

BOOK REVIEW

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A Review of *Police Professionalism*

REFERENCE: Deakin, T. J., *Police Professionalism, The Renaissance of American Law Enforcement*, Charles C Thomas, 2600 South First St., Springfield, IL 62794-9265, 1988, 343 pp., \$43.50.

We of the forensic sciences work very closely with the police in the United States yet know very little of how those police organizations became what they are today. Thomas J. Deakin, an attorney and editor of the *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin* attempts to correct that in this book. This would be an excellent text for a police science course or for any individual who would like to learn somewhat how today's police organizations came to be. The text stresses the "professionalization" of police and more specifically, the philosophy of how such organizations changed from the political handiwork of the 19th century to the efficient and mostly apolitical police forces of today.

The reader is given a brief history of policing since Roman times and an overview of the problems of the 19th century. These bring us up to the twentieth century where the author believes the trend to make police more professional in the way they operate and in the impetus of police work began. I would have liked to have seen more of the historical background and more of the patrolman's views blended in with the discussion. Aside from these minor faults, the book covers the topic as promised and will keep the reader's interest. Most texts on subjects such as this are dry and best taken with a good wine to make them more palatable. This was not the case here. I had no qualms about picking up the volume and looked forward to the developing story of how the police became the more efficient and respected organizations that they are today.

Because of the author's involvement with the FBI, there is an emphasis placed on the leadership of that organization as well as the International Association of Chiefs of Police toward modernizing the attack on crime. This is overdone to a degree and the reader will often wonder what the "unofficial" opinion is. This is not to say that the author believes the FBI to have been correct in everything done, just that there were others at work in the field and they did have an impact. For example, the FBI Laboratory is touted as the leader in the field of forensic science research and, were it not for that laboratory, no others would exist. This is, of course, a disputed subject. His coverage does lead to a showing of the importance of the integration of the forensic sciences with police work towards obtaining more professional attitudes towards the common problem.

The language is easily understandable and flows from one topic to the next. The arrangement is generally chronological with a minimal number of forward and backward references. This avoids the reader looking to other sections of the text to determine the flow of a prob-

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lem. One composition problem which did become evident was the constant restating of facts addressed elsewhere in the text. Because of the author's position as editor of a periodical, this fault can be easily understood, however, it cannot be excused. Once the reader learns of J. Edgar Hoover's approach to the International Association of Chiefs of Police it need not be repeated. While this is not done with lengthy paragraphs, it is done enough times with minor points to become an annoyance. To the author's credit, he does not clutter up the book with textual footnotes. All cited material is properly listed at the end of each chapter and the reader is directed to many other resources to continue individual research. You learn from the text, not from multiple footnotes.

The final topic addressed is the accreditation of police departments. I believe that more space should have been devoted to this very important trend in law enforcement as such a program is the "state of the art" in police professionalism. Acceptance by one's peers and standardization of organization and procedures will bring respect and success to the law enforcement community. The author states that no police department in New York State had been accredited. I would like to correct that. The Rochester, New York Police Department was accredited in early 1988 as the first in the state.

I did have criticisms of the book, but would consider them to be minor in comparison with the overall impact and need for the text. Again, I would recommend this book to anyone desiring to learn the history of police professionalism and how it got where it is today.