

TESTIMONY OF DANIEL BONGINO

FORMER NEW YORK POLICE OFFICER,  
FORMER US SECRET SERVICE AGENT

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

ON

“OVERSIGHT HEARING ON POLICING PRACTICES AND LAW  
ENFORCEMENT ACCOUNTABILITY”

June 10, 2020

Police Officer Dan O'Sullivan was a friend of mine. We went through the Police Academy together but we lost touch when we graduated, as we were assigned to separate precincts. Dan and I were briefly reunited in 1998. But it wasn't a joyous occasion. I was reunited with Dan in a hospital in Queens where he was hospitalized with devastating injuries after pulling over, while off-duty, to assist a driver in an emergency situation. Dan was the very essence of a public servant. Dan always put himself last, while putting his commitment to the safety and security of the public first.

During my employment with both the New York City Police Department, and the United States Secret Service, I had the honor and privilege of working with agents and police officers who had committed themselves to a higher cause. Just like Dan. I met so many of these committed public servants that, sadly, I can't even recall all of their names. These are good men and women. Yes, as with any profession, there are officers who aren't suited for the job and who cause trouble, and sometimes worse. But, in my experience, this is rare and becoming rarer.

Special agents I worked with, and remain friends with, in the US Secret Service joined members of the NYPD and NY City Fire Department on that tragic day, September 11, 2001 and sprinted into those burning buildings and personally escorted people out. The buildings collapsed, as we all know, taking many of those brave NYPD and FDNY souls with them. Those brave souls were running into the buildings, while everyone else was evacuating. These are the types of people I was honored and privileged to work with. Public safety first, EVERYTHING else is second.

The defund the police movement will target these heroes. They ARE the police. It's not some amorphous mass that will be affected, it's real heroes, in real time. Removing these heroes from communities will do nothing but ensure chaos and destruction. Police officers are the frontlines, putting themselves between the evil-doers among us, and the honest, hard-working Americans yearning for security and prosperity.

We can, and should, commit to police accountability without shredding the thin wall between civilization and chaos. There are few jobs in the country as stressful as policing. I receive an email or a text a few times a year notifying me about the death or injury of a police officer I knew or worked with. Imagine if that was happening at your job. God forbid you found out that co-workers of yours were killed or injured in the course of doing their jobs. And you received these messages multiple times each year. That's policing. That's what they do. They risk their own lives for yours.

I'll say in closing - I spoke at an event for police officers years ago and a spouse of one of these heroes said this, "the most wonderful sound of the world for a spouse of a police officer is the sound of Velcro at night." Why Velcro? Because it's how a police officer's body armor is secured to their bodies. And when the body armor comes off, and that sound echoes in their ears, the families of our heroes know that they're home safely.