

My Intervention in the Prison Capacity Ministerial Statement

John Redwood (Wokingham) (Con):

I strongly welcome the proposal to deport more foreign criminals, and I also support the idea of finding something better than prison for non-violent offenders. Will that include, wherever possible, their need to have a job legally and to pay compensation to those against whom they have committed fraud, theft and other financial crimes?

Alex Chalk, Secretary of State for Justice:

My right hon. Friend makes two excellent points. It is worth reflecting on the fact that since 2019, we have deported around 15,000 foreign national offenders. A huge amount of work has taken place, and that will continue, albeit at an even greater pace.

The second point he makes is fundamental. Judges already have the power to impose a compensation order in the event that someone is convicted of a crime, but their ability to do so is determined by the funds that are available to that individual. How much better it is if the individual can go out and do an honest day's work to generate more income, so that they can, in a small way, put right the crime they have committed and the damage they have done.