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## Trump fires back at NFL over player protests

Haley Sylvester

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## Trump fires back at NFL over player protests

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President Donald Trump has created quite the controversy on social media in the past week over certain NFL players decision to kneel during the national anthem before their games to protest racial oppression and inequality in the United States. Former San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick was the first player to protest the national anthem last season by sitting down during a preseason game, and then kneeling during week one.

Since the start of the 2017 season, players from several NFL teams have chosen to protest by kneeling, sitting, raising their fists, placing their hands on teammates' shoulders and locking arms during the national anthem.

The morning of Sunday, Sept. 24, Patriots quarterback Tom Brady posted an Instagram picture with James White with the caption "Strength. Passion. Love. Brotherhood. Team. Unity. Commitment. Dedication. Determination. Respect. Loyalty. Work. #nflplayer (<https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/nflplayer/>)." Shortly after, Green Bay Packers quarterback posted a similar picture on his Instagram of himself and teammates Davante Adams, Randall Cobb and Jordy Nelson. The caption included five hashtags: unity, brotherhood, family, dedication and love.

One day after Trump's remarks that the NFL players choosing not to stand during the national anthem was disrespectful, NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell released a statement that called the comments "divisive," though Trump was not mentioned by name. Trump fired back on Twitter on Saturday afternoon that said, "Roger Goodell of NFL just put out a statement trying to justify the total disrespect certain players show to our country. Tell them to stand!"

"The NFL and our players are at our best when we help create a sense of unity in our country and our culture. There is no better example than the amazing response from our clubs and players to the terrible natural disasters we've experienced over the last month," Goodell said in the statement. "Divisive comments like these demonstrate an unfortunate lack of respect for the NFL, our great game and all of our players, and a failure to understand the overwhelming force for good our clubs and players represent in our communities."

At a rally Friday night in Alabama, Trump demanded that players be suspended or "fired" by the NFL for disrespecting the flag. In a New York Times article posted on Sunday morning, Trump called for NFL fans to boycott games until the league suspends or fires players who refuse to stand for the national anthem.



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