

POLICE TRAINING AND POLICE PROFESSIONALISM IN EGYPT

by

Sam S. Souryal, Ph.D.

The Criminal Justice Center

Sam Houston State University

A small portion of the police community in the U.S. are familiar with Egypt beyond perhaps being the "cradle of ancient civilization", a developing nation, a moslem society, and the birthplace of President Sadat who immortalized the essence of peace by single handedly making peace with Israel and later giving his life for his chivalrous endeavor. Domestic peace in Egypt, however, must be another prominent Egyptian feature to be reckoned with especially in an age characterized with soaring crime rates and an obsessive fear of walking in the streets of most large cities in the world today. Not only can citizens and foreigners walk the streets of the capital city of Cairo at any time (by day or by night) with almost safety, crime rates in all Egyptian cities have been virtually going down. As Frank Morn, a University of Chicago criminologist, put it in a recent article, "in relation to its population growth and compared<sup>(1)</sup> to Western societies, Egypt has a negligible crime problem".

The land of Egypt (385 square miles) is the equivalent of the areas of Texas, Oklahoma, and Louisiana combined. The population of Egypt (40 million ) is equivalent to that in the three states plus New York and Missouri. Nevertheless, the total number of serious crimes reported to the police in 1979 as published in the Egyptian Public Security Report were:<sup>(2)</sup>

Murder	1022	Kidnapping	7
Rape	129	Robbery	129
Arson	47		

Serious Crimes Reported, 1979

Not only do these figures indicate a shockingly lower crime rate than those in the United States, the following figures further show a substantial, and consistent, decrease in crime rates that would baffle the mind of any American criminologist who visits the country or attempts to compare the effectiveness of the American and the Egyptian police systems. <sup>(3)</sup>

Years	Murder	Kidnapping	Rape	Robbery	Arson
1960	2262	43	155	420	267
1965	1273	16	138	115	101
1970	1224	18	166	240	76
1975	1289	13	138	275	60
1979	1022	7	129	174	47
Decrease %	55	84	17	59	83

Serious Crimes Reported from 1960 - 1979 & Percentage of Decrease

In Morn's article, the author discussed at length the subject of low criminality in Egypt focusing on the historical, cultural, political, and religious factors that originally contributed to that state of relative tranquility in Egypt. He also identified and described the major components of the criminal justice system with ample elaboration on the role of indigenous concepts and practices of crime repression. As expected the author associated low crime rates with such traditional factors like the influence of Islam, the patriarchal family structure, and a functional system of "village justice". Another major factor described in Morn's article, and appears, at least by implication, to be of great value to the continuing decrease in crime was Egypt's "revolutionary" police reform program. In this article, it will be argued that the latter factor, especially in modern Egypt, must be the dominant one and the primary contributor to the decrease in crime rate.

The before mentioned traditional factors have virtually been in effect for centuries and evidence to any increase in their effectiveness as a crime control agent has not been shown. In fact their may be considerable evidence to their deteriorating influence on Egyptian social behavior and thus loosing its deterrent edge on criminality. The new role of well trained and more professional police forces in Egypt must therefore -- barring the presence of a third group of factors -- be accredited with increasing viability and success in the nation's struggle against crime. Hence the focus of this article on police training and professionalism.

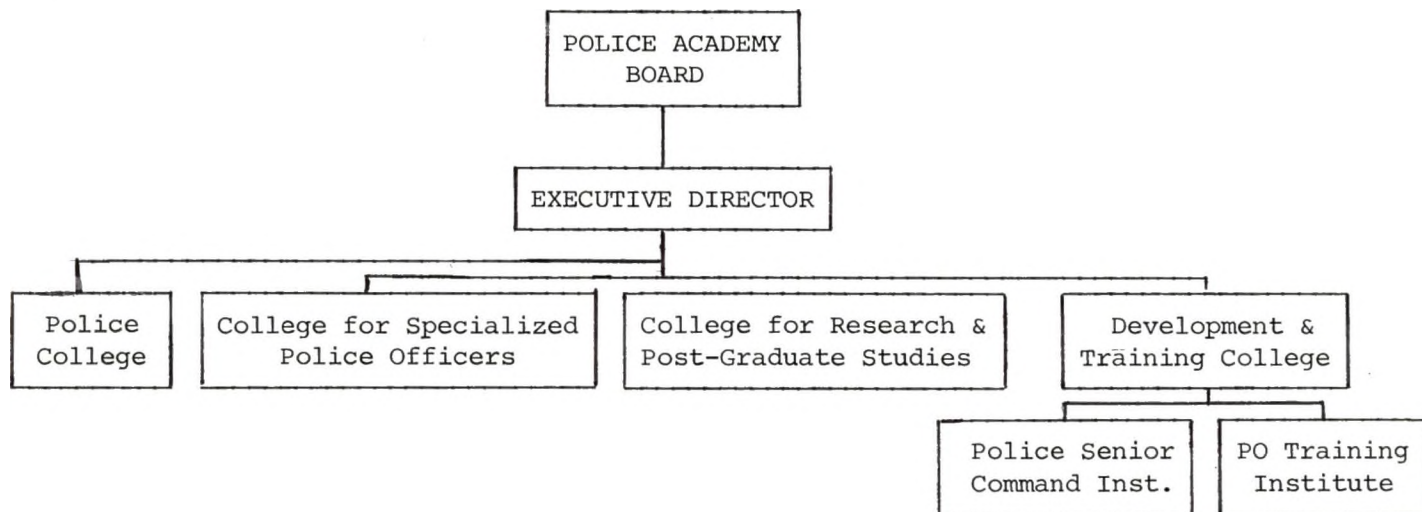
This author, like Morn, had the rare professional opportunity of visiting Egypt (Dec. 81 - Jan 82) and examining the criminal justice system in Egypt along with twelve other college researchers. Officials at the Ministries of Interior (that controls the police and prisons) and Justice (that supervises courts) were most hospitable and open. The strengths and weaknesses of crime control methods in Egypt were presented and frankly discussed. Field trips were subsequently made to numerous police agencies, courts, and prisons so as to confirm the findings the researchers made from the data and testimonials presented. The amazing fact concluded by the research team at the end of the visit was overwhelmingly the high level of sophistication and professionalism of the Egyptian police officer. While this might come as a surprise to the non-comparatively-oriented police officer in America, especially those who have not had the opportunity of visiting foreign police systems, the Egyptian police training system stands out as one of the highest, most comprehensive, and unique in the world. Egyptian police officers who must be defined in American terms as middle and top police managers from the rank of second lieutenant to commissioner (excluding only patrolmen and sergenats) must be graduates of the paramilitary National Police College. After spending four arduous years of university studies at the college the officer graduates with a degree in law and a Baccalaureate in Police Administration and Science.

