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From: Newman, Melanie (OPA)
Sent: Wednesday, June 29, 2016 4:20 PM
To: Hoffine, Brandi S. EOP/WHO
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From: Castor, Olivia (OPA)
Sent: Wednesday, June 29, 2016 2:10 PM
To: Lewis, Kevin S. (OPA); Newman, Melanie (OPA)
Cc: Stewart, Rebecca L. (PAO); James, Kelli D. (OPA)
Subject: Transcript of AG Lynch's Q&A from Press Conference in AZ Yesterday (6/28)

Hello,

I've attached a document containing the transcript to this email, and I've included the text below. Please let me know if there is anything that needs to be corrected.

Best,
Olivia

June 28, 2016
Press Conference with Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch
Phoenix, Arizona

ATTORNEY GENERAL LYNCH: So let me first thank the mayor of this great city, Mayor Stanton as well as the police chief of this outstanding department, Chief Joe Yahner. They have welcomed me to the city; they have opened the doors of this department to me, and we've seen some truly outstanding police work going on here. I want to thank them for their service and for their dedication to the people of Phoenix. I am here in Phoenix today as a part of a six city community policing tour. It began earlier this year in 2016 and I have already had the pleasure of visiting Miami and around Florida, Portland, Oregon, Indianapolis, Indiana, and Fayetteville, North Carolina. Tomorrow, I'll be concluding the tour in Los Angeles, California. And in each stop along the way in each of these cities I'm highlighting one of six pillars of community policing, identifying the final report of the President's task force on 21st century policing. You'll recall this came out a little over a year ago. But the report contains a number of common

sense adaptable recommendations for communities seeking to create a more collaborative approach to law enforcement and to public safety. And on this stop, what has brought me to Phoenix today, we're focusing on training and education, vital components of any successful law enforcement agency and an area where the Phoenix police department does indeed excel. From the (INAUDIBLE) police department's introduction of de-escalation training to their creation of a specially trained mental health crisis intervention squad. The Phoenix police department is ensuring that their office have the tools that they need to respond to the unique challenges of contemporary law enforcement. And just those two issues alone are some of the most pressing challenges facing 21st century policing today. Now, earlier today, I had a chance to actually witness a de-escalation training session in the Arizona Law Enforcement Academy. I was tremendously impressed by the comprehensive instruction that the officers received here, and that we will be highlighting going forward as an example to other departments across the country. As you know, this is a topic of great concern. We look at certain issues and cases, and people within the community often have questions about how officers are trained, about when and how they employ de-escalation, and I saw, frankly, thoughtful, substantive, effective approach to a number of different scenarios. And let me commend the training officers as well as the officers who go through this training here. We in the Department of Justice are determined to do our part, however, to work with our state and local partners to improve their educational capacity, particularly in this regard of training. We offer a wide range of grants, we offer training sessions, we offer technical assistance through our office of Community Oriented Policing Services of COPS, our Office of Justice Programs, our Bureau of Justice Assistance, our Civil Rights Division and our U.S. Attorneys' Offices among other components. Now we intend to continue looking for ways to provide assistance and support officers and the communities that we all serve and protect. Now as the Attorney General, I am committed in highlighting this work, such as the Blue Courage training and the de-escalation training that I saw today, as ways to keep both officers and the community safe, healthy and whole. Now of course, in addition to the work that we're doing with our state and local partners who are so important to us, we in the department are also committed to ensuring that our own personnel are well-trained in the core principles and best practices of community policing. And to that end, I am proud to say that the Department of Justice is now requiring all of its law enforcement components and Assistant U.S. Attorneys to undergo implicit bias training, something that has been rolled out at the local level for the past several years. This is an important step in our ongoing efforts to ensure that our administration of justice is as fair and impartial as possible, as an example of the Justice Department's commitment to holding itself to the same high standard. And let me, at this time, thank the Deputy Attorney General, Sally Yates, and her team, for their leadership on this issue, and we look forward to implementing this training in the weeks ahead at the federal level as well. So again, thank you for joining me. I'm delighted to be here in Phoenix, and I'm happy to take some questions.

REPORTER: So I have a question. President Obama, of course, will be supporting Hillary Clinton. To what extent does his support for Hillary Clinton affect, in any way, your role as Attorney General of the ongoing FBI investigation of candidate Clinton (INAUDIBLE) her emails.

ATTORNEY GENERAL LYNCH: So the investigation into how the State Department emails are being handled is being handled by career lawyers and agents. They are handling that matter

in the way that they handle every investigation: independently and fairly. They follow the facts and evidence and when they are done they will come up with a recommendation. We do not discuss any case with anyone at the White House, so the endorsement by the President does not impact any of the case that we're working on.

