



An American Boycott Of The Beijing Olympics Would Only Let Communist China Win

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Biden must allow our athletes to take to the global stage in the 2022 Olympics, showing Communist China that tyranny will not triumph over the globe.

RealClearPolitics White House Correspondent Philip Wegmann posed a timely question to Press Secretary Jen Psaki on Friday: Why is President Joe Biden calling for the MLB All-Star Game to be moved out of Georgia due to an election bill but has yet to call for the United States to boycott traveling to Beijing for the 2022 Winter Olympics? Shortly after Wegmann's query, the MLB announced it was moving the All-Star Game out of the state.

While the left calling for all corporations to boycott Georgia is ridiculous, Biden would be prudent to heed the failures of Jimmy Carter in 1980 and send our athletes to compete against the new Evil Empire — China. Having American athletes compete in Beijing makes it clear our nation's enterprise and athletic superiority will not falter in the shadow of tyranny. If the United States pulls out of the Winter Olympics, the CCP wins, and they don't deserve one ounce of victory whatsoever.

In 1980, the United States joined 65 countries in boycotting the Summer Olympic Games in Moscow. After 35 years of containment, the Soviet Union's presence was spreading from Poland to Afghanistan to Nicaragua to Mozambique and Angola — Marxism-Leninism was trampling the globe and *détente* wasn't cutting it.

President Jimmy Carter, whose strategizing during the Cold war was less than stellar, announced the boycott after the Soviets declined American demands for the withdrawal from Afghanistan, a year after its military invaded the country. While Carter was trying to compensate for failed foreign policy, his plans accomplished nothing and dashed the dreams of more than 500 hardworking American athletes, denying them the unparalleled chance to compete on the global stage.

It is unequivocally true the Chinese Community Party is responsible for mass genocide and is a tyrannical regime. Indeed, it will be up to the Biden administration to send a clear message to dictator Xi Jinping that the United States will not stand for the extermination of Uighurs. Yet, as evidenced by Secretary of State Antony Blinken getting pushed around by a Chinese diplomat at the Alaska Summit, the Biden administration has much work to do.

Biden needs to get on the offensive. This means mandating federal contractors disclose their ties to the regime, as Republican Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida proposed. It means denouncing ensorship, quitting the talk of systemic racism that only communicates national weakness to foreign adversaries, and working with Quad member states Australia, India, and Japan to strategize on opposing China's aggression, as Trump did. It also means holding China accountable for concealing evidence of the coronavirus months after an outbreak in Wuhan, which devastated the entire globe.

It means policies and partnerships, not fruitless efforts that only harm our own talented and hardworking citizens.

Republican Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas made this point in March, writing:

The worst thing we can do to stand up to China is to keep our athletes home. As anyone who has ever faced down a bully knows, when you decide to hide and not to fight, the bully wins. Our athletes should go to Beijing next year proudly, bring home medal after medal, and show the world what it means to compete on behalf of a free society. We shouldn't give China an easy way to run up its medal count by preventing Americans from going to the Olympics.

Cruz continued by noting a boycott shows “the Biden administration does not have a China strategy and, in their fumbling, they would use American athletes as pawns to look tough on China instead of actually getting tough on China.”

Similar to Cruz, Doug Bandow, a senior fellow at the Cato Institute, argued in The American Conservative that boycotting the Olympics only provides “vanity” to the U.S. government in feeling like it has erroneously accomplished something.

“A solitary, or almost solitary, holdout by the U.S. might make some people feel righteous, but it would likely be counterproductive. It would look like a politically motivated bout of moral vanity at the expense of athletes who would lose the opportunity to compete,” Bandow wrote.

While some may claim the United States would be giving in to the Chinese by participating in an athletic event with the repressive regime — and traveling to their home court — the opposite is true. By forcing our athletes who have trained for years to sit on the sidelines of the global stage, America would allow China to declare victory before the race even begins.

Most importantly, there is much reason to doubt that the United States sitting out the Olympics will actually fix China's human violations or help those impacted. It is dubious China will suddenly come to the realization that it is a repressive regime in need of course-correction upon the withdrawal of American athletes from a Winter Olympics competition. If anything, given the tremendous media opportunities, participation by U.S. athletes provides an opportunity for the civically engaged to shed a light on China's myriad human rights abuses.

The Biden administration must take stricter measures against China, whose communist regime is arguably the greatest threat facing the entire world. But sitting out the 2022 Olympics is not the right way to do it.