

Yankee Stadium Didn't End at Yankee Stadium - Bring Down The 10,000 Posters

Steven Sprague
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Photo credits: All photos from Carol Pobanz

I met the Unification Church in early February, 1976 while attempting to walk the length of Manhattan to go to work. I was working as a civilian Police Administrative Aide in the fighting 48th precinct in the Bronx. I grew up in the 48th precinct and was assigned to work in the 48th when I graduated Police Academy training. The 48th precinct was next to the 43rd precinct, which had been made infamous by the movie "Fort Apache, the Bronx," a must-see film for any aficionado of fallen nature. I worked in the 124 Room, which meant I was the Police Officers' connection to the Criminal Justice system since I would write all the incident reports to insure the best outcome when it was time to go to trial. I was the most trusted Civilian Aide and I worked the hated midnight-to-8am shift. As you can imagine midnight to 8am was not well attended by supervisory personal so anyone working the graveyard shift was part of the family.



By March 31st, I had suddenly resigned from my position with NYPD, vanishing without a trace. It was a very difficult decision to leave a good-paying job with a great pension plan and not one discussion with anybody about what I was doing. But that was just the way things went, and on April 1st, I found myself sitting on the floor at the 43rd street church at 6:00 in the morning, seeing Rev. Moon for the first time. He announced a great campaign to "Go over" New York. Yes, we were going to have a great rally in Yankee Stadium! I really love the Yankees. We were going to advertise like crazy and inundate the city with Rev. Moon. We were going to bring back thousands of young people to God. We famously asked permission from the city to hang tens of thousands of posters of Rev. Moon, offering you a chance for your re-birthday. As a condition for hanging the posters, we promised to take them all down as soon as the Yankee Stadium event was over. And when we say as soon as the event was over, we meant immediately after the event was over. It was our goal to remove all the posters before the sun rose on June 2nd, the day after Yankee Stadium. We were going to show the city something it had never seen before.

So after the Yankee Stadium miracle, we all went back to our centers and got organized into teams in vans. We hit the streets to bring down those 10,000 posters. Along about 2am, I found my van driving

down Tremont Ave. in the Bronx, the 48th precinct! The very street I grew up on! The street was very quiet as the night wore on. We hopped out on the corner of Crotona Ave. where there were some posters. As we began peeling the paper, a police car came over to check out what was happening. I hopped down from the posters and went to the cop car and stuck my head in the window. Of course it was an officer I knew so I just greeted him, "How you doing, Muldoon?" Well Muldoon looked at me and said, "Sprague! Sprague! Is that you?" (Of course,



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from the posters and went to the cop car and stuck my head in the window. Of course it was an officer I knew so I just greeted him, "How you doing, Muldoon?" Well Muldoon looked at me and said, "Sprague! Sprague! Is that you?" (Of course, the officers had never seen me with short hair and very neatly dressed.) We had a few laughs and Muldoon went on the radio and announced, "Sprague is back!" Soon there were 8 police cars gathered there to see me.

Of course, the other members had no idea of what was happening and duty called, we had 10,000 posters to remove, so we moved on. I, however, had a memory for the rest of my life. Thank you midnight shift, 48th precinct.