I!S8 to the NEWS

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OLYMPIC POLITICS

Cutting off your nose to spite your face is the old adage that describes the way some people let foolish pride hurt themselves. The Africans boycotted the Olympic Games because New Zealand played a rugby game with South Africa -- a total irrelevancy because rugby is not even an Olympic event.

The Free Chinese from Taiwan boycotted the Olympics because the Canadian government denied them visas under the proper name of their country.

Canada's action involved reneging on its word to the Olympic Committee by cravenly caving in to a ploy by Red China to humiliate Taiwan. The iron fist in the velvet glove was Red China's threat to cancel its big wheat purchase from Canada.

Olympic athletes go through at least four years of heroic train ing and exercises requiring immense self-discipline and self-sacrifice. The iron determination that is the essential ingredient of success was illustrated by the Japanese gymnast Shun Fusimoto who competed and won on the rings despite a broken leg. It's a pity when the athletes are deprived of their chance to compete by the pride of their own country's politicians.

To the delight of the American television audience, however, the Olympic games were a tremendous success. Although the girl gymnasts from Romania and Russia were the most spectacular TV stars, some Americans were outstanding winners. Admittedly the greatest

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athlete in the Olympics, the winner of the ten-event decathlon, was an American, Bruce Jenner. At the 1972 Olympics in Munich, he had finished fourth. After four years of intensive training he defeated the Russian who won in Munich four years ago and bettered the Olympic record by an amazing 164 points.

The American basketball team, under its great captain Quinn Buckner, retook the crown that the Russians stole from us four years ago. The American men swimmers won 12 out of 13 races and broke many records. The American Peterson brothers, for the second time, won Olympic gold and silver medals in wrestling. This time John Peterson won the gold medal in the 180-pound class; Ben won the silver in the 198-pound class.

The American boxing team made daily prayer a part of their training program. They won five gold medals, climaxed by the Spinks brothers' knocking out their very tough Cuban and Russian opponents in the finals. An anonymous donor paid their mother's fare to Montreal to have the thrill of her life seeing her sons compete. "I knew they could do it," she said. "They depend on higher Power."

The young hurdler Ed Moses was another athlete who prayed before every race. His coach is an ordained minister. Although Ed Moses had never run the 400-meter hurdles before this year, he set the world record and won by 26 feet over the second-place American, and by 40 feet over the third-place Russian.

The Olympic Games would be vastly improved if God were the only outside interference allowed. The politicians should keep their hands off.

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