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Wang Leizhan

Male

I trained at a military police academy in mainland China. I have worked as a policeman for over 10 years. My job was mainly related to maintaining social order and national security. I also worked on investigating political and religious suspects, including Falun Gong and Islamist groups. In 2018, I was posted to Xinjiang. I left China in 2020 and currently live in Germany.

Chronological account

1. I was posted from mainland China to Xinjiang in 2018 and only stayed for some months. My main duties related to investigating anti-separatist movements. When I arrived in Xinjiang, I stayed in a police hotel – a residential area reserved for policemen coming from the other provinces. This was the first time I learnt about re-education (or “ideology transformation”) camps, from a senior colleague based in the area. I learnt from other policemen that these re-education camps were aimed for people with different ideologies in order to make them more “politically correct.” I also learnt that the largest group locked in these re-education camps were Uyghurs. These re-education have nothing to do with education or training, but they are about brainwashing the prisoners.
2. I later learnt from several other policeman about the existence of a Committee, organised by local authorities, who decided on who was sent to the camps. This Committee decided which persons would be sent to the re-education camps. One possible accusation was that a person was a “Two Faced”. This accusation was normally used for those who had a higher status in society. The decisions on whom to accuse and arrest were made behind closed doors. This was an administrative Committee run by the local authorities. There was no juridical process or fair trial safeguards involved in these decisions. This Committee was also responsible for the overall surveillance and monitoring of citizens and could decide on arrest and detention of individuals. Moreover, all Uyghurs residents in Xinjiang had to provide the Chinese government DNA samples, to enable continual monitoring of Uyghurs.
3. In my discussions with other police officers, I learnt that as many as 150,000 police recruits were sent to Xinjiang in the period when I was there. On their arrival in Xinjiang, these recruits had to attend political training on how to deal with the Uyghurs. Many of these guards did not receive extensive professional police training. Many of these individuals were unemployed before they got recruited as police guards. The Chinese government initiated a recruitment drive for individuals from mainland China who were ready to move to Xinjiang to work as police guards. Many of these individuals were used to man the many

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check posts that were created in Xinjiang. There were checkpoints at every 500 metres in the city but in the suburbs of Ürümqi, these checkpoints were at every 200 metres. These police guards were also used to enforce censorship laws and arrest people.

4. This recruitment drive was part of the Chinese government's policy of "Building Xinjiang." And this has enabled the Chinese government to recruit several individuals from other parts of China, to send to Xinjiang, facilitated by "Xinjiang Aid" offices in the various provinces. The Xinjiang Aid offices helped with the recruitment of various professionals such as doctors, teachers, police and military. However, as the environment in Xinjiang was restrictive (eg. strict curfews, frequent identity checks even for Han Chinese), many individuals, including police officers posted in Xinjiang, did not wish to stay there for long. As an incentive, the Chinese government has offered very high salaries to police and military officers posted in Xinjiang to work. There is also a military internship, where especially young Han individuals from mainland China may join the military internship opportunities in Xinjiang, which are very well paid. In some cases, those Han individuals who agreed to move to Xinjiang got land for free (land which was previously confiscated from Uyghurs).
5. When these 150,000 police guards arrived and began to work in Xinjiang, they were immediately sent out on arrest rounds. When I arrived and I went on my round, we arrested around 300,000 Uyghurs. The reason for these arrests included that they might have had a knife at home or because they were showing their cultural identity, or they were somehow considered to have a different ideology. In some villages in Xinjiang, the whole population of a village was taken to the concentration camps.
6. In my previous experience working in mainland China, before I came to Xinjiang, I saw first-hand that Uyghur suspects were treated differently and harsher from other suspects. There was a national Chinese policy to arrest Uyghurs because they are automatically considered enemies/terrorists by this national policy. For instance, Uyghurs were not allowed to travel outside China and if we caught Uyghurs trying to travel abroad, we had to arrest them. Also, Uyghurs prisoners are monitored more closely in prisons. And prison guards are not allowed to provide them with any food or drink, as they had to be treated as terrorists according to prison rules. And Uyghur prisoners were also routinely tortured, using various methods. Very often, I noticed that the criminal charges against Uyghurs were just pretexts for arrest – for instance, because they sent / received money internationally.
7. I have witnessed Uyghurs being tortured. I feel compelled to speak about it because I am a professionally-trained policeman and what I have witnessed fell well below professional policing standards. Uyghur prisoners were sometimes forced to kneel, punched, a plastic bag would be tied over their head in order to induce suffocation and the bag would only be removed when they begin

