

China police arrest British journalist: Olympic PR cracks widen

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The Chinese just can't kick the repression habit. Today they have [arrested](#) (and then released) [ITV](#) [journalist John Ray](#) who was covering a Free Tibet demo. It backfires for the Beijing regime because now that will be all over ITV's bulletins and is available to the world (well apart from China I guess) on [YouTube](#).

This is not the worst thing to happen to a journalist and John Ray makes the most of it ("I am a journalist!"), but it's not nice to be dragged off by police in a van for no good reason, even if it does make good television. It shows how instinctively the Chinese authorities distrust openness.

This all comes after it was revealed that they faked the [firework pictures](#) from the opening ceremony, got a child singer to [mime](#) and bussed in fake spectators to make half-empty events look popular.

It's not just the Chinese, of course, these days the Games now feels like a PR stunt got up by a self-serving and corrupt IOC for the world's TV companies. It's just that the Chinese have used it quite overtly for political gain. Where will they hold the one after London? South Ossetia?

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