



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF TULARE

Tim Ward, *District Attorney*

December 2015

Embarking on this last commentary of 2015, I truly wanted to write something light-hearted, playful and indicative of holiday spirit. No cautionary words of warnings about criminals who prey on holiday shoppers, scam artists who exploit our generosity, no reminders about being mindful of drinking and driving. I don't know about you, but I was in the mood for nostalgia and humor.

And then the shooting in San Bernardino happened. As our office was preparing for our holiday party, a group of county workers a few hours south of us lost their lives, were injured, and were forever changed by two killers.

It was clear to me that no matter how many times we hear that we must move on, that we must not let the terrorists "win," these terrorists are eroding our well-being. By attacking our citizens during the most quotidian of environments, at a holiday party, it sends a message that they lurk in the ordinary, the routine and benign events of our lives.

But here is what I believe: Though our well-being is shaken, we will live our lives.

My good friend and colleague, Mike Ramos, the District Attorney for San Bernardino County, is no stranger to his community being under siege. We all remember a few short years ago when ex-Los Angeles Police Officer Christopher Dorner was on a murderous rampage in the Inland Empire. Again he found himself grappling with unimaginable violence as these two terrorists gunned down fellow county employees. District Attorney Ramos told me this incident hit close to home, his professional home. We stand 58 California counties strong in solidarity with San Bernardino County and the feeling that our workplaces are our home away from home.

We did have our holiday party as scheduled; we began with a moment of silence to remember the victims in San Bernardino. We felt a degree of kinship with them. A holiday party, a company picnic, a team-building seminar, these are all the commonplace hallmarks of our work lives. They are special and unique to us, but happen repeatedly across this nation with little fanfare. I believe that our routine opportunities to bring colleagues together to share in conviviality are important and meaningful.

With every incident of perverse and grotesque violence, there is the shining light of heroism. I was moved by San Bernardino Sheriff's Detective Jorge Lozano, who while

evacuating a group of workers and tells them, "I'll take a bullet for you, that's for damn sure." After the incident, he was interviewed and predictably stated that he was just doing his job and any other police officer or deputy would do the same. I believe that. I believe that there are more brave, morally sound, dedicated police officers across this country than the pundits, protestors and the media would project.

On behalf of my staff and my family, I am wishing you and yours peace on Earth, good will towards man. Here is what I believe: Peace and good will toward one another will prevail.

Tim Ward
Tulare County District Attorney