

Wednesday, November 7, 2007

"The first thing we do, let's kill all the lawyers"? Musharraf, lawyers and judges.

Video footage uploaded to YouTube on November 5, 2007. What would it take for lawyers in the United States -- including the many who today support maintaining the legal establishment's status quo -- to duplicate Pakistani lawyers' daily demonstrating in the streets (are only a minority throwing stones, which apparently are being thrown at the beginning of the above video?) at the risk of the types of beatings, arrests, and jailings being faced by the anti-Musharraf lawyers (and the detentions of anti-Musharraf judges)? What motivates the demonstrating Pakistani lawyers to do so? I wish to know if my hunch is correct that plenty of them are otherwise very mainstream lawyers and people when government leaders are not stepping on legal rights to such a degree as being seen after Musharraf declared a state of emergency. What motivates Musharraf to so brazenly crack down on dissenters -- all of them, not just lawyers? Does he think he can get away with this and still receive the same amount of aid largesse from the United States and other nations? For how long will the United States government wait before reducing its aid to Musharraf's government during his declared state of emergency? As to the title of this blog entry, it is from Shakespeare's Henry VI, Act IV, Scene II, which is apparently about one of the approaches tyrants can try to take for consolidating power; that is to say, when lawyers exist who are willing to stick their necks out for justice in the first place. Jon Katz.

Posted by Jon Katz in Jon's news & views at 00:00

Jamie Spencer, over at Austin Criminal Defense Lawyer, asked the same question:
<http://blog.austindefense.com/2007/11/articles/other-blogs/what-would-lawyers-do-wwld/>
Anonymous on Nov 7 2007, 02:01

Thanks, Steve, as always for your comments. I learned after posting my blog entry that numerous other people have been using the Henry VI reference concerning Musharraf's suppression of lawyers and judges in Pakistan. Thanks for letting me know that Jamie and I have overlapped questions about what motivates so many Pakistani lawyers to risk arrest by demonstrating against Musharraf's repression.
Anonymous on Nov 9 2007, 05:59