wall. *Shashlyks* were grilled on the corners, and the smoke hung over rows of vendors squatting beside their goods laid out on the pavements. I saw a cart overflowing with peaches, which the owner was feather-dusting with a flocculent rag. On closer inspection it turned out to be a fatty sheep's tail.

Kashgar had its Han sections too. As in every Chinese city there was a People's Park strewn with garbage, a large artificial lake, and a Mao Zedong statue. This statue showed Mao as Helmsman, his right arm raised, but the underpart of the sleeve was noticeably decaying. On "Kitchen Row," as I called it, a long line of outdoor restaurants served delicious, Han-only food. (But no menus in town offered sweet and sour pork, given that Uighurs are Muslims.) The streets were choked with bicycles, and two forms of taxi: donkey-carts or motorcycles with sidecars. The Public Security Bureau

10. Censuses suggest 185,000 Uighurs in Kazakhstan, 37,000 in Kyrgyzstan and 36,000 in Uzbekistan. The numbers are probably a little higher, due to respondents' reluctance to expose themselves to poll-takers as members of a minority. It is unlikely, though, that there are "half a million Uighurs in Central Asia," the number claimed by émigrés in Alma-Ata.

11. The headquarters of "Spark of the Motherland," a Uighur revolutionary organization in Alma-Ata, claims to have unearthed a "secret plan" for sinicizing Xinjiang: 70 million Han to be relocated in the Tarim basin, and 25 million elsewhere in the region, by the year 2000. Spearheading this plan, the most massive program of resettlement in history, are 840,000 families living in the Tiansha valley in central China; allegedly they began arriving in May of last year.

12. I am not so sure. If there were 300,000 Chinese in Xinjiang (3.7%) in 1949 (*Financial Times* 13 July 1996) the Uighur population must already have been approximately 8 million. Assuming 2.5 children per family over two generations (a modest average for Uighurs), their number today should be around 12.5 million. Perhaps the 1949 census figure is wrong; more likely, the population figure (16 million) for Xinjiang is wrong. In that case, the Uighurs complaining that their numbers are underreported are right. These calculations suggest a total population closer to 20 million, where Uighurs comprise 71%.

(police) were largely Uighur but the People's Liberation Army, a rather visible presence, were exclusively Han.

The overlap of cultures was symbolized for me by a Uighur stirring a great cauldron of plov (*zhuaflan*) beneath four red Chinese lanterns. My overall impression of Kashgar was as a slow-paced, laid-back city. Its multi-ethnic composition gave it a cosmopolitan atmosphere. Best of all, the Chinese did not stare at the *waiguroren* (foreigners) as if we had dropped from the moon. Wide-eyed amazement and invasive curiosity are the standard reaction to Westerners most places in China; but not in Kashgar.

The central square was dominated by the Id Kah mosque, faced with yellow tiles. Uighur mosques had no minarets; the *azan* was called from atop the entrance portal. They all seemed to have white shady porticos supported by columns painted forest green. On the street outside the Id Kah white skullcaps were being sold for 3 yuan (U.S.\$0.36) apiece. My sister and I went to Friday prayer together; the men noticed that there was a woman sitting among them, but frankly nobody seemed too bothered! When we arrived the mullah was reading out *hadith* in Arabic, which he then translated and explicated in Uighur. His lesson was only the prelude to the *juma* prayers, and continued for over an hour while the mosque filled up. We knelt on red prayer rugs set over rush matting, and by counting them I estimated that eight hundred people could fit inside. Not only were most of the rugs occupied by the time prayers started, there was a large congeries of the faithful, mostly wearing white skullcaps, overflowing onto the portico.

The late morning *azan* had rung out at 1:30 p.m., Beijing time. "Beijing time" is a pleonasm in the rest of China since the whole country is on a single time zone. Only the Uighurs, in a subtle show of resistance and contumacy, exist in a parallel time zone of their own creation. They set their watches to "Xinjiang time," two hours behind official clocks. They work, eat and pray on a schedule deliberately and provocatively unsynchronized with the rest of China — including the Han in Xinjiang who confu singly use Beijing time. Thus one quickly learns when inquiring about bank schedules or market openings or bus timetables that the answers are useless until one has specified which temporal universe the information conforms to. Since Beijing is thousands of kilometers away, Xinjiang *should* be on a separate time zone; it does not get dark in summer until 11 p.m. Beijing time. But everyone knows the system was not introduced for the sake of convenience. It is a passive form of secession from the dictates of Beijing. Time itself has become politicized.<sup>13</sup> Unsurprisingly, the Id Kah

clock tower in the middle of Kashgar is broken; I do not blame it.

