Twitter Thread by Michael Beaton

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Yes. This is the problem.

Irrational anger & outrage which is easily manipulated, as we see being done, into tribal affiliation. Predicated not on some devotion to core ideals & principles of the country, but something else.

Notice what ea side appeals how they express it.

> Wait for it, we\u2019re about to unleash 73 MILLION of this guy! https://t.co/34x0rTzC77
>
> — President-Elect Lynn \u2b50\ufe0f\u2b50\ufe0f\u2b50\ufe0f (@lynnemiles01) November 20, 2020

One side largely is moved by wanting a system, a society, a government that is responsive to the situation and needs of the public. This has a number of aspects, from infrastructure, taking care of the environment, BLM, taking care of the 'least among us' &etc.

These folks...

These folks on "the other side"... Not sure what to call this other side. It is a collection of right wing people, some who are simply "members" by affiliation, by tradition, by location in the country...others by reasoned choice.
However they get there, a large % are like this.

Lets call this the Trumpian side, Trumper Cohort, since that is the current center around which these "73M" are organized. Within this cohort, there are many who are simply "Republicans" by inertia. Their family has been so forever, and so they are too. In actual fact they

do not like what is being done in their name, wonder what happened to the party, but cannot imagine voting for a "Democrat", no more than the feud over Ford vs Chevy would resolve in welcoming in the other 'team'.
These don't really know or und what a "Democrat" is these days,

but they are damn sure they don't want to be one, or affiliated with one. Some of these people, actually reflecting on what the GOP has become under Trump find themselves in a spot where they do not associate w Trump/GOP so find themselves estranged.

Others not thinking about it

nor caring to try and work it all out, simply retain their old alligences and set thoughts/opinions.

These are not people who will get worked up like this fellow.
They are the ones who will line up for a Trump rally and go with the flow.
They are also the ones who are

interviewed, to comic effect, and really don't have any reason or thinking through what they are chanting about, just w some vague sense of "we/our team is right and those guys need to be locked up"

These are easily manipulated, but are not the ones who will carry guns into a

fight.

Assuming this is about 50% of the Trump cohort (who knows what the actual number is?) that leaves 35+M people who carry some level of this rage & outrage.

Back to my essential point:
Look at the behavior and how these people manifest their feelings and affiliations. They carry guns,and are sometimes ready to use them. As we have seen. Always ready to intimidate.
And when you try to assay what they are angry at, what it is that

they want to "save", it tends to be around fuzzy notions of the "2nd Amendment". Rarely do you hear 1stA. Rarer still any sort of appeal to unity, trying to find a common set of values/principles from which the sides both exist.

It is more about complete domination of the

conversation. The emotional tone is like this video clip, one of extreme frustration and anger. It is a state easily turned into a mob. It is not generated by reflection, consideration, a vision. It is fueled by grievance, a sense of us v. them, a sense of isolation.

Ultimately it is a sense of power consolidated by the authorities. It is the sense that "We" need to be protected from "Them".

This is the deep agitation that is used to justify the guns and the violence. And is the hook by which forces like Trump are able to provoke them into

a base. This is not new. This is the pattern of the rise and ascendency of authoritarian states. Esp as they erode any democratic footings that would counter these impulses.

This argument deserves a better treatment. It needs to be an essay, not a twitter thread. It is far more complex than this simple distinction, even though I think the distinction essential and fundamental.
Look at the rage & outrage as manifested by each side.