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Olympic Committee Vaults Over Censorship Controversy

When the IOC began taking heat for this supposed collusion, committee president Jacques Rogge stepped in and apparently convinced Gosper otherwise in an August 1 meeting. AP quoted Gosper on August 1 as saying he was now “absolutely satisfied” that there were no arrangements “in respect to censorship for the international press to report on the games.”



Gosper may be satisfied, but the August 1 AP story also attributed to him the following statements: “We have always had an understanding, and we haven’t necessarily talked about it, that any sovereign government will block pornographic sites and what they might consider subversive, or sites which are contrary to the national interest. I would suggest also that we are not working in a democratic society, we’re working in a communist society. This is China, and they are proud to be a communist society. So it will be different.”

It will be very different indeed because China’s leaders consider websites about human rights, Tibet, Tiananmen Square, and Falun Gong to be, using Gosper’s terms, “subversive” and “contrary to the national interest.” One therefore wonders how Gosper would defend the IOC’s decision to grant the honor of hosting a celebration of free athletic competition to a society that, he acknowledges, is not only non-democratic but also “proud” of its communist tyranny.

Whether or not the IOC made a deal to ignore China’s Internet censorship is rather irrelevant, as merely agreeing to hold the Olympics in Beijing lends tacit approval to a totalitarian regime infamous for its “Great Firewall” of Internet control. “Olympic historian David Wallechinsky has criticized the IOC for giving the games to China,” AP noted on July 30. “There is so much money being made that the IOC has just turned a blind eye,” Wallechinsky was quoted as saying. “You know, the Communist Party wants to control everything.”



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