

China Calls Dalai Lama Head Of Illegal Theocratic Government

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China Calls Dalai Lama a Political Exile, denies that he is spiritual leader of the Tibetan People

By Stephanie Ho

Beijing, China (RushPRnews) 13 March 2009-China has issued its strongest recent criticism of Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama - calling him a political exile who directly heads an illegal theocratic government. The comments came Friday in Premier Wen Jiabao's press conference at the end of the annual session of China's

legislature, the National People's Congress.

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao discussed a host of issues in a news conference that stretched for more than two hours.

These topics ranged from the global economic crisis, to the Central Asia-focused Shanghai Cooperation Organization, to debt relief for developing nations in Africa.

The issue that the Chinese Premier spoke about most forcefully, though, was Tibet, which he stressed was an inalienable part of China's territory.

Wen says Tibet-related issues are completely China's internal affairs and that Beijing will accept no foreign interference on the matter.

The Chinese leader also had strongly critical words for Tibet's exiled spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, who fled to India after a failed uprising against Chinese rule in his homeland.

The premier said Beijing considers the Dalai Lama a political exile, not a religious figure.

Wen pointed to the Tibetan government in exile, which is based in Dharamsala, India. He called that government theocratic and illegal, and said it is under the direct leadership of the Dalai Lama.

This comment preceded his recitation of what has become a standard phrase - Beijing wants to see what the Dalai Lama does, not what he says.

Premier Wen accused the Dalai Lama of misleading political figures around the world, but added that some western leaders are also trying to use him for their own purposes.

The Chinese leader had a much different approach to Taiwan, a separately-governed island Beijing considers a renegade province and has been trying to woo.

Mr. Wen called Taiwan a "treasure island" and said he has a long-cherished hope of going to visit it someday.

In the only comments that elicited apparently spontaneous applause, Mr. Wen said he is already 67 years old, and even if he could no longer walk, he would crawl to get to the island.

On other issues, the premier said he is, in his words, "a little bit worried" about China's "huge amount" of U.S debt, which totals about \$1 trillion. He urged the United States to continue to be what he called "a credible nation" that can "ensure the safety of Chinese assets."

Meanwhile, he said China is working very hard to cope with the negative effects of the global economic downturn. He said China is aware that no country can overcome these economic difficulties alone. But at the same time, he said his country's view is that, in his words, "we would rather dig a well for ourselves than beg for water from others."

About the author:

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