

Ex-Boss of Scandal Ridden Prison and Immigration Contractor - Now British Minister for Justice

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Global Research, June 18, 2018

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Region: [Europe](#)

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Corporate power has been turning Britain into a corrupt state and it's colonisation of the institutions that are supposed to uphold society is now acting like a terminal disease on the dying carcass of democracy. The corporate elite is putting business and their version of free-market ideology at the heart of political policymaking. The big corporations are literally making government in their own image and this is once again confirmed by Theresa May's appointment of a senior executive at scandal-ridden Serco, the government prison and immigration detention centre contractor as justice minister.

Tory Edward Argar, who became Charnwood's MP in 2015 – only nine months after quitting his role as head of public affairs at Serco UK and Europe – will be responsible for issues concerning youth justice, female prisoners, and offender health, amongst others, in his new role as justice minister.

Interestingly, there is a [Wikipedia](#) page but it omits any proper description of Argar's time at Serco and so does his website, which to fair, doesn't just omit some information about his employment at Serco – it doesn't mention anything at all. That page is [HERE](#) for you to peruse.

Image on the right: Edward Argar

Argar worked at Serco for three and a half years until August 2014.



One of the scandals that Serco was involved in was the sheer scale of [overcharging](#) the public purse. It got caught red-handed invoicing the tagging of offenders who were not being monitored, some of whom were already back in prison or had died. At the time Serco was the subject of criminal investigation by the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) and although Serco agreed to repay £68.5m plus VAT the SFO is still investigating.

Serco were also [caught](#) and then agreed to repay £2m in profits on a separate prisoner escort contract after it was found that its staff had been recording prisoners as delivered “ready for court” when they were not. Again, the case was referred to the SFO.

In another investigation of a contract held by Serco it was [revealed](#) that “potentially significant” errors or irregularities in three payment-by-results contracts for the Department of Work and Pensions work programme to support the long-term unemployed were found.

An offshore law firm called [Appleby](#), itself mired in the international Paradise Papers scandal even [regarded](#) Serco, “a company that runs sensitive government services in Australia and the UK, as a “high-risk” client, expressing concern about its “history of problems, failures, fatal errors and overcharging” – reported the Guardian.

That article also reported that –

“Chief among the Appleby’s concerns about [Serco](#) were allegations of fraud, the cover-up of the abuse of detainees, and the mishandling of radioactive waste.”

Serco was founded in the UK and had revenues of £3bn in 2017. In Britain, it operates six [adult prisons](#) and the [Yarl’s Wood](#) immigration detention centre, helps manage [healthcare facilities](#) and provides critical [support services](#) to the military.

In 2013, when Argar was a senior executive at Serco, Yarl’s Wood was also involved in a separate [scandal](#). There were multiple accounts of sexually inappropriate behaviour including guards offering to assist in immigration cases in return for sex. More recently in 2018, residents of Yarl’s Wood have gone on hunger strike against poor conditions, so poor in fact, that an [Independent](#) article stated that they were operating an “inhumane regime.”

Separately, Doncaster prison was criticized by inspectors in 2016 who found the prison overrun by vermin and what was described as “overwhelmed” staff.

The person responsible for defending this company, a company mired in corruption, that operates with no sense of morality, ethics of indeed justice has just been given the high profile and responsible role of ‘justice’ minister in the United Kingdom. I think that says something not just about politics right now, but also about the Conservative party who obviously seem to think that conflict of interest, corruption and scandals of this nature are perfectly in order.

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