



American Police, A History: 1945-2012: The Blue Parade, Vol. II

Thomas A. Repetto

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Postwar America saw few changes to law enforcement in one hundred years. The little known San Francisco riot of August 1945 announced the violent events of the next half century. Most of the methods remained unchanged until the 1953 kidnapping of Bobby Greenlease in Kansas City, Missouri, that shook the country.

The 1960s were dominated by civil rights struggles and major riots. Watts, Detroit, and Newark demonstrated how local police departments were unable to handle the disorders that engulfed those cities.

The anti-war protest at the 1968 Chicago Democratic Convention is important to this narrative since the author was in charge of convention security. The police department was split on how to deal with the protestors: a major revelation of this book. The author also turned down an offer to become part of a unit later known as the "plumbers" made to him personally by Attorney General John Mitchell.

The 1970s and '80s are the lowest points in modern American law enforcement until the emergence of "zero tolerance" by New York Commissioner William Bratton and Mayor Rudy Giuliani. 9/11 changes the landscape with the new focus on counter terror and new challenges to law enforcement.

Thomas Reppetto began as a police officer, rising to Commander of Detectives in the Chicago Police Department. In 1970 he received a PhD in public administration from the Harvard School of Government. He taught at the John Jay College of the City University of New York and became dean of graduate studies, then vice president. He is retired and lives in the New York City area.

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