

Jason Featherstone
27 Spey Street
London
E14 6PP
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Re: Concern for the state of society

Dear Prime Minister,

My name is Jason Featherstone, I run an organisation called Star Family and Star Family News which can be found at www.starfamilynews.com.

I have been active in violence reduction efforts for some years having implemented a successful violence reduction programme in HMYOI Cookham Wood which saw a 95% reduction in group violence. The programme was pioneering and as far as I am aware it has been the only scientifically evidenced programme to reduce violence in custody in the world.

I wanted to make you aware of what I find to be startling observations regarding the prison service, post Brexit UK and the Coronavirus Pandemic. The prison service is in a state of catastrophic failure as we speak, in 2019 prison violence broke records in every measurable category and there is no indication to suggest we will see any type of significant reduction any time soon.

I have written a short theory on the issue of violence in the prisons and community, it is called the Cracking Effect:

There are absolutely no meaningful national interventions to tackle the contagion of violence at the time of writing, this leads to:

1. High rates of violence in prisons - People without violent offending in their behaviour become exposed to violence in prison, this exposure and infection then leads to more people exhibiting violence, increasing levels of violence in the prison and critically, increasing the number of people leaving prison with violent behaviour
2. Ergo we have a situation where more people exhibiting violent behaviour are leaving prison than those who entered it
3. These people are then distributed across the UK - There are processes in place that mean prisoners cannot always return to their locale on release due to criminal connections or risks to the public or themselves. They are then placed in different parts of the country, many of these different locations at the time experienced low levels of violence
4. The placement of people exhibiting violent behaviour in a new area then leads to the contagion of violence spreading to that new area - people traditionally without violent behaviour then start to exhibit violent behaviour - new violent areas are created
5. With no meaningful community intervention this leads to gang crackdowns in all major cities and nationally - what follows is an increase of people then being jailed who exhibit violent behaviour which in turn increases the number of people exhibiting violence in the prison - the cycle then repeats.

What is concerning is - without any meaningful intervention the contagion of violence is being systematically spread throughout the UK increasing levels of violence in new areas - without intervention we will have an unmanageable situation of violence of levels that will not be anticipated in an unprecedented number of locations, cities, and areas in the UK

I believe what is happening is that there are numerous knock on effects of this disaster, a significant and extremely troubling one is the increase in school violence. As more areas become infected with the contagion of violence, more children witness violence, more are exposed and infected by the contagion.

This coupled with the Coronavirus Pandemic and after effects of Brexit presents a very strong possibility of social unrest in the UK. Many people are currently losing their jobs at an unprecedented rate due to Coronavirus, we haven't yet seen the effect that Brexit will have on the supermarkets and economy in general.

Prime Minister, the situation appears to be dire. There has been social unrest in a number of countries due to the Coronavirus as it is, with the added issues of Brexit and the failure of the prison system there is a very high possibility of serious social unrest in the upcoming years. Potentially we will not see what we consider riots as the primary concern. Although we will potentially experience traditional riots in the beginning, I believe the long term implications of the Coronavirus Pandemic, Brexit and prison failure will result in an evolution in unrest more developed and pronounced than simple rioting. We might see the potential for insurrection and a long term stand off between government and the people reminiscent of the unrest witnessed in Greece due to the austerity measures.

The conflict in Greece was so drawn out that protesters became rioters, the rioters became a movement and ultimately Greece ended up in a situation where the people were using satellite positioning technology to identify the locations of government responses to the unrest in order to mobilise military responses. The conflict was so drawn out that the people were throwing stones at the police and the police were picking up the stones and throwing them back at the people. Such was the breakdown of society.

Whilst I can be of no assistance regarding two of these issues i.e. the effects of Brexit and the Coronavirus Pandemic, I can be of service in reforming the prison estate. The reason I believe this is critical immediately is this:

With the potential unrest looming on the horizon, we might soon have an unprecedented influx of people into the criminal justice system and into the prisons. With the Kracking Effect, we will witness a serious increase of violence being distributed across the UK on release at a time of serious social unrest. It does not bode well.

The recent proposal to increase the prison population with 10,000 new prison places to alleviate the issue of overcrowding with the £2.5 Billion project could be marred by the sudden influx to the prison estate as per the influx due to the 2011 UK riots which some might argue, the prison estate still hasn't recovered from.

I believe that if we were to implement a serious prison reform with immediate effect we could make a significant impact and lessen the effects of the current crisis by dealing with this issue. An immediate stem of people leaving custody with violent behaviour is more of a must have outcome than one that is desirable in the current climate.

My proposal is this:

I can deliver a complete prison reform for all 150 prisons in the country for £3,095,238 per prison per year. The reform I have in mind will be long term and as such I will require the exclusive contract for this work for a 20 year period. With the topic of Brexit and the negative implications to British society including the social unrest (I note you were making provisions for military deployment for such unrest in 2019 due to Brexit), we can offer the people hope and a positive spin on Brexit.

One of your campaign messages and one that led me to vote for Brexit was the promise that the UK would save £325 Million a week from Brexit. The total cost of the prison reform which might be the turning factor we need to avert a catastrophic outcome of the current crisis is just 10 days worth of Brexit money per year for 20 years.

With this re-investment of the Brexit money back into the UK we can make a significant impact in improving society in the UK.

I can provide scientific evidence of the violence reduction work conducted and any further information required.

Kind Regards

Jason Featherstone
Director Star Family News