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struggling to breathe. Sometimes, their limbs were tied, and waterpipes were inserted in their mouth to force water into their lungs. This was done in order to force Uyghurs to reject their religion and to confess that they had committed the crimes they were accused of. They were forced to sign confessions to admit that they are terrorists and also to “denounce” and provide a list of their relatives and friends as being terrorists.

8. Other methods of torture of Uyghurs included using electric rods, which were connected to a male’s penis, in order to electrocute those parts. These methods were used to humiliate and target the ego of Uyghur prisoners. Sometimes hammers were used to break the legs of prisoners. Sometimes, prisoners were left to starve and then some food was offered, in order to taunt them, to those prisoners who were willing to turn on and attack other prisoners. These methods were used to target the prisoners mentally and psychologically. This caused some prisoners to go crazy. And when this happened, prisoners were stripped naked doused in cold water. These torture methods were used systematically against Uyghurs.
9. I think such torture against Uyghurs took place because it was encouraged by central Chinese Government. This is because, according to Chinese government policy, Uyghurs are systematically and collectively defined as “terrorists.” Thus, severe repression and torture against Uyghurs is encouraged by the Chinese government, because Uyghurs are mistrusted and enemies. And many of my fellow police officers were ready to accept these explanations to repress the Uyghurs. This is because they believed that, even if a Uyghur had not yet committed any terrorist offenses, it was only a matter of time before they do.
10. As part of the national policy of seeing Uyghurs as automatically enemies/terrorists, as part of my police training, I was taught to see Uyghurs as “the enemy.” If a Chinese police officer decided to arrest Uyghurs, we were told to invent reasons/pretext and to make the arrest appear as legal/plausible as possible. This is why torture and electrocutions were also routinely administered to Uyghurs.
11. The children of many adults in the concentration camps have been taken into State orphanages, where they have been assimilated into Han Chinese culture.
12. I think that Uyghurs are targeted by the Chinese government in order to implement China’s “One China” policy. In so doing, the Chinese government wants to destroy the identity of Uyghurs and promote Han Chinese identity. There is also an issue with corruption and natural resources in Xinjiang. These natural resources are claimed by both the Uyghurs and the Chinese government. Thus, at the moment, the arrangement in Xinjiang is like a colonial system, where the mainland Chinese government takes all the natural resources without really respecting the local populations. And if the local

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populations protest, they are characterised as “enemies” of the government. And this is why all Uyghurs are defined as enemies.

5804 **7 June 2021 (00:50:36 – 02:15:00)**

5805 **Wang Leizhan (Mr Jang) – UTFW-022**

5806

5807 *Counsel – You are trained as policeman and posted to Xinjiang in 2018, how long did you*
5808 *serve there?*

5809 WL – Several months.

5810 *Counsel – You mentioned policemen there did not receive proper training, is that correct?*

5811 WL – They are actually not police; they are assistant police. They were recruited all over
5812 China and majority had never had a job.

5813 *Counsel – You refer to a secret committee deciding on warrants of arrest. Can you explain*
5814 *more about this committee or anything you know about it?*

5815 WL – The committee consisted of the local government officials. Most of them are from
5816 the department of work. There are no officials from the judicial system. The main purpose
5817 of the committee is to come to convert or correct the political view the so called ‘incorrect’
5818 political view or people who had the ‘problem with their thoughts’.

