

China - Carrying A Torch For The Next Superpower

When it was awarded the 2008 Summer Olympic Games, China assured the international community that it would address concerns raised by its dismal record on human rights. There is no evidence beyond Marxist propaganda that the situation has improved. Indeed, the opposite is true. An International Christian Concern representative routinely sees evidence “that human rights violations in China are getting worse as the Olympics approach.”

Christians especially are subject to arrest, imprisonment, harassment and face very serious persecution for their faith. ICC notes, “We’ve seen a huge increase in the number of house churches being raided. Leaders of the house churches have been taken into custody; 70 leaders were taken at one time in early March.”

Beijing believes *naively* they can clean up their international image by simply arresting and repressing any who might disagree. The Reds want to keep things under the rug until the Olympics are over – making sure nothing embarrasses them during the Games. They don’t want to *lose face* on such a world stage when everyone is looking at China.

State-sanctioned Protestant and Catholic churches number up to 35 million followers, [according to the 3-Self Patriotic Movement] making Christianity the third-most practiced religion in China after Buddhism and Taoism. Islam ranks a distant fourth. Many of the converts are prominent figures from the 1989 Tiananmen Square pro-democracy demonstrations.

More significantly there is a steadily growing network of unregistered “home churches” said to have over 100 million members. Compare that with 70 million members of the Communist Party, many of whom have lost faith in the obsolete Marxist ideology since it increasingly adopts free market principles.

Earlier this year the U.S. State Department removed China from its list of the world’s top human rights violators. It was an unwarranted concession to Beijing ahead of the Olympic Games this summer. Others still on the list include Iran, North Korea, Cuba, Burma, Syria and Sudan.

But summer is coming and everyone loves the Olympic Games. China’s trouble with Tibet however threatens to overshadow the show. Dissidents were burning Lhasa, the capital, in mid-March, putting a damper on the festivities and damaging a peaceful run-up to the games. Just as Hitler engineered the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin before launching WWII, Beijing may have an ulterior motive this time around. The government’s heavy-handed tactics betray an underlying insecurity. Communist leaders should have learned long ago not to dilly-dally with the Dalai Lama, but in China’s rule book, confrontation trumps negotiations.

For years China has been concealing its military buildup which includes a blue-water navy complete with aircraft carrier groups to guard its oil route across the Indian Ocean

from Sudan. In the “Days of Empire,” Britain and other European nations extended their influence by sea-power – “Britannia rules the waves!” remember? Success was measured by the number of ships at sea. Today, success is measured by the number of satellites in space.

In January 2007 the Chinese successfully tested a missile against one of their aging weather satellites. This was in flagrant violation of international agreements banning development and deployment of weapons in space. The implications of this violation are serious. If China has the technology to take out one of its own satellites (a non-aggressive act), it sends a signal to the US that it certainly has the means now to take out one of ours, thus blinding our satellite-guided military worldwide.

China’s test was a wake-up call for folks who incorrectly believe that space is a sanctuary. Defending satellites is expensive, difficult and often controversial. Apart from costs and technological difficulties, there is the debris problem. China’s weather satellite shattered into tens of thousands of pieces now in orbit and posing a danger to

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all existing satellites whether military or commercial. Blowing up more satellites could make it almost impossible to operate in space.

China’s military buildup is closing the gap with U.S. forces. The trend shows “a window of vulnerability” for the United States between 2008 and 2015 before newer U.S. weapons are fielded.

Since 2002 China has built and deployed nuclear-powered submarines to waters near Guam, Taiwan and Japan. These are designed to interdict aircraft carrier and expeditionary strike groups that might deploy to the western Pacific. Chinese captains of the 40 to 50 new subs entering their navy will want to test their mettle against the 7th Fleet.

China has had a significant presence in Africa going back to the 1960s and its construction of the Tan/Zam railway, which reaches like a greedy arm all the way from Dar es Salaam into the rich mining fields of Zambia’s copper-belt. Most of China’s investment has been in mining and oil projects. In 2006 Angola replaced Saudi Arabia as the largest exporter of oil to China. U.S. businesses are trailing China in the massive aviation and infrastructure sectors in South Africa, which is hosting the World Cup Soccer games in 2010. Low-cost Chinese imports are making it difficult for African entrepreneurs to compete. One private-sector official recently labeled Chinese involvement in African nations as “colonialism in a different package.”

Hopefully the Olympic torch will illuminate the hidden persecution of Christians in Red China.

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