

# Powerful Enough Not To Care

The Olympic Games have caused many to finally see the injustice that Tibet continually faces from China.

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Staff Writer

China should never have been picked to host the Olympic Games, the symbol of tolerance between different nations and people. China is powerful enough to not care about anybody else, and enforce its will on the rest of the world.

This heated situation between China and Tibet is not new, it has been going on for almost 50 years. However, under the light of the Olympic torch, now the world finally opens its eyes to see China's barbaric suppression of Tibet, but will it make a difference? Will things change? I don't think so.

Asia Times reported that China believes that the Dalai Lama wants to

use the occasion of the Summer Olympic Games in Beijing to "internationalize" the Tibet issue in hopes of leading to the ultimate independence of the Himalayan region.

His Holiness, the Dalai Lama Tenzin Gyatso, is the head of state and spiritual leader of the Tibetan people. He does not live in Tibet though; he lives in India, where he was given political asylum in 1959.

"His holiness was recognized at the age of 2, in accordance with Tibetan tradition, as the reincarnation of his predecessor the 13th Dalai Lama, and thus an incarnation of Avalokitesvara, the Buddha of Compassion. The world's foremost Buddhist leader travels extensively, speaking eloquently in favor of ecumenical understanding, kindness and com-

passion, respect for the environment and, above all, world peace," wrote Jeffery Hoppkins, professor of Tibetan and Buddhist studies at the University of Virginia.

In November 1950, His Holiness assumed political power, after some 80,000 Peoples Liberation Army soldiers invaded Tibet. Beijing's ruthless policy ignited an uprising and resistance that exploded in the capital of Tibet, Lhasa on March 10, 1959 with the largest demonstration in Tibetan history, calling on China to leave Tibet and reaffirming Tibet's independence. The uprising was brutally crushed by the Chinese army and His Holiness was forced to escape. He was exiled to Dharamsala, India with some 80,000 Tibetan refugees.

Dharamsala, known as "Little Lhasa," became the seat of the Tibetan Government-in-exile. Today, more than 120,000 Tibetans live in exile and the Tibetan leader could not set foot on Tibetan soil for almost 50 years, according to the Government-in-exile. Over the years, His Holiness appealed to the United Nations, calling on China to respect the human rights of Tibetans and their desire for self-determination without achieving any change in the situation.

The Dalai Lama tirelessly urges people to be more tolerant in his public speeches around the world. He believes that "it is better to have a variety of religions, a variety of philosophies, rather than one single religion or philosophy." He met Pope John Paul II

at the Vatican to discuss tolerance and ways of achieving peace between nations, religions and people.

"We live in a period of great crisis, a period of troubling world developments. It is not possible to find peace in the soul without security and harmony between peoples," said the Dalai Lama.

The Norwegian Nobel Prize Committee awarded the Dalai Lama with a Nobel Peace Prize in 1989 and praised him. "The Committee wants to emphasize the fact that the Dalai Lama in his struggle for the liberation of Tibet consistently has opposed the use of violence. He has instead advocated peaceful solutions based upon tolerance and mutual respect," the committee said.

China has drawn international criticism because of its recent crackdown in Tibet. Peaceful pro-independence protests began in Lhasa on March 10. But then violence erupted, with shops burned and stores looted. The protests have threatened to overshadow Beijing's hosting of the Summer Olympic Games in August, CNN and other international news agencies reported.

Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao accused the Dalai Lama of trying to undermine the Games. "They want to undermine the Olympic Games. We should respect the principles of the Olympics. We should not politicize the Games," he reportedly said.

"Many nations have called on China to exercise restraint in dealing with the Tibetan protests, but none has indicated it will boycott the Olympics," reported the Asia Times.

Despite the rhetoric, the latest events are unlikely to change much. China is so big and powerful that nobody can tell it what to do. The protesters could be dead or in prison for life. China is known for expelling foreign reporters from troubled areas and mounts its own media campaign, disregarding what a free press should stand for. Beijing organized a "news tour" for selected reporters to Lhasa to report the protests, but restricted

the visits to the burnt out shops and damaged temples. Interviews included only civilians whose families were killed in the violence and injured policemen. Monks were not allowed to be inter-

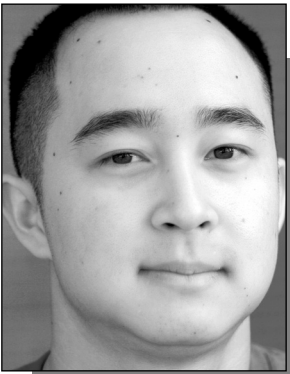
viewed, but that did not stop a group of Buddhist monks from disrupting the tightly controlled tour by shouting, "Tibet is not free!"

Unfortunately for the Tibetan people, instead of making things better by attracting the world's attention to the Himalayan region, they only angered mother China. The Western world most likely will soon forget about the few hundred dead in Lhasa in the shadows of Iraq, Afghanistan and other regions with higher death counts, but Beijing will not.

After the friendly Olympic Games are over, China will take the gloves off and assure that Tibet does not break up a nation that is taken so much work and lives to "unite."

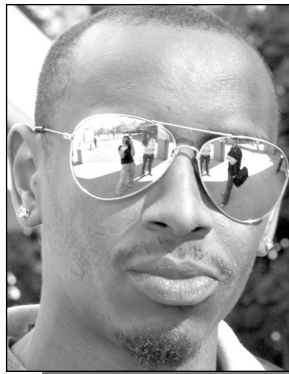
## Voices:

How do you feel about the situation between Tibet and China?



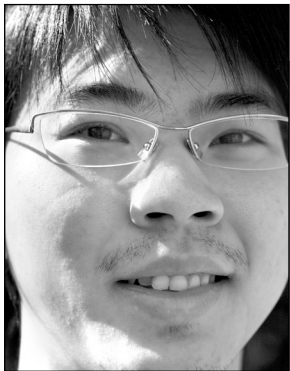
"It sucks, but what can we do about it? The U.S. government should tell China to back off, but the U.S. has too many things going on."

**Chang Wong, business**



"China is so big, they can do whatever they want. They own the U.S."

**James Nganga, political science**



"Violence is really bad. Tibet should be independent."

**Janus Cahang, business**



"The world is finally noticing the cultural and real genocide that has been going on for a long time there."

**Marschall Roe, political science**

Reporting and photos by Szilvia Gogh

**"It is not possible to find peace in the soul without security and harmony between peoples."  
— The Dalai Lama**

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