



Home Office official tells man facing deportation: 'My job is to piss you off'

Secretly filmed footage shows official telling man: system is 'working because it's pissing you off'

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Thu 3 May 2018 10.19 EDT



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The Home Office is investigating undercover footage filmed at one of its reporting centres showing an official telling a man facing deportation that his job is to “piss him off” as part of the government’s challenging environment.

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The 39-year-old man who secretly filmed the Home Office official last year has now voluntarily gone to Pakistan, a country where he has only spent one month of his life, saying he was driven out by the controversial regime.

The man was required to report weekly to Becket House, a Home Office reporting centre at London Bridge. He had

===== served a 13-month prison sentence and although the Home Office had signed a deportation order it had failed to remove him to Pakistan, a country he has never lived in, instead requiring him to report weekly to Becket House while depriving him of the right to work, rent accommodation, drive or access NHS treatment.

In the footage the man tells the Home Office official that having to report to Becket House weekly is worse than his time in prison. The official replies saying that he's going to talk to him "on the level".

The official then says: "What you got to understand, yeah, you take the piss out of the system, the system is going to take the piss out of you. We are not here to make life easy for you. It's a challenging environment we have got to make for people. It's working because it's pissing you off. Am I right? There you go. That's my aim at the end of the day, to make it a challenging environment for you. It's pissing you off. You're telling me it's pissed you off. There you go, I've done my job."

When the Guardian asked the Home Office if it was instructing its staff to make the environment challenging for migrants by "pissing them off" a spokesman replied: "The views expressed in this video do not represent Home Office policy."

The man's solicitor, Fahad Ansari from Duncan Lewis Solicitors, said: "The challenging environment mentioned by the immigration officer appears to be a reference to Theresa May's 'hostile environment' policy. The rationale behind this policy is to create an environment so utterly soul destroying to live in that people will voluntarily leave the UK."

When he was appointed home secretary earlier this week after Amber Rudd resigned following the Guardian's reporting on the Windrush scandal and an ensuing row over targets, Sajid Javid said that the phrase "hostile environment" was unhelpful. "The phrase 'hostile' is a phrase I'm not going to use," he said. "It's a compliant environment ... it doesn't represent our values as a country to use that phrase."

The man who recorded the video, who has mental health problems and has been self-harming, was jailed for criminal damage and blackmail. He was facing deportation because he had committed a crime. Although he had lived in the UK since the age of 18 with indefinite leave to remain, he had not naturalised as a British citizen, which would have stopped him being deported after finishing his sentence.

He is appealing against the deportation order signed by the Home Office from Pakistan. He has lived in the UK since the age of 18 with indefinite leave to remain and leaves behind his elderly parents and three brothers, all of whom are British citizens. As a child he lived in the US and Saudi Arabia.

A Home Office spokesman said: "We are investigating the footage provided. The views expressed in this video do not represent Home Office policy. Any staff found to have breached the civil service code of conduct will face appropriate

action. Foreign nationals who abuse our hospitality by committing crimes in the UK should be in no doubt of our determination to deport them.”

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