Twitter Thread by Ali Velshi



Ali Velshi
@AliVelshi

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President Biden signed an executive order phasing out the federal govt's use of privatized prisons. It instructs the Justice dept. NOT to renew contracts with privately-operated prisons; a policy that was first implemented under Obama, then reversed in 2017 by Trump. #velshi

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Private prisons are a stupid, amoral idea. So how did we end up with them in the first place? For starters, the U.S. is the most prolific incarcerator on the planet. That is a fact & it is not new. #velshi

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2018 figures show the U.S. ranks number one when it comes to the total number of incarcerated people. It has roughly 300,000 more people that have been sentenced to prison than China does... which has literally one billion more in population. #velshi

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What about prisoners as a percentage of the population? America for the win, again, with the highest rate of incarceration in the world, a great deal higher than the next country on the list, El Salvador. #velshi

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Our prison system became so overwhelmed, partly due to misguided federal initiatives like The War on Drugs in the 80s and the 1994 Crime Bill, that it was forced to outsource help. #velshi

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Former Obama deputy Attorney General Sally Yates wrote in 2016: "The federal prison population increased by almost 800 percent between 1980 and 2013, often at a far faster rate than the Bureau of Prisons could accommodate in their own facilities.“ #velshi

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“… In an effort to manage the rising prison population, around 2006, the bureau (of Prisons) began contracting with privately operated correctional institutions to confine some federal inmates." #velshi

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In 2017, U.S. private prisons incarcerated nearly 122,000 people, representing 8.2% of the total state and federal prison population. And private doesn’t mean cheaper or better. In fact, private prisons are more dangerous than government run prisons. #velshi

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A damning report from the Justice Department's Inspector General released in 2016 found that federal private prisons were much more violent and a lot less secure than public, federally run facilities. #velshi

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Last week I noted that there aren't two sides to some issues. This is one of them. Private prisons should not exist. In economics it's what we call a “perverse incentive.” #velshi

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Private prisons thrive when there are lots of people incarcerated, which is the opposite of what society’s goals are. Some conservatives argue that anything the government can do, the private sector can do better. #velshi

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We can and should do better with healthcare, mental health and true rehabilitation in prisons. But we don’t have to sustain a profit motive with private shareholders making money off of imprisoned Americans to achieve that. #velshi

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America, as we have seen in the last eight months, needs a complete overhaul of its justice system, from policing... to the judicial system... to sentencing and rehabilitation. Ending private prisons won’t solve the problem, but it’s a start. #velshi