

US Boycotting the Beijing Olympics?...*You must be kiddin'!*

We don't have the guts to boycott the Beijing Olympics. No, I'm not talking about not being able to buy cheap and lead-infested toys at Wal-Mart any more or not getting the rightly adulterated blood-thinner heparin at our neighborhood pharmacy very soon, if we did so. I'm also not rabble-rousing about its human right violation. Nor am I talking about the soup brewing in Tibet, which might spill over us if we meddled in China's internal affairs. We should leave that to the House Speaker Nancy Pelosi who looks so good and convincing on camera standing next to the 'Spiritual Dilemma'. O' yeah, heart goes out to her for giving company to the leader of an oppressed nation in its difficult times. But where was she when bullet pumping NYPD cops were exonerated in broad daylight, the other day? Oops...I forgot; in this great land of free my black brothers don't need or deserve justice! Like lot of other functions, our compassion has also been outsourced to the Third World now.

Come to think of it, why is His Holiness sitting cozily in India, at a time of distress, chaos and misery unleashed on his followers? I don't know what does he do for a living and how does he manage to roam around the world giving lessons on spirituality. But what turns me off the most is when people begin to compare him with Gandhi and Mandela. They never feared persecution or even death by the British. For God's sake, they never abandoned their people when they needed them most. You cannot give hope to people and uplift their trodden spirits from villas across the border. Dalai Lama's running away from reality on ground becomes even more comical when you add the fact that he believes in reincarnation and reportedly has already chosen his successor, in whom his spirit would reside. So, with such celestial arrangements, what is he worried about? So much for screaming loud about the iron-fisted Chinese brutality on fellow Tibetans!

In the not-to-distant a past, China has emerged as the only challenger to America's status of superpower, wrote Gwynne Dyer, recently. The Bush administration has spent the last seven years in tireless pursuit of alliances or less formal military arrangements with countries all around China's border. In political jargon, it is called the rule of containment. India happens to be one of the new strategic partners in that endeavor since it has its own simmering ambition to be called Asia's lion in the 21st century.

All of a sudden we are unnerved by the very thought of no more being the Tallest, the Biggest, the Richest, on many fronts. We are also frightened by the ever-increasing financial, political and above all, the military clout of China around the world. To counter that, for a while we tried playing bad boys with China by beating the pro-annexation drums on behalf of Taiwan.

Ah! That lofty dream of democratizing the world in our own image, again!

Had China reacted, this would have created a perfect fiery Dragon for some fifty years or so for the American citizens, who love to live in the shadows of imaginary fears devised and created by our great leaders and politicians, for one and only one reason: to keep our war machine well-oiled. Remember the cold war fear syndrome of the last century? What good did that myth do, besides making the world strewn with landmines and starting an insane and insatiable arms race? And what good did that do? It shattered the peace and tranquility many small countries once were proud of, and replaced it with internal strife and chaos. Just imagine, if we didn't globe-trot militarily, would there be a Grand Theft Auto series, which teaches our young to rejoice in violence and mayhem and as statistics show, many a times to mimic? Truly, state gives character to its populace.

Alas, China didn't stir under our threat at sea. Actually, it didn't even care, because like it or not, China owns us: three-quarter of our foreign debt that we took from rest of the world to live on those leased dreams (beyond-the-means homes, gas guzzling hummers and SUVs, plastered-in-every-room flat-screen plasma TVs, twice-a-year in Bahamas no-matter-what family vacations and so on) is owed to China!

China is now the second largest holder of the US debt, with more than \$260 billion in the US Treasury securities. Even when American warships were bobbing near Taiwan to fend off military threats to the island which China claims as its own, Chinese weren't fazed, because they knew well we're bluffing. So, we became content with arguing with China over other important issues: bra quotas, television tariffs and currency pegs.

One recent posting on the internet even jokingly suggests that China should consider forgiving our debt, just like it is doing to those poor African countries: *"China needs to look into its heart, and its soul, and forgive American debt. At this point it seems petty for China even to ask for its money back. What's 900 billion dollars among strategic allies? You can't even fight a good war and against a backwater country for that anymore."*

With such 'strong' economic ties, do we really think we want to be in the bad books of the Chinese? I reckon not, unless of course Exxon, BP and Shell feel extremely patriotic overnight and are willing to donate their ever burgeoning quarterly profits to the Federal Reserve Bank to rid our nation of shameful pachydermy and Chinese debt.

Nah, we wouldn't dare boycott the Beijing Olympics!