Twitter Thread by David Rothkopf



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If the (erroneous) Office of Legal Counsel memo saying president's can't be indicted for crimes while in office had not been written, hundreds of thousands of Americans would still be alive today.

If Rod Rosenstein had not told Mueller to stay out of investigating Trump's finances and to narrowly define his investigation, the coup attempt would never have taken place.

If Mueller had not gone along with Rosenstein and had followed all of the investigations into Trump's ties to the Russians and his finances, we would not have seen months of attempts to attack and weaken our democracy.

If Mnuchin had not blocked the attempts to release Trump's tax returns and had followed his constitutional responsibilities and the law, millions would not be out of work due to COVID.

If McConnell had fulfilled his Constitutional obligations and had conducted a Senate trial in which evidence was presented and the GOP had not reflexively defended Trump despite all his abuses, millions of US children might not be going hungry now.

If Murdoch & Fox & Breitbart & OANN & an army of commentators had not let partisanship and self-interest supplant their decency and ethical obligations to the truth, the mobs storming the Capitol would have known Trump, Hawley, Cruz & the others were lying about the elections.

If Trump had been rejected by the GOP as a candidate when it was revealed--as it repeatedly was--that he was a lifelong sex abuser, fraudster, liar, racist and crook, children would never have been thrown in cages, separated from their families.

If Trump appointees and supporters in the government had honored their oaths to the Constitution ahead of their loyalty to one man, years of attacks on the rule of law in America would not have taken place.

The coup attempt was not Trump's first crime. It did not reveal anything we did not know about the man. It did not provide our first insight into the fact that the GOP has been attacking democracy in America for years.

This past week was not the first time we realized that what McConnell and McCarthy and the Cruzs, the Hawleys, the Gohmerts, the Jordans, the Pompeos, the Barrs, their donors, their spin doctors, and their supporters were up to.

Had our eyes been open...had our system worked as it should...perhaps 500,000 lives would have been saved, millions would be employed, our cities would not be struggling, our standing in the world would not be weaker than its ever been, our democracy would not be under siege.

We could have stopped Trump as a candidate. Our system should have stopped Trump for countless crimes over the past four years. We could have thrown his enablers out of their jobs in 2016. We could have used the law to bring down his defenders. We had the tools.

We had the knowledge. The truth was out there for all to see. But greed and political self-interest and lack of moral courage and corruption ate away at the guardrails, the checks and balances and at the other mechanisms of conscience within our government.

The result was a massive failure that must be studied so we can ensure it never happens again. Trump was a failure as a president because he is a failure as a man. He was a demagogue and a fraud and a traitor. But blaming it all on him is not enough to protect us in the future.

We must identify & acknowledge the failures in ourselves as an electorate, in our institutions, in our leaders, in the media, in the GOP, in those who should have stood up sooner & more forcefully in opposition, in our justice system & within our society that made Trump possible.

Because the COVID catastrophe, the economic disaster that followed, the human rights abuses at our borders, the damage done to our environment, the weakening of our alliances, the damage done to our democracy, was all avoidable.

It was very clear that if Trump was not stopped disaster would inevitably follow. This week's events were shocking. But none were a surprise. To avoid such shocks in the future will require much introspection but that alone is not enough.

It will also require accountability. Crimes must be investigated, prosecuted and punished. Failures of leadership must result in new leaders being put in place. Broken guardrails and failed checks and balances must be examined and reformed.

Where our democracy is broken it must be repaired. This is not the work of one party or one administration. Trump is the culmination of years and decades of decay and malfeasance and concerted efforts to pervert our system.

With luck, the shock of this week will put a stake through the political viability not only of Trump but Trumpism. But that is not enough. The desecration of the Capitol should stand as a reminder of all the violations and abuses that have come before that made it possible.

And we should recognize it signals a massive job ahead for each and every one of us as citizens.