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80th KZGNNews Talking Points Editorial

Why are the police guilty of offense, when just one person feels they are treated wrong?

First, a couple comments about last Tuesday’s editorial titled: Do any of you believe that extremist terrorists may be in these waves of immigrants coming out of the Middle East into Europe? The only inputs Ireceived on this editorial were from a couple people that I saw in the store. It seems that they, too, are wondering how many extremists terrorists are flowing along with the millions of immigrants flowing into Europe.If those countries are not concerned about this potential problem, they better get concerned.I agree, and hope we don’t see the day that terror attacks in more western countries becomes a regular event. I hope this administration doesn’t let it happen here in the United States.

On to today’s editorial topic: Why are the police guilty of offences, when just one person feels they are treated wrong? Before I get into this, for the record, I am a volunteer with the Ridgecrest police department. Please note that I have not discussed this topic with anyone at the police department.This is written totally on my own.

Have you noticed that when someone gets upset with the police, sometimes they make a public declaration of some supposed injustice at the hands of police, and they just throw it out the for all to see. When I was growing up, the last thing people did then was go public with accusations against the police.First, the person that was in trouble really didn’t want the world to know about it to begin with.Even if they didn’t do what they were charged with, people still wanted to keep it quiet.Now, people get a beef with the police and the first thing they do is start a rant on Facebook. Sometimes these rants are started when the poster doesn’t have all the details.They just get upset, and run to Facebook. Maybe because of my age, but I just see this as weird.As many people tell me to have all the facts about a news story, which I do try to do, people out there in the world can just go crazy on someone or a group of people with little shame. This editorial is not about any particular occurrence.

It’s about the thought process used by some people to just get upset about something, and then run to Facebook to start a public debate.

When the police get accused of something, there are so many people ready to jump on the bandwagon and beat on the police too.In the case of charges against the police, they are now guilty as charged, right away.Without even a comment from the police, they are still guilty. I find it amazing how many people will read an accusation, and take it as the whole story and jump on it too.What did that one TV commercial say that was running a couple months ago?Oh yeah, I remember.One person was talking about something totally ridiculous on the Internet, and a person asked him, “Of course, if it’s on the Internet, we know it has to be true?” And the person answered, “Of course”.Catch the satire there.There is so much on the internet that is not true, but so many people think it is. Why are so many people ready to jump on police when accused?I can say this from my own experience with the police department and the officers, when I went through police training, we were beat on in every class about the people’s constitutional rights, and that the people’s rights were paramount.All people rights. Everyone was to be treated with respect.The decision to take someone’s rights away by an arrest was to be considered the highest level of importance.Do not arrest without evidence.Do not attempt to detain a person without probable cause.Keep the peace was important. When I sit at the station and talk with officers, I have never heard one officer say, let’s go out and make someone’s life miserable today, or let’s go out and write as many tickets as we can today.Officers don’t go on duty to make someone’s life miserable.But they do have a different responsibility than the rest of us.When they go to work, they are sworn officers.They swear to uphold and enforce the laws of the city, state, and federal government and to do that enforcement fairly and equally to all.There is no bias towards any particular group of people. I know that lately there have been some officers across the country that have done the wrong thing, and those officers should be dealt with, but the overwhelming majority of officers just want to do their job, and go home at night. That is a key point. They want to go home at night, just like the rest of us. Remember, they risk their lives everyday out there.There is a chance everyday they go out on duty, that their job could end their life.Sure, the odds for that are low, but it is possible and is a possibility they live with everyday of their career.They deserve the benefit of doubt when people attack them publically.They aren’t always guilty as charged. Next time you see someone going off on the police, give them the same benefit of doubt that you’d like to be given if you were accused of something.Do all lives matter? Of course.Does innocent until proven guilty matter? Of course.Does fairness to our fellow man matter? Of course.Should we wait to hear both sides of the story, before reaching our own conclusions? I believe we should.We all know there are at least two versions of any story. The next time someone goes crazy on Facebook, bringing charges against anyone, sit back and wait for details, before jumping on.People are innocent until proven guilty.Police are innocent until proven guilty. Most of all, when you decide to publically ridicule a person on something like Facebook, the accused has a family and friends that may see it too.Think about how you may be affecting their children or their own parents.If you have a problem with the police, go down to the station and ask to talk to the chief.We have a fine chief that will not sweep something under the carpet if an officer does something wrong. He will deal with it.

In conclusion, think about how you handle disputes.Do you want to make everything public?If you do, have you thought out the impacts to people that will read them. Is Facebook a good place to levy attacks on someone?I don’t think so.Whatever happened to face to face contact to handle differences?

I’m Tom Wiknich, and that’s what I think.I’d like to know what you think.If you have any comments about this editorial, or would like to discuss or recommend a topic, I’d like to hear from you. Please email them to info@kzgn.net.