## SUPPRESSED VOICES

I shall never forget it and neither will my sister. We were turning a corner in Kashgar, and I was complaining that I had not found any Uighur students willing to have a frank discussion with me. At that instant a nasty dust storm blew past and we paused, covering our faces. A voice beside us asked politely, "Are you foreigners? Do you have any questions?" I said, "Who are you?" The young man replied, "I'm a Uighur."

My Uighur-to-order met me with two of his friends the following afternoon. One worked as an editor for the student literary magazine *Kashgar edibiyoti*. It, together with *Aksu edibiyoti*, are the main outlets for Uighurs to express dissent, albeit in a tortuously disguised form. Reviews of poetry or articles on the Kuomintang cryptically conceal political commentary. I gathered that reading between the lines has become a high art form, although not being an expert myself I am afraid I failed to follow my informant's elaborate explanations. But I understood well enough that the mildest criticisms of Beijing meant sailing pretty close to the wind.

The other friend was studying Islam in the afternoons at a madrasa that had opened in 1987. Chinese religious policies were liberalized in the 1980's, and the leadership reasoned that particularly in Xinjiang more tolerance toward Islam would weaken resistance and win more support for Beijing. By the same token money was earmarked for restoration of historical Uighur monuments and buildings. Thus, for instance, the foundation stone to revamp the mausoleum of Yusup Hazi Hajip (educated at the Royal Kashgar Islamic College and author of the eleventh-century classic *The Wisdom of Royal Glory*) was laid in August 1986. It is a purple-domed building with blue tiling and green wooden window-screens.<sup>14</sup> However, whether it has contributed in any way to Uighur pride is disputable since it may be spankingly shiny but it was utterly deserted. When I bicycled into the countryside to see the Abakh Hoja mosque, the second largest in the Kashgar area, I found it in a half-finished state. Restoration had begun in 1988 when it was declared "a key protected historical site," but no state funds had appeared until much later and they were cut off abruptly last year before the work was done.

According to the student at the madrasa, the authorities in Xinjiang are having doubts about their previous generous view of Islam. They are beginning to retrench, perceiving that their policy has been a double-edged

13. As in Crimea (population 62% Russian). Although a part of Ukraine, the Crimean peninsula is set to Moscow time, one hour later than Kiev. The institution of Xinjiang time must be a recent development; apparently nothing like it existed ten years ago.

14. No one can accuse the Chinese of being too hung up on historical authenticity: the sign from 1986, still there, read "The rebuilt mausoleum will be even more towering and magnificent than the original one."



sword. While it may have opened a valve for religious feelings that had been stifled, it also has raised Uighur awareness of their separate culture and heritage. The regional newspaper, *Xinjiang Ribao* had become especially shrill against "religious fanaticism," accusing it of stirring up the population to rebellion in the name of *jihad* and practically equating Islam with subversion. Freedom of religion is protected by China's Basic Law, but the newspaper's targets have been grouped under the portmanteau term "illegal religious activities."

The young man's teachers were being pressured to close the madrasa, and recently he had been so harassed going in and out by plain-clothes policemen that he had temporarily stopped attending. The Xinjiang authorities have in fact been claiming since 1994 that some Uighurs had adopted the slogan "Religion Before Marxism-Leninism." President Jiang Zemin recently signaled a harder line by blandly announcing that religion must be "adapted to socialist society." Usually the more anodyne and euphemistic the terminology, the more stringent the measures it describes.

