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PATRICK YOES
NATIONAL SECRETARY

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Statement about the Anthem Protests

As law enforcement officers, we swear an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. We are compelled by that oath to defend people whose beliefs we find personally repugnant. Under this oath, we are obliged to protect those who peacefully fly a confederate flag and those who peacefully kneel under the stars and stripes.

As private citizens – and as a the Fraternal Order of Police, the oldest and largest law enforcement organization in the country - it's our right to disagree with white supremacists spewing hatred and NFL players kneeling during the National Anthem alike. We also reserve our rights to push back against false accusations made about our profession. Law enforcement officers seek to protect our communities and we categorically state that there is no systemic racism in law enforcement. Protecting our communities is our laser focus. Suggesting that law enforcement officers favor one interest group, or target specific members of the community, does us a disservice and pushes a narrative that results in violence against law enforcement officers.

Green Bay Packers Quarterback Aaron Rodgers made some great comments: "We've got to come together and talk about these things and grow as a community, as a connected group of individuals in our society, and we're going to continue to show love and unity," he went on "This week we're going to ask the fans to join in as well and come together and show that we can be connected and we can grow together." The Fraternal Order of Police agrees with the sentiment of this statement. We have maintained that it will take a holistic approach to improve relationships in our communities and it starts by working together.

Today I am calling on the NFL and NFL Players Association to sit down with the National Fraternal Order of Police. We are ready to work with the NFL, NFLPA, and any other groups to develop programs that will unite us deescalate violence and rhetoric. . We have worked with the players association in the past to advance common interests and we would welcome a chance to do so again.

Thank you.

Chuck Canterbury
National President

— BUILDING ON A PROUD TRADITION —