

## *The Police Officers Who Did Not Disgrace The Uniform*

*by*

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*There has recently been intense media coverage in Washington, D.C. about the disgraceful conduct of out-of-town police officers in town for National Police Week and memorial services honoring their fellow officers killed in the line of duty. From the media reports and eyewitness accounts, there is little doubt that these men, sworn to uphold the law, instead broke the law and did a sad disservice to their fallen comrades.*

*Enough said about those adult juvenile delinquents. The media is doing its job reporting on the the destruction and disruption that occurred, but I would like to focus on the police officers, including members of the Massachusetts State Police, who I personally observed during National Police Week. These are the ones who conducted themselves with honor and pride.*

*I work near the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial where*

the names of slain police officers are engraved on a granite memorial which rings a beautiful park not far from the White House. My apartment happens to be near several of the Capitol Hill hotels where many of the out-of-town police officers were staying for the weekend. I saw these officers all week long, around the Memorial, touring other sites or near the hotels. Frankly, I have never felt safer walking the streets of Washington than I did this past week. My observations of thousands of visiting police officers were quite different from the unfortunate activities of a minority of police officers which are garnering all of the attention.

The officers I saw were the ones who quietly visited the Memorial for the fallen law enforcement officers. They were accompanied by fellow officers, family members of the deceased officers, and their own families. These are the officers who took pictures, knelt down to trace the names of deceased friends on a piece of paper. They sometimes wept and embraced, overcome by the emotion of seeing the name of a friend or family member

engraved on the Memorial. I saw them walking in and out of the Memorial Visitors Center across the street from my office, anxious to go home with a memento from their trip to Washington. These were men and women of honor.

I attended the Saturday night candle light vigil held at the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial. It was a beautiful night and an awesome sight, with an estimated 8,000 people in attendance, 157 candles lit to honor the officers who died in the line of duty during the last year. State and local law enforcement officers from all over the country, including a contingency from the Massachusetts State Police in their blue dress uniforms, were in attendance, all who I saw conducting themselves with honor and dignity.

The National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial is a special place for a lot of people, including me. The name of Joseph F. Moynihan, Jr. is on

the Memorial. It's engraved in section E-33. Many people remember Joe, who was a Massachusetts State Police Trooper and died in an airplane accident in the summer of 1990. I was two years behind him in high school and later was proud to work with him in then-District Attorney Scott Harshbarger's office. Everyday, when I walk by the Memorial on my way to and from work, I think of Joe. The vast majority of officers who visited Washington this week similarly came to remember someone they knew.

The law enforcement officers who I observed over the course of last week honored Joe Moynihan and the other officers whose names are on the Memorial. The officers who lost their lives while serving the public and the ones who conducted themselves with honor dignity during National Police Week are the ones we should remember when we think of this Memorial and National Police Week. Anything less would be a disservice to all of

them.

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