5819 *Counsel – Have you heard of the computer program the Joint Integrates Operations*
5820 *Platform?*

5821 WL – Yes. It is used as a major database that collects the data of the Uyghur people. All
5822 the information including their driving license and any information related to their daily life
5823 is collected in this system. If someone went to Beijing for example you can detect they

5824 are there. As soon as they touch their ID anywhere, we know where they are. This is for
5825 complete control over individuals.

5826 *Counsel – Does this computer program order arrest of individuals?*

5827 WL – The system management is through the ID card number, when you go to train
5828 station or at airport, as soon as you use it who you are or if you are a suspect or if you
5829 have a tendency against the government, and this will show on the system and the police
5830 can arrest there and then.

5831 *Counsel – You said there were 300,000 arrests of Uyghurs during your time, can you say
5832 how this number was handled, how many arrests a day?*

5833 WL – All the neighbourhood committee, including schools must provide names of
5834 suspects, those considered to have problems in their thoughts. All the activities including
5835 using the telephone and using the internet, every movement were completely under
5836 surveillance. The police in all the different neighbourhood or county level or city level go
5837 to those houses and arrest them. They target the names provided and they would be
5838 arrested and detained. Through this complete surveillance system using the data and
5839 also with the information provided by different committees, village level or town level
5840 including schools if students said something which gives away information which is a
5841 tendency which needs thought reform, or information provided by other sources. We
5842 arrest them if we think they have a tendency to commit terrorism.

5843 *Counsel – You stated the Uyghurs were treated differently?*

5844 WL – All the Uyghurs were considered politically incorrect and a threat to the state.
5845 Political prisoners are different from the normal criminals. The police were always ready
5846 to attack them as they were considering a threat to the state.

5847 *Counsel – You mention that Uyghurs were tortured?*

5848 WL – Yes, I can confirm.

5849 *Counsel – Can you let the tribunal know in your training what is the guideline for torturing
5850 witnesses or criminals?*

5851 WL – In the past especially 20 years ago it was common to beat up any detainees
5852 regardless of what kind they were. Later there is an inspection department, after
5853 interrogation they must have a video record submitted to this department and they will
5854 check. For the Uyghurs, because they are considered political and be ones who try
5855 overthrow the party there is no such procedure. The police do not have to do any
5856 recording of their behaviour or the interrogation process. The police have the complete
5857 power to interrogate and torture and force them to confess.

5858 *Counsel – Did they mention during training did they mention whether you can or not*
5859 *torture criminals?*

5860 WL – It completely depends, in general they say we are not supposed to torture prisoners.
5861 But if the prisoners are considered political then we have a different method such as
5862 depriving them of food, sleep, water and in some cases use various methods for them to
5863 confess their accused crimes.

5864 *Counsel – What type of torture are you allowed to inflict to obtain the confession?*

5865 WL – There is no written order how to torture these prisoners. However, the police have
5866 the complete power to torture them. These people are tortured severely and forced to
5867 water pipe into their lungs and all the methods in my statement.

5868 *Counsel – When you were trained, were you also trained in methods of torture?*

5869 WL – It is quite secret, I am an old policeman but after arriving in Xinjiang, what I
5870 witnessed I realised it is unwritten rules that allowed police the power to torture prisoners
5871 and you do not need to be trained on how to torture prisoners. When you watch what
5872 happened you will know what to do.

5873 *Counsel – Are you permitting to beat the prisoner to extract a confession?*

5874 WL – The police ranks aren't different. The police in charge of interrogation is medium
5875 level. My role was not the medium level. I did not receive such training as I was not police
5876 trained to interrogate prisoners. In Xinjiang the situation is very different, many things are
5877 done very secretly. The state security police have the total power to arrest Uyghurs
5878 according to their own.

