

Is Barot a political prisoner?

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Dhiren Barot has been sentenced to 40 years imprisonment. What has he done to deserve this – a serial rapist or mass murderer perhaps. Apparently not. Although called a senior al-Qaida terrorist plotting carnage, he in fact was imprisoned using a conspiracy charge. The length of the sentence with this made me think of a political trial and as luck would have it I have a book by one, Peter Hain, entitled “Political Trials in Britain”. In it is a whole chapter on conspiracy charges and how they have been used by the political establishment in the UK at least since the time of the hated Star Chamber (1700s) to crush political dissent. As I read the chapter I became aware that this trial fits a political conspiracy especially in the way in which it confuses action with thought.

Barot is described in The Guardian report of the trial <http://www.guardian.co.uk/frontpage/story/0,,1942037,00.html> as an experienced, well trained, full time terrorist. The judge described him as determined and dedicated.

However whatever his ideation is, he has no track record for terrorist actions, so hardly experienced. If he is fulltime he is a dismal failure as it alleged he has been plotting this since before 9/11.

Even more suspiciously Barot was arrested two years ago although at the time of his arrest police admit “It is no exaggeration to say that at the time of the arrest there was little or no admissible evidence against Barot” so it appears he was kidnapped by the police. They then went off on a fishing expedition.

Hey presto, from Pakistan, a laptop appears which happens to have Barot’s ruminations on it apparently. Over the next two years, yes, two years the police built (?concocted) a case against him which involved lifting 300 computers, 1800 discs, CDs, an assortment of hard drives and scores(no less) of books, documents, note pads using fingerprinting, DNA, computer, forensics, linguistic analysis and facial mapping. In other words they had a grand old time.

And the result of all this? A conspiracy charge but with phantom co-conspirators, or was he conspiring with himself? You may laugh but a woman was once charged with conspiring to procure an abortion on herself, and she was not even pregnant! I think that gives a taste of the nature of conspiracy charges.

After all this high powered sleuthing just ideas; no bombs, no guns, no bomb making equipment, no resources.

Mr. Justice Butterfield opined that he ‘had no doubt that Barot intended to implement them (his ideas).

'It could only be +assumed+ that the plans had been presented to and approved (assumed) by Barot's (putative) overlords in Pakistan.

I fear the Muslim world will not see this as the much vaunted Western system of justice putting away a dangerous criminal but as a message that any Muslim can be fitted up using conspiracy charges.

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