I was informed that the mosques in Gansu and Ningxia provinces, where nine million Muslims live, are filled to capacity. Developments there do not concern Beijing as much as in Xinjiang, however, since the Muslims in question are Hui, not Uighurs. Hui are physi-

cally and linguistically identical to Han — indeed, until 1949 they were considered a religious community and not an ethnic minority at all. I learned in Alma-Ata that the vice-chairman of Ningxia's Islamic Association, Ma Zhiren, reaffirmed in mid-July that the Hui harbor no separatist pretensions, then went on to condemn Xinjiang separatism, much to the chagrin of Uighur émigrés. (There is an irony to this: historically, the instigators of the insurrections against Han rule I described above were almost always Hui. The Uighurs, meanwhile, as a nation have traditionally been passive and phlegmatic, followers rather than leaders.)

I remarked that the Id Kah mosque had been well attended. Now the Uighur who came out of the dust storm began to speak. "The crackdown is real," he said; moreover the ideological struggle against religion had been intensified in the last three months. The building of new mosques had been banned. He himself, although a Kashgari, had been living among émigré groups in Alma-Ata for the previous two years, translating the Bible into Uighur. Two months before, a mullah whom he knew and foolishly trusted had expressed interest in reading the Christians' Holy Book. When he brought a copy of his manuscript to the mullah's house, he found Chinese security waiting for him. He had been betrayed. For twenty days, he claimed, he was held without charge in a solitary cell somewhere on the edge

of town, questioned and beaten. What did they question him about? What he had been doing in Kazakhstan, whom he associated with in Kashgar, why he had translated the Bible. And *why* had he? "I was converted by American Pentecostists. I think Christ's message of peace is a good one. I told that to the police. They let me go."

In the first week of July, security forces had made a swoop on the row of religious booksellers that ran alongside Id Kah mosque. They had seized as many as 150 books from each of them, threatening some with financial ruin, given that an Arabic-Uighur Koran with commentary could cost up to 300 yuan (\$35.73). The police had not been interested in religious texts *per se*. They had confiscated any books that offered *interpretations* of the scriptures. The authorities suspected that separatist ideas were seeping into the religious commentary. Revolution justified by theology was their new nightmare, as the hard-line editorials in *Xinjiang Ribao* made clear. The Chinese, in short, were frightened they had let the fundamentalist genie out of the bottle. Were fundamentalist or Wahhabi ideas becoming attractive? The young men became grave, perhaps to disguise the fact that they were not too sure what Wahhabism was, but they assured me that a growing number of their contemporaries wanted to hear more about the Iranian experience, religion as a form of political empowerment, and some were even flirting with Shiism.

Now I regretted that I had not concentrated more on the mullah's explication of the *hadith* on Friday. Might he have been fomenting revolution in front of my eyes? The man from the madrasa laughed bitterly: "Of course not. All imams are appointed by the central authorities." The mullah had taken up his post at the Id Kah mosque only a few months before, and seemed particularly resented as a Chinese creature. What had happened to the previous mullah? Now some feet began to shuffle and they prevaricated. Finally I got it out of them: he and his son had been killed by a crowd on May 12, branded "collaborators." The Chinese press merely reported that one Aronghanaji, identified as an important committee member of the China Islamic Association, and his son had been injured by two attackers. However, all others I talked to in Kashgar were adamant that he had been the supreme Muslim leader of Xinjiang and that both he and his son were dead.

Nobody was willing to discuss the details of the inci-

dent, but apparently it was sparked by Aronghanaji's speaking out in favor of birth control. Uighur couples hitherto have not been subject to China's one-child policy; they are permitted two in the cities and three in the countryside. I was told, however, that there was mounting pressure on young Uighurs to breed less, and that propaganda extolling the joys of a family of three had been stepped up throughout Xinjiang.<sup>15</sup> The mullah's pronouncements sounded like part of that government drive. He enraged the masses, however, because his words also coincided with Beijing's dirty campaign (as Uighurs see it) to marginalize their ethnicity by drowning them in an inexhaustible stream of Han immigrants. Although I cannot agree that Beijing has embarked on a policy of "genocide" (the conclusion of radical émigrés), I acknowledge that fewer Uighur babies plus more Han immigrants is a powerful formula for skewing the ethnic percentages in Xinjiang. If Aronghanaji was promoting family planning with this end in mind in collusion with Beijing, I am not surprised he fell victim to Kashgari popular justice.

