

ALLIANCE FOR POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – JULY 29, 2017 – ALLIANCE FOR POLICE ACCOUNTIABILITY
– Pittsburgh, Pa

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THE ALLIANCE FOR POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY REACTS TO PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP’S CALL FOR POLICE BRUTALITY TODAY IN LONG ISLAND, NEW YORK

The Alliance for Police Accountability is disheartened and disgusted by President Donald Trump’s statement encouraging and condoning police brutality during a speech to law enforcement officers in Long Island, New York yesterday. (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/trump-police-brutality_us_597b840fe4b02a8434b6575a) The president’s decision to refer to arrestees as “thugs” and “criminals” ignores the constitutional protection of the presumption of innocence and endorses an already far too prevalent culture in law enforcement of playing judge, jury, and literal executioner before an arrestee can even be formally charged. The President’s words are reckless and irresponsible and could add to the already astronomical number of people killed by police annually.

The healthy applause that the president received from the audience of law enforcement officers highlights the harsh reality that there is a culture in American policing supporting abuse of power, that is not only celebrated by law enforcement, and endorsed by their political allies, but also brazenly displayed and voiced for the world to witness.

Law enforcement officers have killed nearly 600 citizens in the United States this year alone. Instead of using this forum to encourage law enforcement to create more meaningful relationships with citizens or engage in training that could reduce the use of lethal force in the field, the president made the false statement that the laws are “stacked against” police officers. To the contrary, the parade of officers – both locally and nationally – who have not been charged or have been acquitted at trial after brutalizing or killing citizens tells just the opposite story. In fact, in many states, laws exist that provide different and greater protections to officers acting in the line of duty than to citizens.

The Constitution of the United States mandates that its citizens be free from warrantless searches, be presumed innocent unless and until the state carries its incredibly high burden to prove guilt, and be entitled to a fair and impartial trial before a jury of their peers. When police officers brutalize or kill citizens they deprive them of those critical rights. We police officers brutalize citizens they deprive them of inalienable human rights. We live in a time where there is a necessity to create a movement to support and amplify the importance of Black lives because of the repeated,

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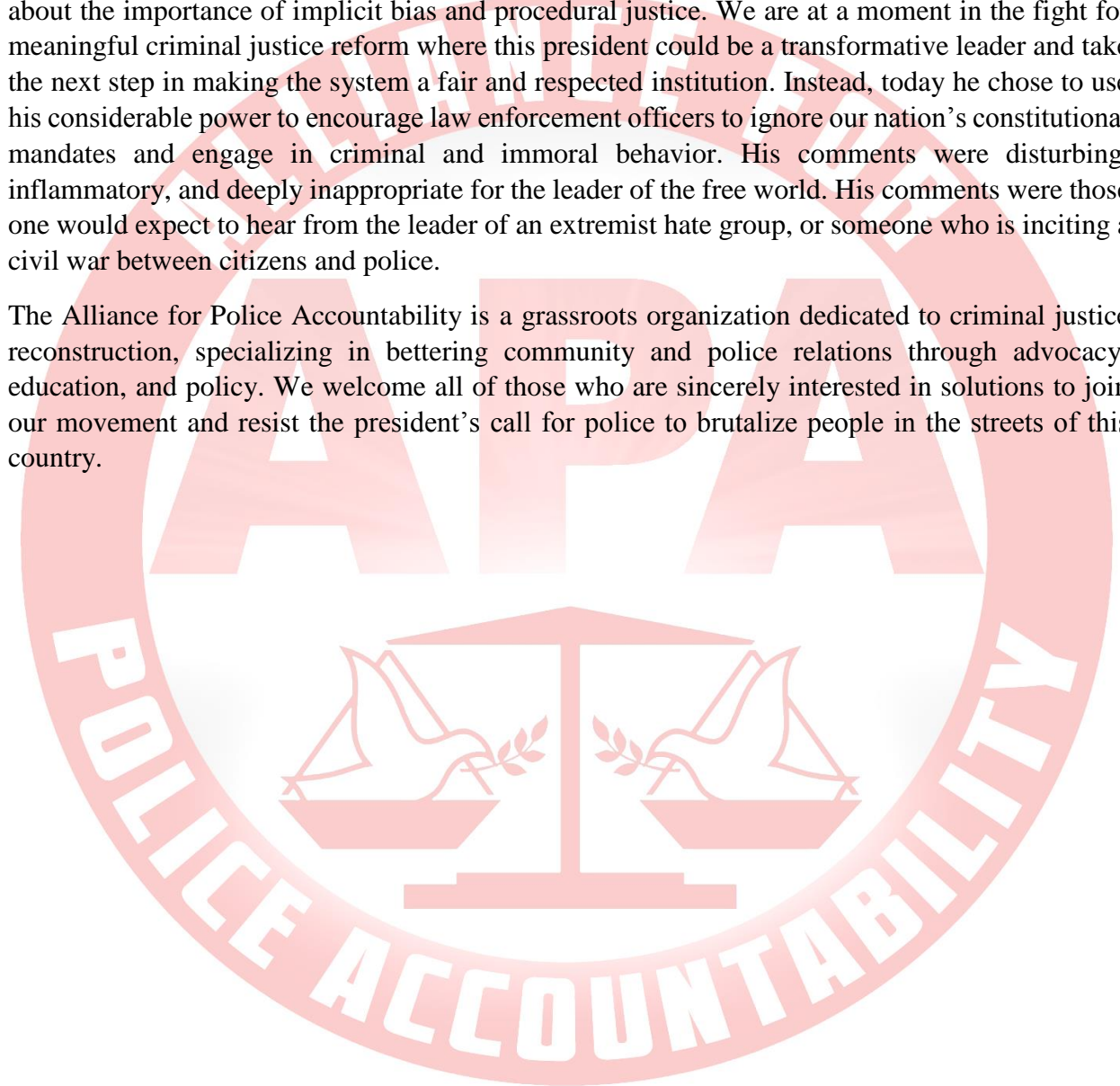
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tragic murder of black citizens by police in this nation's streets. We live in a time where, until the current administration, we were in the midst of reflecting critically about, and

remediating the ills of, mass incarceration. We live in a time where police departments around the country, under the oversight of the mayors attacked by the president today, are educating officers about the importance of implicit bias and procedural justice. We are at a moment in the fight for meaningful criminal justice reform where this president could be a transformative leader and take the next step in making the system a fair and respected institution. Instead, today he chose to use his considerable power to encourage law enforcement officers to ignore our nation's constitutional mandates and engage in criminal and immoral behavior. His comments were disturbing, inflammatory, and deeply inappropriate for the leader of the free world. His comments were those one would expect to hear from the leader of an extremist hate group, or someone who is inciting a civil war between citizens and police.

The Alliance for Police Accountability is a grassroots organization dedicated to criminal justice reconstruction, specializing in bettering community and police relations through advocacy, education, and policy. We welcome all of those who are sincerely interested in solutions to join our movement and resist the president's call for police to brutalize people in the streets of this country.



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