



International Union of Police Associations

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I.U.P.A. Reflections on National Police Week from Sam A. Cabral, President of the International Union of Police Associations

Each year in May, the Nation celebrates National Police Week. It includes the ceremony of engraving the names and honoring the brave men and women who have lost their lives in the line of duty. As of this writing, 23 have given their lives just this year.

To me, every day is an occasion to honor and thank them.

Law Enforcement Officers are one of a kind. The 911 phone rings constantly. There are desperate pleas; always tragic, always urgent. These calls are answered by our nation's finest. They place their lives on the line daily, for people they don't know, some of whom hate them.

They witness the aftermath of unbelievable violence and confront the vicious behavior of criminals, those suffering mental health crises, and human despair.

Amid this, they also deal with their own issues, work, court, families, and holidays missed. The images they suppress haunt their sleep and erode their peace. They deal with their actions being dissected frame by frame by people who have never faced what they face. They are vilified in the media based on a few moments of video without context. Some are even prosecuted for actions taken in the midst of chaos.

And we wonder why their ranks are thinning.

We should honor, empathize, and give thanks, rather than criticize – daily.

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*NOTE: Originally chartered in 1979, the **International Union of Police Associations** is the only chartered labor union that exclusively represents law enforcement personnel. The I.U.P.A. represents active-duty, rank and file law enforcement professionals and emergency medical personnel nationwide – including the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. The I.U.P.A.'s mission is to protect and advance officers' wages, benefits, and work conditions. Membership includes officers from agencies throughout the United States, including the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.*

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