5879 *Counsel – You witnessed Uyghur prisoners had bags tied on their heads to induce*
5880 *suffocation to force confession?*

5881 WL – Yes, I can confirm this.

5882 *Counsel – You mentioned sometimes their limbs were tied and a pipe forced down their*
5883 *throat to pump water into their lungs, can you confirm this?*

5884 WL – Yes.

5885 *Counsel – You also witnessed the use of electric rod connected to the penis in order to*
5886 *electrocute those parts, correct?*

5887 WL – Yes.

5888 *Counsel – Also prisoners were left to starve and food was offered to taunt them, correct?*

5889 WL – Correct

5890 *Counsel – Did you see any witnesses going crazy or mad as a result of the torture?*

5891 WL – Yes.

5892 *Counsel – Did you witness any prisoner die as a result of torture?*

5893 WL – I did not see with my own eyes.

5894 *Counsel – Have you heard about it?*

5895 WL – Yes.

5896 *Counsel – Did you witness any sexual harassment or rape against the prisoners?*

5897 WL – Well, it is a topic I never liked to discuss therefore I never made any inquiry into
5898 this. But I believe such behaviour exists. Well, I did hear about assistant police who heard
5899 about it against the detainees.

5900 *Counsel – You refer to state orphanages, have you seen them or been inside any of*
5901 *them?*

5902 WL – It was not orphanages, in Xinjiang, all the schools the children had no summer or
5903 winter holidays as they live in those schools. It is state boarding facilities. They recruited

5904 teachers from mainland China, the conditions were extremely bad, in small facilities, ten
5905 square metre where many children slept in bunk beds, the food is also very poor.

5906 *Panel – Regarding the time before Xinjiang in mainland China, what events or factors*
5907 *usually led to you detaining political or religious suspects?*

5908 WL – The Falun Gong people and religious people who practice underground, all were
5909 targeted.

5910 *Panel – Were these multiple ethnic groups?*

5911 WL – They didn't care what ethnic group as long as you participated in the banned
5912 religion.

5913 *Panel – In the prisons were there interrogation rooms without cameras for such*
5914 *prisoners?*

5915 WL – I didn't participate in the process of these interrogation but I have knowledge these
5916 people have different facilities that they were taken to and the police in those facilities
5917 were in charge of what to do with them.

5918 *Panel – Why you were transferred from the mainland to Xinjiang?*

5919 WL – The program was to recruit police from the mainland to support and protect Xinjiang
5920 police. Different regions have to support the different regions in Xinjiang. This was the
5921 process of bringing a more policemen of all levels to Xinjiang in order to help and support
5922 the police there.

5923 *Panel – You say when you arrived in Xinjiang, this was the first time you learnt of the re-*
5924 *education camps. Did you mean first time you learnt of their existence or of their nature?*

5925 WL – I didn't know about the re-education until after arriving there. In training we were
5926 told the state was fighting against terrorism and Uyghur separatists. We were warned we
5927 were not meant to disclose any information about it. It was all separate. Many Uyghur
5928 police were arrested as they detection they spoke about these facilities over the phone.
5929 It was all in strict secrecy.

5930 *Panel – Re the local committees deciding who should go to the camps, who chose the*
5931 *individuals on these committees?*

5932 WL – The party and the state you cannot separate. It is the party and department who
5933 decides and has absolute power to make that decision.

5934 *Panel – Is it the party who trains the people as to what to do?*

5935 WL – Yes.

5936 *Panel – In paragraph seven you refer to prison rules preventing guards from reviving*
5937 *Uyghur prisoners with food and drink, were these written rules?*

5938 WL – It is the rule very clearly – no guards or assistant police or police show any mercy
5939 towards the prisoners.

5940 *Panel – Is this written?*

5941 WL – Every rule is a rule not necessarily seen by others. I believe there are written rules
5942 at each level of management.

5943 *Panel – In paragraph ten you state you believe there was encouragement of torture by*
5944 *the Chinese government due to the ‘terrorist’ label. Could you expand on that, and do you*
5945 *think the label necessarily implies it is allowed to use torture on them?*

5946 WL – The communist party considers any forces who against their power are labelled as
5947 terrorist are the enemy of the people. They are not considered as human beings, so they
5948 can be treated the way how they wish. They do not treat them as normal human being.
5949 They received inhuman degrading treatment.

