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## **Book Review: A Forerunner of Things to Come, the Big Blue Line, by Ed Cray**

Norman J. Freedman

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Book Review

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Book Review: A Forerunner of Things to Come, the Big Blue Line, by Ed Cray

*A FORERUNNER OF THINGS TO COME, THE BIG BLUE LINE.*  
ED CRAY. Longmans Canada Limited, Toronto: 1967. pp. 250. (\$7.50)

Ed Cray, the Director of Publication for the American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California, has written a compelling and informative account of police practices both in and out of the station house.

His well-researched book contains outlines of leading American criminal cases involving the basic conflict between the rights of private citizens as opposed to the needs of law enforcement. As well, the author describes a number of shocking incidents involving false arrests and imprisonments, beatings and brutality, and general examples of lack of respect for basic human rights and dignity.

Since the book centres on police practices in the United States, where a high percentage of crime is ostensibly committed by Negroes and Puerto Ricans, a Canadian reader might feel that the events depicted have little relevance to law enforcement procedures in Canada.

However, this is not so. A lawyer practising in the Magistrates' Court quickly learns that our police often resort to physical force in order to obtain statements from persons suspected of committing criminal offences. As well, in many cases where the charge is one of assaulting police, it is the initial conduct of the police officer which has brought on the alleged assault. Furthermore, one need only examine the recent recommendations contained in the Canadian Police Chiefs' Association

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\*Virginia MacLean, B.A. (University of Toronto), is a member of the 1967 graduating class at Osgoode Hall Law School.

Brief to become aware of the type of thinking that permeates the higher echelons of law enforcement.

Solutions to these problems are not easy to find.

The obvious one suggested by the author is to raise the general level of the police department by a combination of higher admission standards and longer and better training. However, better educated and trained law enforcement officers deserve much higher salaries than they are at present receiving and government seems reluctant to provide this.

The other solution advocated by Cray is the formation of an independent civil review board that would investigate complaints of police injustice and would have the power to discipline the offending officer if the facts so warranted. The police, however, are violently opposed to this idea on the grounds that it would fan the existing flame of distrust between police and private citizen and it would greatly undermine police morale which is already at a very low ebb.

One thing is clear. Until these problems are resolved, the incidents, the beatings, and the riots depicted in this book are only a mere forerunner of things to come.

NORMAN J. FREEDMAN.\*