

British Hypocrisy On Human Rights

By **Alexander Baron** - Sep 1, 2015



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The case of three Al-Jazeera journalists said to be subjected to political persecution in Egypt has been making the headlines here, as has the more recent case of **two from Vice News** who have been detained by the authorities in Turkey. Amal Clooney **commented at length** about the former to the BBC while the latter has attracted the attention of Amnesty International. These men have been accused of terrorism offences, albeit apparently of a technical kind.

British human rights activists and politicians are never shy about commenting on the perceived outrages of foreign governments, especially those in the Middle East, but they exhibit a curious myopia about similar human rights violations in the UK.

Radical preacher (so-called) Anjem Choudary is currently facing charges under Section 12 of the *Terrorism Act, 2000* for allegedly inviting support for a banned group on social media. The wording of this act is **so incredibly vague** that supporting a proscribed organisation could mean almost anything, certainly any words that come out of Choudary's mouth. You can find his speeches and discussions on social media yourself, but it remains to be seen if any reasonable person would find any of his pronouncements likely to inflame anyone to travel to Syria or even to put his hand in his pocket for a whip round by the local ISIS rep. Even so, Choudary will remain behind bars until January, and if he is convicted – which is extremely likely – he will face years locked up for expressing an opinion. Ironically, the treatment and especially the conviction of Choudary is likely to drum up real support not for ISIS but for attacks against a judicial system that Moslems, along with many others, consider unduly repressive.

In an entirely different sphere, a man whose crime is to write bad poetry has been **banned from the UK**. Back in 2009, Tyler, The Creator wrote some lyrics that some people deem offensive. You can find his musings on various lyric sites; offensive or not, they are certainly puerile, even allowing for the fact that he was 18 at the time. Why anyone would want to listen to him on YouTube much less buy tickets for his concerts is a mystery. True, youthful music tends to be rebellious, but the Sex Pistols, he ain't. All the same, like Anjem Choudary he is considered a threat to the spiritual well-being of the nation. If you were a Turkish policeman, who would you consider the greater danger to your country, a sewer-mouthed rapper, a radical preacher with zero credibility, or a group of foreign correspondents who might just be spying for a banned organisation? Nuff said.

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