

Tuesday, August 12, 2008

Olympics at the price of human rights.

Image from NASA's website. The Olympics always is political, ranging from nations wanting to shine a light on their Madison Avenue public relations face to nations wanting to whitewash unspeakable brutality. The brutal and virulently racist nazi regime had its day in the sun with the 1936 Berlin Olympics, which at least was offset by the victorious track performance of Jesse Owens, an African American competitor who returned, ironically, to a deeply racist and segregationist United States, which during World War II -- during the fight against the racist nazi regime -- would continue with a racially segregated military. Now with its day in the Olympics sun is China, whose government is extremely brutal, but not on the same level as Germany during the nazis, and apparently without the racism. I have written several times about China's deliberate and rampant human rights violations and its efforts to carefully choreograph a Disney-ized Olympics. The real human rights face of China is not only gross human rights-violative business as usual, but also increased harassment of dissidents in order to try to present a Chinese Neverland, censorship of foreign journalists covering the Olympics, and the deep complicity of Google, Yahoo, and Microsoft in censoring the Internet in China and helping rat out dissidents to Chinese authorities, who then have their human-rights-violative ways with the dissidents. . Have you been watching the Olympics? If so, how has your enjoyment of the Olympics been affected, or not, by the brutal reality of its government's ongoing and severe human rights violations? Jon Katz

Posted by Jon Katz in Jon's news & views at 00:00