OUR DEFINITIONS OF NATIONAL SECURITY CRIMES ARE FUCKED

I realized something the other day.

For the purposes of hacking, a theater (or at least any mall it was attached to) might count as critical infrastructure that would deem it a National Security target, just as Sony Pictures was deemed critical infrastructure for sanction and retaliation purposes after it got hacked.

But if a mentally ill misogynist with a public track record of supporting right wing hate shoots up a movie showing, it would not be considered a national security target. Given his death, DOJ won't be faced with the challenge of naming John Russell Houser's crime, but they would have even less ability to punish Houser for his motivation and ties to other haters than they had with Dylann Roof.

DOJ had no such problem with Joseph Buddenberg and Nicole Kissane, who got charged with terrorism (under the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act) yesterday because they freed some minks. And a bobcat.

So shooting African Americans worshipping in church is not terrorism, but freeing a bobcat is.

Meanwhile, most of the 204 mass shootings — averaging one a day — that happened this year have passed unremarked.

I laid out some of the problems with the disparity between Muslim terrorism and white supremacist terrorism (to say nothing of bobcat-freeing "terrorism") the other day.

> "This should in no way signify that this particular murder or any federal crime is of any lesser significance." [than terrorism, Loretta Lynch claimed while announcing the Hate Crime charges

> against Roof
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> Except it is, by all appearances.
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> When asked, Lynch refused to comment on how DOJ is allocating resources, but reporting on the increase in terrorism analysts since 9/11 suggests the FBI has dedicated large amounts of new resources to fighting Islamic terrorism, domestically and abroad. In addition, there are a number of spying tools that are tied solely to international terrorism — but DOJ has managed to define, in secret, domestic terrorism espoused by Muslims in the U.S. as international terrorism. That means FBI has far more tools to dedicate to finding tweets posted by Muslims, and fewer to find the manifesto Roof wrote speaking of having "the bravery to take it to the real world" against blacks and even Jews.
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> Perhaps most importantly, because of vastly expanded post-9/11 information sharing, local law enforcement offices have been deputized in the hunt for Muslim terrorists, receiving intelligence obtained through those additional spying tools and sharing tips back up with the FBI. By contrast, as one after another confrontation makes clear — most recently the video of a white Texas trooper escalating a traffic stop with African American woman Sandra Bland that ultimately ended in her death, purportedly by suicide — too many white local cops tend to prey on African Americans themselves rather than the police who target African Americans for their race.
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> [snip]
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> Finally, the FBI has an incentive to call Roof's attack something different, as it makes a big deal of its success in

> preventing “terrorist” attacks. If the Charleston attack was terrorism, it means FBI missed a terrorist plotting while tracking a bunch of Muslims who might not have acted without FBI incitement. That would be all the worse as the FBI might have stopped Roof during the background check conducted before he bought the murder weapon, if not for some confusion on a prior charge.
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> [snip]
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> I’m certainly not saying we should expand the already over-broad domestic dragnet to include white supremacists espousing ugly speech (but neither should hateful speech from Muslims be sufficient for a material support for terrorism charge, as it currently is). Yet as one after another white cop kills or leads to the death of unarmed African Americans, we have to ensure that we call like crimes by like names to emphasize the importance of protecting all Americans. DOJ under Eric Holder was superb at policing civil rights violations, and there’s no reason to believe that will change under DOJ’s second African American Attorney General, Loretta Lynch.
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> But hate crimes brought with the assistance of DOJ’s Civil Rights division (as these were) are not the same as terrorist crimes brought by national security prosecutors, nor are they as easy to prosecute. If our nation can’t keep African Americans worshipping in church safe, than we’re not delivering national security.

But I’d add to that. If we’re discussing mass killings with guns (remember, earlier this year Richard Burr tried to include commission of a violent crime while in possession of a gun among

the definitions of terrorism) then it suggests far different solutions than just calling terrorism terrorism.

What if we focused all our energy on interceding before crazy men – of all sorts – shoot up public spaces rather than just one select group?

What if our definitions of national security started with a measure of impact rather than a picture of global threat?