

# **Transcript of Riverside County Sheriff Chad Bianco's Keynote Speech to the California Peace Officers Memorial Ceremony May 8, 2023**

Thank you and good morning. I am extremely honored to be present and to be able to participate in this morning's memorial. On behalf of all of the California State Sheriffs and the Chiefs of Police, I want to offer my sincere condolences to the families of our fallen heroes. I can tell you this is not the address that any law enforcement leader wants to give and a gathering that all of us wish did not have to occur. However, memorial services are important to all of our lives as we remember our loved ones and question our own vulnerabilities.

As we come together as a large extended family, we must remember that God designed all of us to dwell and flourish in community. There is also something very powerful and healing when we come together under a common bond to mourn, remember, and celebrate the lives of heroes who gave their lives in the service of others. This year, we are adding nine names to this memorial, nine families whose lives forever changed when their loved one said goodbye at the beginning of the day, never to return home. two weeks later, California lost the first law enforcement officer of 2023 when Riverside County Sheriff's Deputy Darnell Calhoun was also murdered.

As we look around us, we see many different colors of uniforms, different styles of badges, different patches on our shoulders, and yet we are all the same. We are part of the same large extended family. The men and women who don these uniforms share a special bond. Despite what some political leaders, activists, and some in the media would like everyone to believe, we are the best of the best that society has to offer.

Men and women who sacrifice their personal families and their personal lives willingly in true service of both self fashion in order to protect the lives and the property of others, people they don't even know. We hold ourselves to a higher standard than all others. We live our lives knowing that unwavering honesty and integrity in not only our professional lives but our personal lives determine whether or not we remain employed and allowed to continue to serve others.

Our commitment to place our lives on the line for people we do not know is something that people outside this profession cannot understand. Unless you are wearing this uniform, your position, your title, your career is not determined by this same standard. Some should be thankful of that. When we lose a loved one sometimes the first question is always, why for law enforcement when we lose a brother or sister in the line of duty, the answer is sometimes a very simple one. It isn't because we chose this career and it certainly isn't part of the job that we signed up for.

Let me assure you, it wasn't the gun's fault or the non-existent made up emotional buzzword of gun violence. The real answer is as old as time itself, the battle of good versus evil. From the beginning of time, God has gathered and called forth warriors in the fight against evil. I believe none of us chose this profession. We were made for it. I believe that we are told, I believe what we are told in the book of Rome, of in the book of Romans, that God has instilled in each of us abilities and skills needed for such a noble and righteous profession.

**Character, honesty, integrity, passion, determination, common sense, reasoning, ability, and most importantly, the strength and the courage to do things that most others are afraid to do or simply cannot do.**

He then led our lives down a specific path which led us to this career. In the book of Isaiah chapter 14, verse 12 through 15, God asked, who shall I send? Isaiah stood up and said, send me as we sit here today, remember and mourn the loss and celebrate the lives of nine heroes who answered God's call, stood up and said, send me. The requirement of a civil society is an adherence to the rules of law and the punishment of the evil rap scallions who, who would do us harm?

Law enforcement is that thin blue line that separates the call from the chaos and the peaceful from the violent. Unfortunately, we seem to have more and more politicians living in a fantasy land. Where up is down right is wrong and wrong is right. They are either naive to the fact that evil exists or they are complicit in the destruction of social compact. You must either stand up against evil or you stand with and you support evil. I will continue to challenge those souls to come see for themselves right in our cars, work in our jails, and witness the evil We deal with.

The last five California law, enfor law enforcement officers to die on duty were murdered by evil men with no regard for our laws or the value of human life. All of them had extensive criminal histories and all of them should have been in jail or prison. They were not in jail because of a failed social experiment where criminals are empowered by a sick and twisted version of so-called criminal justice reform that paints law enforcement as the bad guy and the criminal as the victim of society.

Five sons, five dads, five husbands, five officers who, who would still be with us had it not been for a failed justice system in California. I stand here today on behalf of the fallen their families, all of law enforcement, all of the victims of crime and the law abiding residents of California to adamantly proclaim that we have had enough. When evil spits in the face of our laws and fights against the warriors who hold the line of a civil society, certainly the safety of society as a whole is in parallel.

Our fallen brothers and sisters gave their lives to all that is good in this world. We will continue to put on these uniforms in their honor so that their sacrifice will not be in vain and they will never be forgotten. I pray for the day when we no longer add names to this memorial. I also pray for the day that our lawmakers and politicians care more about public safety victims, law abiding residents and law enforcement officers than they do criminals. Until then, and with complete disregard for the adversity we face, we will continue to put service above self as we honorably and proudly continue the internal battle of good versus evil to our grieving families.

Rest assured, the sacrifice and the loss of your loved one will never be forgotten and you will always be a part of our extended family. Thank you all for making this journey to this year's memorial service as we honor those lost in 2022. I wish all of you a safe ride home and God bless the families and the partners of our fallen heroes.