The bulk of my conversation with these young men was conducted in a Uighur restaurant over bowls of *laghman*. Like dissenters meeting in a conventicle, they had much to discuss but were extremely uneasy discussing it. Glances were exchanged. Voices were dropped when someone passed by our table. I wish to thank my friends for an edgy, prickly, illuminating afternoon.

## CRACKDOWN

Operation Strike Hard was launched by Beijing at the end of April. The hundred-day crackdown on crime affected the whole of China but the truncheons seem to have come down particularly hard in Xinjiang, Guangdong and Tibet. Police sweeps and mass arrests dominated the news. By June the campaign was already being declared a complete success: over one thousand "hard-core criminal offenders" had been seized and instantly executed during the first two months.

From the Uighurs' point of view, the anti-crime campaign was only a pretext for a political purge. By the end of May, émigré groups were claiming that 5,000 Uighur students, intellectuals and religious figures had been arrested, and ten executed. By 10 July, those numbers had risen to 18,000 arrested, 95 executed and 20 killed by police brutality.<sup>16</sup> There were resistance and bloody clashes between Uighurs and internal security forces in many towns across the province. These were the

16. The figures are taken from a rather remarkable letter I have got hold of, dated 11 July 1996, addressed to the parliaments of the "Turkic countries" (Turkey, Northern Cyprus, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan). It is signed by the United National Revolutionary Front of Eastern Turkestan and other émigré Uighur groups. Appealing to pan-Turkic memories and sentiments, their entreaty stresses that events in Eastern Turkestan are not and have never been an exclusively internal Chinese affair: "this is proven by history." The youth of Eastern Turkestan have taken up arms: "If even you refuse us help, China will wipe our nation from the face of the earth."

15. There are also reports of sterilizations of Uighur women after their first child, and of forced abortions on a massive scale: these reached a peak in September 1995, according to émigrés, when 47,000 women in Kashgar's Artush region and 8,000 in Yarkand were compelled to terminate their pregnancies.

latest examples of fulminant violence in Xinjiang during the last decade. "Racial incidents" (officials' jargon) occurred in Kashgar and Aksu in the 1980's. They were succeeded by "a counter-revolutionary armed rebellion" in Baren township in 1989; riots in Kashgar in 1990, when five Uighurs and Kyrgyz died; and more riots in Hotan in 1995 when a popular imam was removed by the authorities and replaced by someone more pliable. It goes without saying that the Chinese reacted to all these shows of ethnic restiveness and "splittism" with characteristic vigor, "improving public order" with a firm hand.<sup>17</sup>

Terrorist actions against the Han are a relatively recent development. Bombs exploded in Urumqi in 1992, and a year later in Kashgar. (I heard about another bomb that destroyed a bank in Kashgar last year, but to my knowledge this explosion was never reported by the press. The bank stood on Seman Lu, opposite the Seman Hotel where most tourist groups stay. A new hotel has been constructed in its place.) Bombs represent a step up the escalation ladder and guarantee an intensification of violence and resentment on both sides. This new element in the war against the Han show that at least some Uighurs, as Oscar Wilde would have put it, have decided to take up politics seriously.

Operation Strike Hard followed immediately in the wake of the Shanghai summit on 26 April 1996. The presidents of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Russia had met to sign a treaty that established security and confidence-building measures along western China's frontiers. Valid for five years, it envisaged a 100-kilometer demilitarized zone and an exchange of military information relevant to border security. Furthermore, it removed the obstacles once and for all toward the demarcation of China's two extensive borders with Kazakhstan (1,700 km) and Kyrgyzstan (1,000 km), some portions of which had long been in dispute.

The groundwork for this treaty had been laid by Foreign Minister Qian Qichen during the previous year. Visiting each of the Central Asian republics in turn, he had carefully extracted commitments from all their presidents to support Beijing's position on Taiwan and to stand firm against any threats to China's territorial integrity. Regional good-neighborliness was the ultimate goal. Trade agreements were held out as carrots. Joint pledges were solemnly intoned to fight separatist, fundamentalist and terrorist movements. The Uighurs were appalled as, one by one, the Turkic nations adopted the Chinese line. For five years they had watched the peoples of Western Turkestan throw off the Russian Empire's yoke and had wondered if Eastern Turkestan's time had come. Instead, they found themselves still locked within the Chinese Empire, worse off than before and abandoned by their cousins whose sole intent was to pursue their own interests. *Realpolitik* proved more powerful than moral duty rooted in shared faith and history. As for blood, the inspi-

rationist proclamations about a Turkic family of nations had turned out to be empty rhetoric; before the Uighurs' very eyes, Chinese blandishments were diluting that blood to lymph.

