



Date: August 29, 2016
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Re: *Comments regarding Colin Kaepernick from PORAC President, Mike Durant*

Colin Kaepernick sat down this weekend, something he has been doing with greater consistency since his breakout season.

Mr. Kaepernick made headlines this time because he chose to take a seat during the playing of our national anthem. His protest was non-violent and completely within his rights, and we would protect him from those who think differently. Mr. Kaepernick explained that he will not stand up again during the playing of the Star Spangled Banner until this country stops oppressing people of color.

His particular target was law enforcement, and in the hope of putting legitimacy to his protest he chose to use such words as lynching, murdered unjustly, police brutality, paid leave for killing people, and circumstances that he has seen of military personnel returning and being murdered by the country they fought for. He also says that 'lots of things and lots of issues' need to be addressed and changed before he stands during the national anthem. He decided not to mention the killings and the attacks on police officers.

Mr. Kaepernick's rant against law enforcement is not new. He proves once again that it is easy to be incendiary and one-sided in your assessment of a situation. His assertion that law enforcement is not held to particular scrutiny and subject to intense investigation both internally and with the public, is just plain wrong. Those of us who have spent our lives working our neighborhoods understand that the relationships we have in our communities have been changed inalterably over a series of tragic deaths.

We understand that an open dialogue also includes listening to those who can sound the alarm yet feign ignorance when asked about solutions. We have a different challenge in law enforcement. We are talking about our workplace; communities that we care about, people we want to serve and protect, and we need to find resolution. PORAC has taken the lead in advancing training, particularly in the use-of-force and de-escalation requirements; encouraging greater community outreach, finding the funding for body cameras, and working with stakeholders for greater transparency. The problems are real. Our commitment to solving them is also real.

Perhaps in December after he watches his team play the Chicago Bears, the noisy Mr. Kaepernick will accept an invitation to ride along with the police officers through streets that border on anarchy and understand that name calling and grandstanding are not the course to honest conversation and the resolution of this national crisis.

I don't know if Colin Kaepernick will ever stand again for the national anthem. I do know that I will not be standing for him.

The Peace Officers Research Association of California (PORAC) was incorporated in 1953 as a professional federation of local, state and federal law enforcement agencies. Today, PORAC represents over 66,000 public safety members and over 900 associations, making it the largest law enforcement organization in California and the largest statewide association in the nation.

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