

My Two Cent's Worth

By: Joseph Andalina

The code

Yes, cops have a code. Y'all know that, right? Cops would never rat on each other, right? Always, stick up for one another, especially if your partner is committing a crime, right? The Blue Line, the Blue Code, the Blue Life. Mums the word. And cops will always lie and change their story.

Never have to fear that your brother or sister officer will turn on you, report you, give testimony against you, or write you a ticket or arrest you, right? Especially if you're retired, disabled, or suspended, too?

Such crap, ain't it? The press and politicians watch way too much *Hill Street Blues*, *Miami Vice*, or what other recent TV shows are broadcast now, reiterating the same garbage.

I remember numerous occasions when younger cops sat in my office in trouble, telling me other officers involved in some minor or major blunders would never violate the code. I told them all the same thing; that not since Al Capone and Big Bill Thompson was there anything near a code that you could bank on. And so they learned the hard way.

Invariably, most officers will report criminal conduct and once confronted with "Garrity" or "Miranda" will spill the beans about another's wrongdoing, especially if there is a deal involved.

Police do have high integrity and very few violate that ethic. So cops write cops, arrest cops, and report cops when necessary. Sure, they may hesitate to offer corroboration to the chief, because we all know what hypocrites most chiefs are.

And while some officers have been known to stretch the truth or withhold it in order to avoid lying, the brass speaks with the proverbial "forked tongue." Can't trust a word they are saying most of the time. So because an officer hesitates, that does not mean they are lying. They are trying to see who is trustworthy.

As a union, our advice has always been to tell the truth. Fibbing will only buy you more than two minutes in the penalty box. But we also tell you not to talk, either, until you speak to an attorney, have been given "Garrity Warnings" and never say more than "I am Groot" if you are read Miranda.

That's to ensure **your** due process, which the press and alderman and other political hacks, want to take away from you. And yes, you should support and back each other always, and be there for one another, but this code thing as expressed by the press and academia for the most part for the every day officer just does not exist.

They're going to tell me that over 500,000 cops in the USA have a secret code like the Illuminati or something? Please. I get so tired of this baloney. It never stops. It's like the movie *Spartacus* where near the end, slave hero Sparty and his 6000 minions have been captured by the Roman legion. When asked for Sparty to come forward and his minions would be spared, 6000 slave rose up to say "I am Spartacus," while the real guy shed some tears over their loyalty. (By the way, never happened in real life, but it was dramatic.)

Well, this "code" didn't go over real well as the 6000 slaves were all crucified along the Appian Way to Rome. Can we have a do-over Marcus Crassius?

Cops understand this and realize that they, too, will be sacrificed if not eventually truthful. Better to identify the real Spartacus rather than be crucified for some mythical code.

I wish I could tell you and recommend that we never say bad things about our own, but it's not something that can be done with honor.

So tell the truth, claim you know nothing, or just answer "I am Groot."

Vita é bella.

ps: As a side note, one thing I wish we wouldn't do — write citations to other cops or retired officers. There is nothing wrong with professional courtesy for minor matters, despite what the brass, press, and politicians may say. All professions have them, so be kind to your fellow boys and girls in blue.