When a Sino-Kazakh commission drew up a criminal extradition treaty on May 8, Uighur activists in Alma-Ata saw it as directed against them. The final blow came when President Jiang followed up the Shanghai summit by touring the region in July. He secured promises from both the Kazakh and Kyrgyz leaders not only to keep out of China's internal affairs (Kazakhstan "supports all measures taken by the Chinese government for maintaining national unity," said Nazarbayev) but even to suppress Uighur nationalist organizations operating from their countries. The Uighurs felt utterly betrayed. In their view, Central Asia had got into bed with China. Beijing had been given a free hand to deal with its refractory subjects as it wished. Thus Uighurs saw no coincidence in the timing of the crackdown in Xinjiang. The authorities commenced repressions immediately after the Shanghai summit because the presidents of Central Asia had given them *carte blanche* to do so.

"There is another reason why the Chinese want to purge Xinjiang of all dissenting elements now," said my Uighur friend from the dust cloud: "Hong Kong." When the colony reverts to Chinese suzerainty at midnight on 30 June 1997, Beijing wants the country as peaceful as possible. The most likely source of disturbances after Xinjiang is Tibet, where there has been a clamp-down on temples and monasteries recently. Chinese authorities admitted in May that the nationwide crackdown was being used to pursue supporters of the Dalai Lama. The screws are also being tightened in Inner Mongolia, a region where separatist movements surface occasionally.

#### BEIJING'S STRATEGY: GETTING AND SPENDING. WILL THE UIGHURS LAY WASTE THEIR POWER?

The Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region is autonomous only in name. The top posts are reserved for Uighurs but ethnic quotas do not deceive anybody. The appointees are firmly subjugated to Beijing and conduct their business in Mandarin, the official language of the region. Apart from their exemption from the one-child policy, the only special privileges the Uighurs enjoy are books, newspapers, television and radio in their own language. Ironically, the only people ever fooled by the ethnic window-dressing are Hans, whom I heard occasionally complaining that they are not represented among the leadership in Urumqi.

The Chinese strategy for undermining aspirations for genuine autonomy or independence may be summed up in the words "economic development." As elsewhere in China, wealth is seen as the remedy for political grie-

17. According to the letter mentioned in the previous footnote, three million soldiers are stationed in Xinjiang, sustained by an annual budget of 35 billion yuan (\$4.2 billion). Chinese military spending is notoriously secret; I would love to know how the Uighurs got this information.

vances, the proposed compact being prosperity in return for obedience. An improved standard of living, as the Xinjiang authorities put it, "will solve differences between minority nationalities."

Urumqi is the showcase for Xinjiang's economic upsurge, a fast-paced city of 1.4 million people. The town is booming, the richest place in China west of Xian. The concrete high-rises and apartment blocks sprouting like mushrooms belie its name, which means "beautiful pastureland" in Mongol. Signs around town tell the story: "Welcome to Xinjiang, the economic and technological zone"; "Urumqi, advanced and new technological and industrial development zone." To encourage investment by means of special trade-zone privileges and tax incentives, Urumqi was officially declared a *port* in 1992! However, although there are some large mosques in town, it is and always has been a Han stronghold (85 percent of the population). The smart businessmen with the cellular telephones are Han. The tradespeople with stalls in the backstreets are all Uighur.

As China's newly opened gateway to the West, now that the Sino-Soviet border is gone, Xinjiang's communications and infrastructure are being upgraded. The Lanzhou-Urumqi double-track railway has been connected to the Turkestan-Siberian railway, with the result that it is now possible to convey freight (and theoretically passengers) 10,000 km. from Lianyungan on the Yellow Sea to Rotterdam by train. This month Beijing allocated 12.2 billion yuan (\$1.5 billion) for thirty development projects in Xinjiang, the majority of them having to do with infrastructure improvements. Bright days are foreseen for trade between China and its Central Asian neighbors. Despite all these good intentions, I should insert a slight note of caution. Commerce will always be a little strangled until border procedures are harmonized and simplified. I described some of the rampant corruption among customs officials in the last newsletter. I also must report that the main road linking Xinjiang and Kyrgyzstan is one of the worst I have ever traveled. The quality of roads also declines sharply as one nears the boundaries between Chinese provinces, as neither side is willing to take financial responsibility for that last stretch.

