Twitter Thread by John Hayward



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Political violence is always wrong and should never be tolerated from anyone. Once "protesters" threaten lives and property, their grievances and ideology should become absolutely irrelevant to the situation.

That is, obviously, not the country we live in.

Long ago, we had an attitude of zero tolerance for terrorism, "we do not negotiate with terrorists," etc. One reason for this was the implicit understanding that negotiating with terrorism legitimizes it. Violence becomes an instrument of politics.

Some of us warned all last year that treating violence as acceptable, even laudable, from SOME people would mainstream it and touch off an arms race. Everyone would start getting the idea that only groups with a demonstrated capacity for violence are taken seriously.

When violence becomes acceptable from one party and its clients, one ideology, it becomes an instrument of authoritarianism. That's why authoritarian regimes frequently have violent vigilante groups roaming the streets in addition to their vast security and military forces.

Iran, for example, has all sorts of heavily armed police and security forces, working for both its secular and theocratic governments, but it ALSO has ultra-violent "vigilante" groups indulged by the State whose "grievances" supposedly justify vandalism and murder.

Either political violence is rejected in total - from everyone, for any reason, no matter who they are or what they believe - or it isn't. Once the tolerance level is no longer zero, we become locked in a vicious and endless struggle to control exactly what the level should be.

This is similar to the detestable way modern society handles racism. The tolerance level should be zero, but it isn't. Racism, prejudice, and discrimination are acceptable from SOME people toward SOME people. "Anti-racism" is an instrument of totalitarian power, not a principle.

Of course the particulars of protecting vital government facilities are different, but in principle the law-abiding residents and shop owners of Kenosha should have the same expectation of protection from political violence as politicians in D.C. But

they don't, do they?

Every time a left-wing group gets violent, we're immediately told the protest was Mostly Peaceful, and the people who assembled peaceably - and their political leaders, no matter how incendiary their rhetoric - are 0% responsible for any injury or destruction that occurred.

We're told it's really all OUR fault for not listening to the grievances of the "protesters" who turned violent, even as we watch video of them merrily looting retail stores. We forced them to steal those TV sets by not yielding to their political demands!

Irresponsible political leaders who fanned the flames of left-wing violence and help the perpetrators escape accountability for their actions are never held to account, never told they must resign, rarely even advised to tone down their rhetoric.

And many - most - of the left-wing riots and killings of recent memory were based on falsehoods and misinformation. Outright lies were blasted by left-wing politicians and media without consequence, entirely BECAUSE they wanted to whip people into a frenzy.

And we were told all of that was fine, acceptable, even praiseworthy because their violence brought CHANGE and their lies illuminated DEEPER TRUTH. Okay, sure, we got everything about Mike Brown or Trayvon Martin's deaths wrong, but there were legit grievances to be addressed!

We have to stop doing that. We have to insist that every quarter of our political spectrum renounce violence, and the willful incitement to violence, completely and absolutely. No more cutesy-poo nudge-nudge wink-wink when lefties burn and pillage. No more double standards.

No more celebration of Noble Lies that illuminate Deeper Truth by the light of burning homes and businesses that were destroyed by mobs with Legitimate Grievances. No more indulgences for those who wantonly break the laws of the System That Failed Them.

That is a principle, and we should all be able to agree on it, no matter what else we disagree on. Absolute zero tolerance for political violence is a message that can save lives and prevent destruction if we all say it together and demand our government acts accordingly.

But if we decide the tolerance level for political violence will not be 0.0, then all that remains is for our armies to meet in the streets. Violence is too powerful, too USEFUL, and too profitable to be ignored when it is indulged. /end