

OLYMPIC CEREMONY ISSUE HEATS UP

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented today on the way the presidential candidates have handled the question of whether President Bush should attend the opening Olympic ceremony:

“Regarding the propriety of President Bush attending the opening ceremony of the Olympic games, Sen. John McCain says, ‘If I were him, I’d keep all my options open.’ Which, of course, says nothing. Sen. Barack Obama is worse. He says that ‘this decision should be made closer to the games,’ and that if the Chinese government doesn’t exercise greater respect for human rights, ‘there should be consequences.’ Which raises several questions. Does Obama really think that a government which has long shown no respect for religious liberty is going to change course without external pressure? How long should Bush wait—until the eve of the opening ceremony? And exactly what consequences does Obama have in mind? Specificity, it seems, is not this man’s strong suit.

“Of the three presidential candidates, only Sen. Hillary Clinton has shown leadership on this issue. She has not only been decisive, she has made the right decision by urging the president not to go to the opening ceremony. Here are the facts: An estimated 70 million Chinese have either been murdered or intentionally starved to death under the Communists; Tibet was literally stolen from the Tibetan people by the Communist thugs; plans to plunder Taiwan have never been jettisoned; genocide is ongoing in Darfur because of Chinese gamesmanship; and the religious persecution of Tibetan monks and the Catholic clergy has been going on for six decades.

“Despite all this, McCain and Obama think it’s too early to

come to a conclusion on whether Bush should go to the opening ceremony. Well, it is not too early for Catholics to decide that only Clinton has got this issue right."