That said, Xinjiang's foreign trade is close to one billion dollars a year, with registered border trade accounting for about half of the turnover. The figure would doubtless be higher if the flood of smuggled goods were added in. China has become Kazakhstan's seventh largest trade partner. Their economies complement one another, as Kazakhstan imports consumer goods and exports ores, fertilizer and steel. Kyrgyzstan offers the Chinese wool, cotton, animal husbandry products and metals. The markets in Alma-Ata, Bish-

kek and Osh are overflowing with shoes, clothing and particularly electronics brought in from Xinjiang. This trade is controlled almost exclusively by Uighurs. Their geographical dispersion has given them a business advantage, since they know China and have friends and relatives across the border with whom to strike up partnerships. Since 1991 the Uighur community in Alma-Ata has turned Barakholka, the old junk market, into a lively emporium with a staggering range of goods.<sup>18</sup>

Xinjiang also stands to benefit in the long run from trade with Pakistan, and from Kazakhstan's trade with Pakistan that will pass through China. There is talk of making Pakistan's warm-water ports Central Asia's primary outlets to the sea, since Lianyungan is so distant and inconvenient. (Turkmenistan plans to route its trade through the Persian Gulf, though.) Islamabad initiated work four months ago to improve the Karakorum Highway. Pakistani businessmen in their pyjama-like *kurta*, interested mainly in cotton and carpets, were a visible presence on the streets of Kashgar; Pakistani scarfs and fabrics were on sale in the markets there. Most of these traders were just looking, though; I gathered that business to date was poor. Tariffs, customs and procedures for verifying goods being shipped to Pakistan were still complicated. Furthermore, Xinjiang's southwestern borders had recently been tightened to prevent the smuggling of arms from Pakistan and Afghanistan that Chinese authorities were afraid were being stockpiled by the Uighurs.

Finally, Xinjiang is rich in oil. The region may contain one third of China's total reserves. The Taklamakan desert is thought to hide 74 billion barrels of petroleum beneath its sands, and new fields are regularly being discovered there and further north in the Turpan and Junggar basins.<sup>19</sup>

The daily yield from the Tarim basin is around 2,500 tonnes. According to China's ninth Five-year plan, Xinjiang's total yield will be 80 million tonnes of oil between now and 2000 (an average of 44,000 tonnes/day). The Chinese trumpet profits and prosperity for all. The Uighurs see little to celebrate. They imagine the petrodollars being poured into Beijing's coffers and they are angry. Even if the wealth is redistributed back to Xinjiang in the form of subsidies, they are not grateful to be sharing a percentage of the dividends when they feel all the earnings belong to them by right.

Here is the fallacy in Beijing's solution to the minority nationality problem. However rich the Uighurs become, their resentment is not likely to subside as long as they regard Eastern Turkestan as a colony whose natural resources are being exploited by a rapacious empire.

18. Hence this joke current in Alma-Ata. A Uighur comes out of Barakholka with a magnificent green parrot on his shoulder and enters a bar. The barman whistles and says, "You've got a beauty there. Where did you find him?" The parrot replies, "In Barakholka — there are lots of them!"

19. The latest discoveries were the Tazhong No. 4 oilfield, "the biggest ever found in a desert" with reserves of 100 million tonnes of crude (July 1996), and the Baolang oilfield in north-east Xinjiang estimated at 380 million tonnes (August 1996).

