

appointed as home secretary, he proposed that London appoint civilians, paid by the community, to serve as police officers. The Metropolitan Police Act was passed in 1829 and modern policing began.

## THE BEGINNINGS OF “MODERN” POLICE FORCES

“Modern” policing began with the formation of the London Metropolitan Police, founded by Sir Robert Peel in 1829. Peel set forth the following nine principles on which the police force was to be based:

- The basic mission for which police exist is to prevent crime and disorder.
- The ability of the police to perform their duties is dependent upon public approval of police existence, actions, behavior, and the ability of the police to secure and maintain public respect.
- The police must secure the willing cooperation of the public in voluntary observance of the law to be able to secure and maintain public respect.
- The degree of cooperation of the public that can be secured diminishes, proportionately, to the necessity for the use of physical force.
- The police seek and preserve public favor, not by catering to public opinion, but by constantly demonstrating absolutely impartial service to the law, in complete independence of policy, and without regard to the justice or injustice of the substance of individual laws; by ready offering of individual service and friendship to all members of society without regard to their race or social standing.
- The police should use physical force to the extent necessary to secure observance of the law or to restore order only when the exercise of persuasion, advice, and warning is found to be insufficient.
- The police at all times should maintain a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and the public are the police; the police are the only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the intent of the community welfare.
- The police should always direct their actions toward their functions and never appear to usurp the powers of the judiciary by avenging individuals or the state.
- The test of police efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder, not the visible evidence of police action in dealing with them.

Peel envisioned a close police–citizen relationship that helped the police maintain order in London. As originally envisioned by the architects of London’s Metropolitan Police, a police officer’s job was primarily crime prevention and social maintenance, not crime detection. Police were to serve as local marshals who actively maintained order by interacting with the neighborhoods they served.

Those who came to America in 1620 and their descendants, through the American Revolution, rejected the British Crown’s rule that permitted British soldiers to take over homes and to have complete authority over the

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Peel’s principles emphasized the interdependency of the police and the public as well as the prevention of crime and disorder and sought to give reality to the historic tradition that *the police are the public and the public are the police*.

colonists. Our founders wanted to ensure that no such power would exist in the newly created nation. As former Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court Warren E. Burger (1991, p. 26) stated: "The Founders, conscious of the risks of abuse of power, created a system of liberty with order and placed the Bill of Rights as a harness on government to protect people from misuse of the powers." Nonetheless, the system of policing and maintaining order in the northern part of the United States was modeled on the police system developed in England.

### Early Policing in the United States

At the time the Metropolitan Police Force was established in London, the United States was still operating under a day-and-night watch system similar to the one that had been used in England. In the 1830s, several large cities established separate paid day watches. In 1833, Philadelphia became the first city to pay both the day and night watches. Boston followed in 1838 with a six-officer police force.

In 1844, New York City took the first step toward organizing a big-city police department similar to those that exist today across the country when it consolidated its day and night watches under the control of a police chief. The police department was modeled on the London Metropolitan Police and Peel's principles. Other cities followed the example set by New York. By 1857, Boston, Chicago, New Orleans, Newark, Cincinnati, Philadelphia, and Baltimore had consolidated police departments modeled on London's Metropolitan Police. The new police chiefs of these departments faced the beginning of tremendous personnel problems and disarray among their officers:

What those first chiefs of police found in their newly consolidated forces was a motley, undisciplined crew composed, as one commentator on the era described it, principally of "the shiftless, the incompetent, and the ignorant." Tales abounded of police officers in the 1850s who assaulted their superior officers, who released prisoners from the custody of other officers, who were found sleeping or drunk on duty, or who could be bribed for almost anything. (Garmire, 1989, p. 17)

Despite these problems, and because there were also many honest, dedicated police officers, the citizens considered the police a source of assistance. Early police officers' duties included more community assistance and service than often imagined. Even at the beginning of the 20th century, law enforcement was one of the only government-sanctioned services to help citizens around the clock. Welfare, parole, probation, and unemployment offices did not exist. Police in New York, for example, distributed coal to the poor, monitored the well-being of vulnerable citizens, served as probation and parole officers, and helped establish playgrounds.

It was more than a decade after the formation of the first police forces in the United States that attempts were made to require police officers to wear uniforms. Police officers' well-known resistance to change was apparent even then. The rank-and-file reaction against uniforms was immediate. Police officers claimed that uniforms were "un-American" and "a badge of degradation and servitude." In Philadelphia, police officers even objected to wearing

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