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Plain Old Agent Reflections on the Siege at Waco and My Career with AFT

David Dibetta with Scott Fasnacht

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New Memoir Provides Fresh Insight Into Life as a Federal Agent Unique perspectives on the ATF s fierce gun battle with the Branch Davidians in Waco are at the center of this compelling look at a career in federal law enforcement. After weeks of training, the ATF was prepared to serve a warrant on the Branch Davidians holed up in their Waco, Texas compound. Special Agent Dave DiBetta was the first agent off the trailers in the ill- conceived police action. Plain Old Agent tells Agent DiBetta s story. For more than 20 years he served in the ATF and often found himself in the center of the action. From Waco to 9/11, Agent DiBetta served his country with honor and distinction. I m thankful for all the experiences I had throughout my career, said DiBetta. Whether it was a great day or a tough day, every one of them reminded me to appreciate everything in my life. Initially intended to focus solely on his experiences related to the ATF s activities in Waco, Plain Old Agent shares DiBetta s perspectives into the operation. His story has not yet been published anywhere else, and it is shared now in an effort to ensure that the officers who sacrificed their lives that day are never forgotten. As he looked back on his career, DIBetta realized that all of his experiences, good and bad, provide insight into the complex and sometimes infuriating life of a federal agent. This book is a diverse collection of stories that, when pieced together, provide an entertaining look into the life of a street agent, said DiBetta. Some of my experiences will make you laugh, and sometimes you ll likely scratch your head and wonder why. Among his many tales, DiBetta takes you up the rickety fire escapes of a Manhattan apartment building, into the control room following the bombing at the Atlanta Olympic Games, and along for a plane ride while serving as an air marshal during those uncertain days following the 9/11 attacks. But his most important contributions are his recollections from Waco. DiBetta was actively involved in the case from the early planning, to the gunfight on the Davidian compound, and the confusing days that followed. From start to finish, his story adds much to our collective understanding of that misguided operation. Four ATF agents lost their lives while serving the warrant in Waco. It was the deadliest day in ATF history. Across the United States today, law enforcement officers find themselves under increased scrutiny from the communities they serve. It s a difficult, often thankless career. You ll find those stories in Plain Old Agent, but DiBetta demonstrates how rewarding a career in public service can be.

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