When the discovery of a new oil well is reported, the Uighurs hear the clink of money in Beijing's pocket. When regional officials unveil plans to develop 500,000 hectares of barren land, the Uighurs picture oceans of Han brought in to work it. When new infrastructure projects are announced, the Uighurs picture the new roads and railways that will facilitate that flood of immigration. They are unimpressed by commitments to fight sand encroachment and salinization, since they already blame Beijing for making the region an environmental disaster area as a result of nuclear testing at Lop Nur. (The 44th and 45th explosions since testing began in 1964 occurred in June and July 1996. Since then the Chinese have declared a voluntary moratorium.) Perhaps to get rich is glorious, as Deng Xiaoping said. But the Uighurs are nursing some very real grudges, and as long as Beijing maintains a political hard line I doubt they can be bought off with glory.

### THE FUTURE OF UIGHURSTAN

Some steps toward decentralization among China's provinces are likely in the wake of Deng's death. For now, that seems the best hope for an uneasy but peaceful cohabitation between ethnicities in Xinjiang. Genuine power-sharing with the Han is not in the cards, but more say over their own affairs is a reliable prognosis of the Uighurs' long-term future.

Revolution against the People's Liberation Army is surely futile. Despite its name, the United National Revolutionary Front of Eastern Turkestan has never been exclusively committed to armed insurrection. I understood from discussions both in Alma-Ata, and with branch members in Tashkent, that the front embraced a wide spectrum of opinion, including a hard core of bomb-throwing loony leftists. (The same can be said of allied groups, such as the Kazakh Association of Uighurs, the Association for the Liberation of Uighurstan, the Ittipak Society of Uighurs of Kyrgyzstan, etc.) However, the Uighur movements had forged unity out of adversity and generally managed to speak with one voice. A plan to unify the groups into a single political organization had been drawn up in a "Draft of the Structure and Goals of a National Union of the Uighurs of Central Asia," (Alma-Ata, 4 January 1996). A cabinet of 15 would be supported by 30 committee members. There was some debate whether the National Union should be dubbed "the Uighur government in exile," an idea first mooted in 1992 and apparently supported by both Turkey and Saudi Arabia.

The shock of Western Turkestan's "betrayal" has rad-

icalized émigrés. It was clear to me that the balance of power within their organizations has swung to those advocating militant action. There were, until recently, a dovish "Menshevik" wing who thought they could work with Central Asia's governments to advance their agenda, and a hawkish "Bolshevik wing" who considered dialogue pointless. The doves had approached the Kazakh Committee for Nationalities to discuss the possibility of registering the National Union legally. The role they envisaged for themselves was as lobbyists for the Uighur cause. Some had even been toying with the idea of a Uighur political party although "For a Free Uighurstan," launched in Bishkek in July 1992, had not been successful.

The Shanghai summit and Jiang Zemin's followup meetings in Central Asia exploded all hopes of working within the democratic process. The hawks crowed that they had been right all along. The Uighurs found themselves driven underground. The Revolutionary Front's publications were outlawed, especially its propaganda organ *The Voice of Eastern Turkestan*, an A-3 broadsheet in Uighur and Russian. When I crossed the border out of Kazakhstan carrying the Front's materials, I theoretically could have been arrested for smuggling seditious literature. The tone of their publications has become more radical since April. An editorial in *The Voice* (23 July, 1996) reads: "The main reason that the [Chinese] regime is capable of carrying out repression in Eastern Turkestan is its good links to inner China. Along the main transport arteries there are more than 300 bridges, 260 tunnels and 45 reservoirs. Our main task is to concentrate our attention on this problem..." The text goes on to praise acts of sabotage along the Lanzhou-Urumqi railway, alleging that two bridges had been destroyed a few days previously.

This is not the way. In Urumqi I talked to four Uighurs in their late teens. They were studying English together at a language school founded by Rabiya Kadir. Ms. Kadir, herself a Uighur, is famous in town as the entrepreneur who opened a private department store and became a yuan billionaire. Now she has selected fifty young Uighurs from her school, including these four, whom she is sponsoring to attend universities in the United States starting next year. I asked them what courses they were interested in. One of the girls parried with a question of her own. "How can we work for a free Uighurstan if we don't understand the West? We have to learn about democracy, politics and diplomacy. Then we can serve our country." The fate of Eastern Turkestan is in the hands of these young people, not the men with bombs. They are the future warriors for Uighurstan. □

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## ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

