Twitter Thread by Matthew Chapman



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Stop saying "defund the police."

Poll after poll after poll is clear. The public supports funding social services that fill some roles police currently have, but they DON'T support defunding the police.

I don't care if you think those are the same thing. Voters don't.

There are neighborhoods in some cities where police are actually *underfunded* for their essential roles, and response times are low for people reporting crimes, accidents, etc.

Police nonresponse hurts POC as much as police brutality. Defund activists have no answer for this.

"BuT wE dOn'T lItErAlLy MeAn GeT rId Of ThE pOlIcE!"

Then find a new damn slogan, because at least some of the people chanting it with you do, in fact, literally mean that. https://t.co/mYlZXncoaH

"Defunding" the police is an intellectual coward's way out for leftists who are "woke" to the point of being sleep-deprived.

They don't want to grapple with the reality of crime and how systemic racism has put POC in the way of social harm that ensures they *need* police.

I'm totally with you on decriminalizing a broad litany of social problems and diverting money to programs that address these noncriminally, from housing to drug treatment.

But not all crime is fixable this way. What social program is going to end DUI? Domestic violence? Rape?

The real goal here is getting cops to serve POC the same way they serve white people.

But that's so much harder to do than pretending you can just eliminate police and handwave away all crime through some piecemeal patchwork of other social programs.

We are at a crucial crossroads of social attitudes on law and order.

The public is horrified by what happened to George Floyd and questioning why our prisons are so bloated. We're moving to a broader social understanding that the justice system has limits and can destroy lives.

Hell, we've reached the point where even *Republicans* feel the need to take reformist postures. Trump did little in the way of real criminal justice reform, but he touts things like drug pardons and expanding time credit in federal prisons. It's surreal to see that from the GOP.

AND YET, the public, including nonwhite people, still very much want police to be available when they need them.

And Republicans have successfully scared many voters into thinking that won't be the case under Democrats, because we have sent mixed messages.

Dems very much got the ball rolling on justice reform and their actual ideas on how to hold police accountable to their communities poll very well.

If we blow this moment because of a stupid three-word slogan and let the GOP look like the reasonable ones, we deserve what we get.