REPORTER: Will that be completed before the election?

ATTORNEY GENERAL LYNCH: I can't give you a timing report on that because, again, I want to let them finish their work. I want to let them complete their review and come up with recommendations which will be reviewed. So I'm not able to give you timing on that, but I will tell you that people are working expeditiously.

REPORTER: What are you doing with your findings here? Are you presenting them to (INAUDIBLE) police departments as a way of saying, "Look at what these people are doing, implement the same strategies." Is that the purpose?

ATTORNEY GENERAL LYNCH: We are going to be doing a report on my Community Policing Tour. We're going to be highlighting the best practices that we've seen in the various departments. In fact, we'll be having - we're hoping to have that done by the time - the first week in August, when we are highlighting our Community Policing Awards, an award that we are inaugurating this year to a rank-and-file police officer who excels at community policing. They can be nominated by the department or by the community, and we are still renewing those as well. So that will - what will be available to departments, but specifically in response to your question, we do often get outreach from police departments who come primarily to our COPS office, and they will request technical training or assistance, they will ask us to review different policies - for example, when a police department may say, "Can you take a look at my use of force policy?" - and see if we need to do anything with that, to provide assistance. We provide that assistance as part of the work of the Department, not necessarily as part of an investigation, although it does come up in those manners as well. We also post through the COPS office - we post information online, and we urge police departments who have questions or concerns about training and situations they might be facing, to look on our website and find departments that are in fact working in these areas. Because our goal is, for example, to be able to match up a police department who may say, you know, "We'd really like to work on our de-escalation training, is there a department out there we can consult with?" We would refer them to Phoenix, for example. And that does happen, and we will be looking to the Phoenix Police Department for that. We also, through our investigative work, published all of our consent decrees on Civil Rights Division's website. And we urge law enforcement officers and departments to look at those as well, and to look at the situations that have led many jurisdictions into problematic situations and see if they feel themselves trending in a particular way, to reach out for assistance before an incident occurs or before the relationship becomes so frayed that they're not able to recover from an incident. So we're trying to reach out and be proactive in a number of different ways, and we will be using the Phoenix Police Department as an example and hoping to match them in other departments also.

REPORTER: Sources say that you met last night with former president Bill Clinton. Did the topic of Benghazi come up at all, or can you tell us what was discussed?

ATTORNEY GENERAL LYNCH: No. Actually, while I was landing at the airport, I did see President Clinton at the Phoenix airport as I was leaving, and he spoke to myself and my husband on the plane. Our conversation was a great deal about his grandchildren. It was primary social and about our travels. He mentioned the golf he played in Phoenix, and he mentioned travels he'd had West Virginia. We talked about former Attorney General Janet Reno, for example, whom we both know, but there was no discussion of any matter pending for the department or any matter pending for any other body. There was no discussion of Benghazi, no discussion of the state department emails, by way of example. I would say the current news of the day was the Brexit decision, and what that might mean. And again, the department's not involved in that or implicated in that.

REPORTER: So what can you tell communities here, communities of color, and others that are concerned about policing, what can you tell them that is different in the way that Phoenix P.D. is doing its job today versus how it did it a year ago or five years ago?

ATTORNEY GENERAL LYNCH: You know I think what we can say to communities here in Phoenix and other communities that are also looking for ways to work with their police departments is that the phoenix police department has been very involved in community policing. That is to say they have reached out to the community and sought input, which we find to be a very important component to building a trusting relationship. The Phoenix Police Department has also emphasized the training that I mentioned earlier. The de-escalation for example really takes a situation and talks officers through a way to find the myriad ways you can resolve a situation before resulting in the ultimate use of force. That results obviously in safer communities, safer people coming into interaction with the police, and safer police officers. So what I'll say to communities is you look at the examples of the cities that we have visited that there have been situations where cities have in fact come back from a very (INAUDIBLE) relationship between law enforcement and the community, and it can be done. It takes work and commitment on both sides and we're happy to work with community leaders and community members to also give them the examples of things that we have seen and pair them with other communities who had very positive progress in this regard.

REPORTER: Do you have any update on the Justice Department's investigation of the Maricopa County Recorder's Office in the March Presidential Primary election?

ATTORNEY GENERAL LYNCH: No, I don't. I know that that's an area of concern here locally but I don't have any information for you about that.

REPORTER: Attorney General, thank you so much for your visit, we appreciate you visiting our town as well. What about the encouragement- do you feel very encouraged by some of the things that you saw today?

