Twitter Thread by Mangy Jay



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I don't think that "Democrats were cowards and couldn't stand up to McConnell" is the correct framing. Dems clearly made a political calculation. Plenty to potentially criticize about that calculation, but it was informed by factors unrelated to generalized "fear of republicans"

What we largely know now:
-There would never have been enough GOP votes to convict
-GOP had the power to hold up *all* Senate business & that means COVID relief (Dems would have been blamed for this hold up)
-Witnesses were uncooperative & would have had to have been subpoenaed

So I think the correct framing is that Democrats made a political calculation that the benefit of adding witnesses (who would not change the outcome) was not worth the political & moral cost of holding up COVID relief, as well as important confirmations. . . .

This calculation can be criticized on its own merits, but it's categorically different than just being scared of McConnell & the GOP.

For my own part, I think an error Democrats made w/r/t witnesses was not calling cooperative police officers who had been attacked that day. Just a few personal narratives from the police would have deeply embarrassed the GOP. That's a missed opportunity, in my view.

But is even that missed opportunity worth both the short term and long term costs of holding up COVID relief? Costs that have implications for millions of Americans, as well as Democrats' success in the midterms? That's a more complicated question w/ less clear answers.

Overall, I understand why some are angry w/ Dems. I think it's good that we are all willing to criticize our own side. However, I also think it will be unfortunate if we let the extent of this criticism obscure the real villainy here: the GOP's craven disregard for our democracy

I think this dynamic--Dems willingness to hold other Dems accountable, paired w/ the GOP's refusal to do any such thing--has somewhat shaped the nature of the W.Bush presidency & the Iraq War in our public discourse & consciousness.

It would be a shame if this happened w/ Trump.

The media, of course, has also played a part here. And, again, I think it's *good* that we hold our own side accountable &, in the case of Iraq, I think it's commendable we have not let any Senators wave away their 2002 AUMF votes.

That said, the justifiable accountability applied to Dems is striking in contrast to the absolute lack of accountability applied to the GOP, given the war was *their* project in the 1st place.

We have to be willing to forcefully criticize our own party. But we also have to be cautious about balancing this criticism, such that the actions of the GOP are not minimized in public memory.