

# Worry when the basic functions of the state begin to fa...

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David Cameron famously argued before the 2010 general election that not a single front line service would be impacted by his programme of austerity. It was, of course, a blatant lie and I have no doubt he knew it was a lie, but I do wonder if he had any idea by how much he would corrode not just what he saw as a bloated state but the basic functions of the state that all consider necessary.

The FT [has an article this morning](#) that details the increase in the number of private prosecutions for fraud because the state is no longer willing to take these cases because of a lack of resources.

I detailed on page 24 of my report '[In the Shade](#)' on the role of what I call shadow companies in the UK shadow economy the significant decline in the number of prosecutions of company directors for failing to comply with the requirements of company law. Official records show no such prosecutions in Scotland since 2008.

This [year barristers have been on strike](#) because of cuts in legal aid. The Court Service has also endured significant cuts in funding.

The provision of law and order is one of the basic functions of the state that even right wing ideologues think it must undertake and yet it is showing signs of failing. I think we need to be worried. Unless there is confidence in the provision of law and order there is no state at all, but only disorder. That has not happened yet, some occasions apart, but the risk is real.

When cuts undermine the fabric of society then society is at risk. That risk does now exist and this should, I think, become a part of the political narrative of those seeking to offer alternative explanation of how we, as a society, should live.