ATTORNEY GENERAL LYNCH: You know, what I though was tremendously encouraging was not just the de-escalation training that I saw but also the Blue Courage training that I saw. This is the second time that I've had the ability to watch the Blue Courage training, which focuses on making sure officers stay connected to the core of why they joined the force and why they became police officers and is designed not only to keep them connected to the job and safe and healthy but also make them as responsive to the community as possible. And in the

cities where we've seen this training in place, we've in fact seen positive community relationships as a result of that. I also think that the fact that the Phoenix Police Department is taking ownership of these issues and saying 'We're going to come up with the best training possible.' In fact, I also think that the Phoenix Police Department's dealing with mentally challenged individuals who may encounter in a law enforcement setting with the Crisis Intervention teams is a tremendous example of dealing with this issue. The issue of how we deal with suspects who present with mental illness or other forms of trauma is a tremendous challenge to law enforcement, because often the call comes from a friend or family member who cannot manage that person. Law enforcement intervenes, and we do not want that to be a tragic result. But we have to have ways of dealing with that.

The Phoenix Police Department has taken the proactive step of creating that particular crisis intervention team, which again, when we've seen that in jurisdictions across the country, has resulted in a much more positive relationship with the community overall. Also, with people who are involved in the mental health community, greater referrals to mental health providers, greater assistance to individuals who are traumatized, as opposed to pure law enforcement intervention.

So, it's really an example of the fact that policing, today, is about so much more about just responding to a call of a bad guy breaking into a house. They really have to be problem solvers. Police officers, today, really have to know their community. They have to know the problems and situations and concerns that their specific communities present and focus on how they can proactively interact with them. And that's what I find very encouraging about this department.

REPORTER: Thank you.

REPORTER: Very recently, perhaps in the last hour, there was a bombing at the Istanbul Airport. Have you been briefed on that yet? And, if so, are there any details that you can share with us?

ATTORNEY GENERAL LYNCH: Well, I'm awaiting a briefing on that matter right now, so I'm not able to share details with you. But, certainly we'll be looking into it to see what, if (INAUDIBLE) to do with that.

REPORTER: Can I ask you one more question, last week Reuters reported that you were opposed to a White House-backed plan that allowed Guantanamo prisoners to plead guilty to terrorism charges in federal court by video conference. Is that something you can confirm and could you explain why you were opposed to that policy?

ATTORNEY GENERAL LYNCH: Well, what I can tell you is that we're often asked to provide a view or an opinion as to the legal sufficiency of particular things that may be presented on the hill or otherwise. And so, we always provide the best independent legal advice to the White House or another agency that may ask us about that and we provide our opinion about the legal issues presented. And I think that that would be a similar situation there as well. We provide our opinion as to the legal issues so that when people are creating the policy or proposing legislation they can take that into consideration.

REPORTER: What was the issue there, what was the problem with video?

ATTORNEY GENERAL LYNCH: Without going into specifics what I can say is that again as many situations we're often asked to look at potential issues involving criminal procedure, criminal policy to make sure that, in fact, we're going to do everything in compliance with the appropriate (INAUDIBLE UNTIL 15:10)

REPORTER: ... And the standards for new recruits are no longer above the state minimum they are now at the state level or do you have suggestions for us locally when we are having problems (INAUDIBLE)

ATTORNEY GENERAL LYNCH: You know I think that I would look at the overall training here for all of the positive things that it is providing. I don't have specific comment on the number of hours of training, but in terms of the substance of the training that I've seen, certainly with the de-escalation training, that is something that we will be recommending to other departments that they implement and take a look at. As I mentioned before a few minutes ago, this department does have the Crisis Intervention Team. The set-up and the operation of that kind of team is something that we do recommend that other departments look at. That often is a resource issue, we understand that municipalities are strapped, but again it has proven to be very, very effective. And, I think that this department's focus on making sure that officers are able to handle the variety of situations that they come into contact with and use a variety of tools to manage them is one that I think is consistent not just with 21st century policing, but good, smart policing.

UNIDENTIFIED: Did everyone get a question? Did you get a question in the back?

REPORTER: I did not. I know that we're talking about Phoenix police right here, but this community also is policed by Sheriff Joe Arpaio. Many of the communities, especially Latinos, feel like they're (INAUDIBLE) criminal charges stemming from a long-running racial profiling case. How would you respond to the community?

ATTORNEY GENERAL LYNCH: There's an open ongoing matter involving the sheriff and some aspects of his administration so I'm actually not able to give you a comment on that now because there is an open and ongoing matter in federal court.

REPORTER: Would you have to sign off on any charges against the sheriff?

ATTORNEY GENERAL LYNCH: You know, I'm not able to give you that information I think it's premature right now, and again because it is open I can't comment on where it is or what it's headed towards.

UNKNOWN: Alright, thank you so much.

ATTORNEY GENERAL LYNCH: Thank you all.