Twitter Thread by Gregg Gonsalves



Gregg Gonsalves
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I've spent the past year as angry as I've been since the early days of the AIDS epidemic when I had to bury friends in their 20s, 30s because our government didn't care if gay men lived or died from a new virus among us. 1/

Some were put off by my anger, some thought scientists shouldn't be political or if they were tone it down a bit. 2/

I work in public health. I am not a basic scientist or a theoretician. I work in a field that is hemmed in by history and politics on every side. 3/

From the 19th century onwards, we've known that who lives and who dies isn't just a function of biology. The data support this thesis, we call them the social determinants of health. 4/

My friend and colleague Paul Farmer calls out these determinants in more direct terms as pathologies of power, structural violence. 5/

The pathologies of power--have been on full display in 2020. The severity of the epidemic, who got sick, who died, were as much about social and economic forces as they were about a new virus #SARSCoV2. 6/

The health inequities that drove this pandemic were here long before @realDonaldTrump. Democrats & Republicans collectively created the conditions for what we've seen. A disinvestment in public health, a fractured health care system, a weak safety net. 7/ https://t.co/zwyI9hyX9D

If the Democrats win the Senate, the @GOP will still hold the majority of the blame for the carnage. It's all documented by journalists now, the incompetence, cruelty. They can try to spin it otherwise, but let the record show... 8/

But we have a new direction to choose. We can tinker, play the "austerity" politics of the 90s, 00s or think bigger. If we want "out" of #COVID19 and to be ready for the next big pandemic we need a New Deal for Public Health. 9/ https://t.co/7gAFq84QhN

Hope is on the horizon. The new Congress and @joebiden have to go big or go home. 10/

Many conservatives, particularly the @realDonaldTrump dead-enders think my fury is only for the @GOP. They see things in partisan terms. I ask: who has the power? Now @TheDemocrats will have the power. If they fail to deliver, guess what? 11/

I am pro-public health, so are the other activists out there who've been fighting for our lives, whether its been about AIDS, breast cancer, T1 diabetes, TB or HCV. So we will hold @joebiden, @chuckschumer & @SpeakerPelosi's feet to the fire. 12/

We're here to help. All of us would have rushed to help any administration who was serious about the pandemic. But we can't just dust ourselves off and pretend like we can go back to politics as normal. 13/

We need a new politics of care, we need to
"start to build a new movement that heals us and our body politic, and that will allow us—all of us—to survive a pandemic, and then, to thrive." 14/ https://t.co/kU65Lfqrvy

So there is hope this morning, if @senatemajldr is now Senate Minority Leader. He was the single most pernicious obstacle to getting ourselves out of this pandemic better than we came in. There's hope this morning. Who's in for the fight? end/