### Institute Fellows and their Activities

**Adam Smith Albion** A former research associate at the Institute for EastWest Studies at Prague in the Czech Republic, Adam is spending two years studying and writing about Turkey and Central Asia, and their importance as actors the Middle East and the former Soviet bloc. A Harvard graduate (1988; History), Adam has completed the first year of a two-year M Litt degree in Russian/East European history and languages at Oxford University [EUROPE/RUSSIA]

**Christopher P. Ball** An economist, Chris Ball holds a B A from the University of Alabama in Huntsville and attended the 1992 International Summer School at the London School of Economics. He studied Hungarian for two years in Budapest while serving as Project Director for the Hungarian Atlantic Council. As an Institute Fellow, he is studying and writing about Hungarian minorities in the former Soviet-bloc nations of East and Central Europe [EUROPE/RUSSIA]

**William F. Foote** Formerly a financial analyst with Lehman Brothers' Emerging Markets Group, Willy Foote is examining the economic substructure of Mexico and the impact of free-market reforms on Mexico's people, society and politics. Willy holds a Bachelor's degree from Yale University (history), a Master's from the London School of Economics (Development Economics; Latin America) and studied Basque history in San Sebastian, Spain. He carried out intensive Spanish-language studies in Guatemala in 1990 and then worked as a copy editor and

Reporter for the *Buenos Aires Herald* from 1990 to 1992 [THE AMERICAS]

**Sharon Griffin** A feature writer and contributing columnist on African affairs at the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, Sharon is spending two years in southern Africa studying Zulu and the KwaZulu kingdom and writing about the role of nongovernmental organizations as fulfillment centers for national needs in developing countries where governments are still feeling their way toward effective administration [sub-SAHARA]

**John Harris** A would-be lawyer with an undergraduate degree in History from the University of Chicago, John reverted to international studies after a year of internship in the product-liability department of a Chicago law firm and took two years of post-graduate Russian at the University of Washington in Seattle. Based in Moscow during his fellowship, John is studying and writing about Russia's nascent political parties as they begin the difficult transition from identities based on the personalities of their leaders to positions based on national and international issues [EUROPE/RUSSIA]

**Pramila Jayapal** Born in India, Pramila left when she was four and went through primary and secondary education in Indonesia. She graduated from Georgetown University in 1986 and won an M.B.A. from the Kellogg School of Management in Evanston, Illinois in 1990. She has worked as a corporate analyst for PaineWebber and an accounts man-

ager for the world's leading producer of cardiac defibrillators, but most recently managed a \$7 million developing-country revolving-loan fund for the Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH) in Seattle. Pramila is spending two years in India tracing her roots and studying social issues involving religion, the status of women, population and AIDS [SOUTH ASIA]

**John B. Robinson** A 1991 Harvard graduate with a certificate of proficiency from the Institute of Kiswahili in Zanzibar and a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing from Brown University, he and his wife Delphine, a French oceanographer, are spending two years in Madagascar with their two young sons, Nicolas and Rowland. He will be writing about varied aspects of the island-nation's struggle to survive industrial and natural-resource exploitation and the effects of a rapidly swelling population [sub-SAHARA]

**Teresa C. Yates** A former member of the American Civil Liberties Union's national task force on the workplace, Teresa is spending two years in South Africa observing and reporting on the efforts of the Mandela government to reform the national land-tenure system. A Vassar graduate with a *juris doctor* from the University of Cincinnati College of Law, Teresa had an internship at the Centre for Applied Legal Studies in Johannesburg in 1991 and 1992, studying the feasibility of including social and economic rights in the new South African constitution [sub-SAHARA]

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Author: Albion, Adam Smith

Title: ICWA Letters – Europe/Russia

ISSN: 1083-4273

Imprint: Institute of Current World Affairs,  
Hanover, NH

Material Type: Serial

Language: English

Frequency: Monthly

Other Regions: Mideast/North Africa; East Asia; South  
Asia; SubSaharan Africa, The Americas

**ICWA Letters** (ISSN 1083-4273) are published by the Institute of Current World Affairs Inc., a 501(c)(3) exempt operating foundation incorporated in New York State with offices located at 4 West Wheelock St., Hanover, NH 03755.

The letters are provided free of charge to members of ICWA and are available to libraries and professional researchers by subscription.

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