5950 *Panel – Where did you go after you left Xinjiang for a few months?*

5951 WL – First Beijing before going home.

5952 *Panel – Were you still working as a policeman in Beijing?*

5953 WL – No, I was not working in Beijing; it was just a place to transfer to come home? I
5954 continued to be a policeman back home.

5955 *Panel – How did you manage to get to Germany?*

5956 WL – It is a long story, some of my actions were against the CCP and I was at risk and
5957 therefore I left and arrived in Germany. The whole journey was not easy. It is complicated.

5958 *Panel – You say Uyghurs are enemies of the people and as such are not human, could*
5959 *you comment on the language/slang that was used by government and officials to refer*
5960 *to Uyghurs as a description? Any informal language used?*

5961 WL – Referred to as terrorists and separatist. The forces that are against the state. I didn't
5962 hear apart from what I know and what I have told you. All the way how they were called
5963 was terrorists or separatists.

5964 *Panel – In paragraph 7 you refer to the national Chinese policy to arrest Uyghurs– what*
5965 *is it?*

5966 WL – It is to protect and maintain the power of the CCP. All different level of the
5967 management they have policies that serve this policy. It said very clearly that you shall
5968 not give any opportunity for these separatists or the so-called terrorists to achieve their
5969 own goal to separate Xinjiang and achieve own ideology to build an independent or
5970 separate country. The whole policy is to maintain power of the CCP in Xinjiang.

5971 *Panel – Which department would it have come from?*

5972 WL – It is under the leadership of the highest level of the party committee. Every level
5973 there is a party committee – they have absolute power to implement the policies that they
5974 receive from the highest level. Including the part committee at village or county level.

5975 *Panel – You said state powers acted according to their own rules, so that is under the*
5976 *party secretary in the region, is that correct?*

5977 WL – Yes.

5978 *Panel – In regards to these policies, did you see or receive or aware of written instructions*
5979 *in that regard, or receive oral / verbal instructions?*

5980 WL – There was a department established anti-terror department. From the provincial
5981 level from all levels, the police stations and department.

5982 *Panel – Did the level increase in 2016?*

5983 WL – Yes, especially since Chen Quanguo became Party Secretary in Xinjiang. He
5984 carried out complete control policy.

5985 *Panel – Do you know under which department the anti-terror department sat, what was*
5986 *the senior organisation to this department?*

5987 WL – The highest level of the bureau is in Beijing and then it comes down to the local
5988 level.

5989 *Panel – In paragraph 11, you link the national policy of Uyghurs seen as terrorists to their*
5990 *being tortured and being arrested. Once they have been arrested there is no need to*
5991 *torture them, so why do they torture them?*

5992 WL – The reason of torture is to remove any kind of disagreements or their own opinion.
5993 After putting them through the worst degrading treatment makes them completely obey
5994 the party. Afterwards they have no thoughts left, completely in line with the communist
5995 party. That is the purpose of the torture. The people who are arrested there are some
5996 educated who had strong own opinions, only through such cruelty will this purpose be
5997 achieved.

5998 *Panel – In paragraph 13, you speak of the Chinese government wishing to destroy the*
5999 *identity of the Uyghurs and promote Han Chinese, you also speak of natural resources*
6000 *claimed by both Uyghur and Han, how important is the economic problem in the way*
6001 *Uyghurs are treated?*

6002 WL – It is extremely important the cotton industry and resources and also oil and other
6003 agricultural resources. They expect the resources for their own power. The economic
6004 benefit includes the need for labour. The CCP acted like they are the emperor or empire
6005 in that region.

6006 *Panel – I noticed when you were visible you had your uniform on, can I assume one you*
6007 *are a patriot who loves China, and two if you are a patriot in China are you able to critique*
6008 *the conduct at all of the state especially when it comes to this region?*

6009 WL – When I became a soldier, my dream was to serve my country and protect my
6010 people. It was not to protect the emperor. Gradually from my own experience seen

6011 through how the system worked, I was not serving the people but protecting the power of
6012 the people. I am a patriot to my people but not to the fascist regime and how they are
6013 ruling the country in a most cruel way.