

Trump "Jokes" about Police Brutality, but Cops Aren't Laughing

By Lauren Victoria Burke (NNPA Newswire Contributor)

(NNPA) - During a speech at Suffolk County Community College on Long Island, N.Y., President Donald Trump seemed to openly endorse police brutality.

Mother Jones reported that it, "Turns out the audience was comprised of officers in a police department that has been scrutinized for racial profiling, and whose former chief was recently sentenced to prison for beating a man."

According to Mother Jones, the speech was supposed to address federal efforts to combat MS-13, "the violent street gang with ties to Central America."

Trump seemed to discourage police officers from safely handling suspects in their care.

"When you see these thugs being thrown into the back of a paddy wagon. You just see them thrown in, rough. I said, 'Please, don't be too nice,'" Trump told the crowd to a smattering of applause. "Like when you guys put somebody in the car and you're protecting their head...like don't hit their head and they've just killed somebody. I said, 'You can take the hand away, okay?'"

Trump was referring to the police practice of assisting handcuffed suspects into the back of police vehicle and protecting their heads from hitting the door frame on the way in.

Some of the officers in the audience chuckled at Trump's remarks, but negative backlash from the law enforcement community quickly spread across Twitter.

"As a department, we do not and will not tolerate roughing up of prisoners," tweeted the Suffolk County Police Department. "The SCPD has strict rules and procedures relating to the handling of prisoners. Violations of those rules are treated extremely seriously."

The two tweets that referred to the president's remarks in Long Island gained close to 100,000 likes.

In reaction to Trump's rhetoric, New York Police

Commissioner James O'Neill said that to "suggest that police officers apply any standard in the use of force other than what is reasonable and necessary is irresponsible, unprofessional and sends the wrong message to law enforcement as well as the public."

In a tweet that would receive over 48,000 retweets and 148,000 likes, the Gainesville, Fla., police department put out a message that read: "The @POTUS made remarks today that endorsed and condoned police brutality. GPD rejects these remarks and continues to serve with respect."

In an emailed letter to employees, acting Drug Enforcement Administrator Chuck Rosenberg wrote, "In writing to you, I seek to advance no political, partisan, or personal agenda. Nor do I believe that a Special Agent or Task Force Officer of the



(Wikimedia Commons)

DEA would mistreat a defendant. I know that you would not."

Rosenberg's letter continued: "I write to offer a strong reaffirmation of the operating principles to which we, as law enforcement professionals, adhere. I write because we have an obligation to

always act honorably," Rosenberg wrote. "A few days after Trump's speech, White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders said Trump was "joking" when he seemed to encourage police brutality at Suffolk County Community College.

speaking out when something is wrong. That's what law enforcement officers do. That's what you do. We fix stuff. At least, we try."

Rosenberg said that law enforcement officers must earn and keep the public trust.

"Ours is an honorable profession and, so, we will

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