

China and US Tensions Tighten Over Tibet, Ships By [Chuck Missler](#)

It is the 50th anniversary of the Tibetan uprising, and tensions have sparked between the United States and China. Tibet is not the only issue; a disagreement about shipping in international waters off of China has caused a flare-up between the two countries. Economics have kept China and the US friendly, but as the global economy slows down, China has grown testier.

The Tibetan Uprising which began on March 10, 1959 failed and ended with 86,000 Tibetans dead and the Dalai Lama permanently exiled from his country. The matter is still a sore point with China. The guerrilla warfare against the Chinese had been going on for several years in Tibet, with guerrillas trained and funded by the United States CIA. After the March uprising, the CIA continued for years to train and fund Tibetan fighters to return to Tibet and resist the Chinese Communist government. Today the Tibetans still suffer under a stiff Chinese thumb.

The Dalai Lama remains the spiritual leader of Tibet, and he leads the Tibetan Government in Exile from Dharamsala, India. On the uprising's anniversary, the 73-year-old Dalai Lama spoke to thousands of Buddhists, saying "Even today, Tibetans in Tibet live in constant fear, and the Chinese authorities remain constantly suspicious of them. Their religion, culture, language, identity are near extinction. The Tibetan people are regarded like criminals, deserving to be put to death." He called Tibet, "Hell on earth," drawing the indignation of Chinese authorities.

While the Dalai Lama has pressed for a non-violent solution to bring more freedom to his homeland under Chinese rule, young Tibetans have not proven as peaceful. According to the Tibetan government, 220 protesters were killed last March before the Summer Olympics. China often points to the violence of the Tibetan youth in defense of its harsh responses.

The United States has remained supportive of the Tibetan people through the years. Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi has again introduced a resolution in favor of Tibet, urging China to "cease its repression of the Tibetan people, and to lift immediately the harsh policies imposed on Tibetans."

It may or may not be a coincidence that the US and China have butted heads over a US ship in international waters in the South China Sea. According to the United States, five Chinese ships harassed a US Navy survey vessel. According to China, the US violated international and Chinese law.

National Intelligence Director Dennis Blair told Congress the Chinese have been throwing their weight around in international waters in Southeast Asia and the South China Sea, becoming "more military, aggressive, forward-looking than we saw a couple years before." Blair considered the situation to be the most serious

disagreement between the US and Chinese since China confiscated a downed US plane and held the crew captive for 10 days in 2001. Some analysts believe China is posturing, sending a message to the new Obama Administration about its rights over waters in its economic zones.

The director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, Lt. Gen. Michael Maples, told Congress that China has been building up its military along its borders. "It is building and fielding sophisticated weapon systems and testing new doctrines that it believes will allow it to prevail in regional conflicts and also counter traditional U.S. military advantages," he said.

As the sluggish economy hits China's pocketbook, this massive semi-sleeping dragon may start to raise its head. Whether it bares its teeth or claws depends on how serious the Communists get about maintaining control over their people and respect as a dominant world power.