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## ***Strikes on Uighurs Show How Trump's Afghan War Is Changing***

Over the past week, escalating US airstrikes in Afghanistan have shifted away from their usual focus on the Taliban and ISIS, and have shifted northward to Badakhshan, the province on the border with neighboring China.

This region has few Taliban, but it has Uighurs loyal to the East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM), which is mostly seen as a secessionist group in China, and rarely thought of at all in Afghanistan.

Still, the [US is targeting them, reflecting President Trump's attitude](#)

[that any groups that are "enemies" of Afghanistan](#), even if just on paper, are now the target. Some analysts are spinning them as part of a "broader" terrorist presence, and with the orders for the Pentagon to escalate, it doesn't take much to get targeted.

Unspoken in all of this is that such strikes are having no impact on the Afghan War itself, as ETIM has little to no presence beyond the immediate border region, and while US strikes on them might be very pleasing to China, ETIM poses no threat to Afghanistan itself.

