Twitter Thread by Diala Shamas



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THREAD: I've represented people the government views as "terrorists." Here's an incomplete set of reasons why calling yesterday "terrorism" is not a good idea:

If the goal is to trigger accountability: the DOJ has *plenty* of tools to investigate, prosecute, or otherwise hold accountable those who conspired to break the laundry list of laws that were broken yesterday. I'll let those more prosecutorially-minded list them out.

The govt regularly prosecutes activities it labels terrorism without ever actually charging a crime of terrorism. On the flip side, it charges not actually dangerous, but marginalized, ppl with terrorism-related crimes all the time. Here's a @HRW on this: https://t.co/XtYSb7aBk5

(h/t @tarekzismail for work on that report). While there, note how when they set their minds to it, FBI/DOJ have manufactured "terrorists," deploying informants, entrapment, and the like. Not just in Muslim communities, also Black liberation & other mvmts portrayed as "Terrorist"

If the purpose is discursive, ask: what work does the Terrorism word do? What did the "War on Terror" designator do? It just stokes fear and clouds our ability to talk about root causes, understand different forms of violence & protest, and different relationships w the state.

This then opens the door to "terrorism experts," permits the deployment of anti-terrorism funding, agencies (FBI, DHS, etc) that have repressive power and who do not share our goals. They will use their authorities, as they always have, to go after Black, Brown dissent & protest.

For example, we know the FBI knew about white supremacist infiltration of police departments for a v long time and has barely lifted a finger https://t.co/iB3vcbkb3D h/t @alicesperi

But instead, the developed an absurd framework justifying their surveillance and investigation of BLM activists, concocting weird labels like "Black Identity Extremism" and then "racially motivated violent extremism" https://t.co/4BgvnItmZ4

or of course, of Muslims under (debunked and completely flawed "Radicalization" theories). The brilliant @assuss has helped shine light on one example of the mind-boggling scope of these programs https://t.co/KHMCgLBZ71

Under the “terrorism” designator, these agencies mobilize insane resources to infiltrate mosques & target religious communities. Here's our client, giving a glimpse of what happened when the FBI tried to coerce him to spy on his community https://t.co/fFTOOgvHq3 h/t @CUNY_CLEAR

This is where the Terrorism label leads. I know we’re angry, and many are actually feeling terrorized. That’s legitimate. But it's a trap. Let’s build on mvmt calls to question the role of law enforcement, including here, when they appear to be the problem, not the solution.

So many other really smart ppl have made this argt v thoughtfully. Applying an abolitionist lens, @atiya_husain reminds us that "the racial history and significance of the concept is constitutive of [the concept of] terrorism." https://t.co/iHlExtNlz4 (this is a must read)

Also @dcli thouroughly breaking down how "counterterrorism" is inextricably linked to US imperialism and how the industry of terrorism 'experts' - those who will be called to opine on & implement the current push - is, well, racist (listen for more nuance) https://t.co/76b3dpq08z