Graduates enjoy all the privileges of the holders of a law degree conferred by other schools of law in the country. They are thus as highly educated as they are disciplined. All graduates of the same college, they share a common philosophy, a common set of goals, and a professionally competitive - though collegial - spirit. All members of the same fraternity, they maintain life-long friendships that permeate -- and often facilitate -- their daily professional contacts. All members of the Egyptian Bar, they carry a special weight and prestige in their interaction with other officials in the criminal justice system, namely judges, district and county attorneys, and prison wardens who are also graduates of the same college. To this extent, the college must be seen as a special police Westpoint. The role of the college does not however end at this juncture. It persists in terms of continued-in-service training sessions throughout one's career. Nevertheless, this type of training is always carried out under the tutelage of the mother institution; the Police Academy.

The Egyptian Police Academy is a gigantic university-like establishment with no counterpart in other nations. The term (academy) is, therefore, used in its Platonic sense: an academic institution which provides total education and expertise to its members from the beginning to the end of their careers. Under the ausposis of the academy, officers can pursue postgraduate studies towards a Master or a Ph.D. degree as well as achieve occupational training in their specialized areas. Under the ausposis of the academy, selected officers can undertake research projects and upgrade their professional development. Under the ausposis of the academy qualified physicians, engineers, psychologists and chemists can be trained to serve as police specialists in areas that need their expertise. Under the ausposis of the academy, police administrators are continually trained in management sciences for command positions as well as senior command leadership positions.

The following diagram illustrates the main components of the Egyptian Academy

Model:



#### OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICE ACADEMY

The police academy is the sole institution for law enforcement education and training in Egypt. It primarily serves the needs of the Egyptian police but not infrequently it offers the same services to police officers from other Arab nations as well. Its motto is "Science For Security". Its goal is the achievement of educational, professional, and moral standards of the highest caliber for Egyptian police forces.

More specifically, the Academy has the following objectives: <sup>(4)</sup>

- a) Educating and qualifying undergraduate police cadets according to the highest standards of education and professional ethics.
- b) Qualifying various specialized police cadres, i.e. physicians, engineers, and scientists.
- c) Training and developing police managers of all ranks through a range of in-service courses that would prepare them for junior and senior command positions.
- d) Providing the opportunity for police officers to pursue post graduate degrees towards an M.A. and a Ph.D. in criminal justice and police sciences.

- e) Providing a wide range of joint professional and academic research projects with the aim of upgrading pure and applied research in criminal justice.
- f) Creating an occupational environment of highly professional and moral standards among the police community.
- g) Exploring new ideas and testing innovative techniques by which police work can keep pace with scientific and technological development.
- h) Maintaining close relations with scholarly and cultural agencies involved with police work inside and outside the country.

#### ORGANIZATION OF THE POLICE ACADEMY

The latest organization of the Academy was established by Ministry of Interior Act No. 91 in 1975. According to the act all policies of the Academy are determined by a Board similar to a board of regents in any university in the U.S. The board is chaired by the First Assistant to the Minister of Interior who is also the chief executive officer of the academy. With the paramilitary rank of police General (equal to police commissioner - in American metropolitan cities) he is responsible for the administration of the Academy as a whole, supervising performance in its component colleges, and implementing the policy decisions of the board. Members of the board include a representative from the Senior Police Board (Ministry of the Interior), a representative from the Universities Senior Board (Ministry of Higher Education), Dean of a law school, directors of the four component colleges of the academy, and a few other professional members.

Responsibilities of the Board include, a) making policy concerning education, research, and training for the police community, b) determining standards for admission of police cadets, c) reviewing educational and training standards, d) defining policy for research in both pure and applied areas, e) nominating

instructors and members of the teaching staff, f) selecting recipients of academic scholarships and officers who would further their education abroad. The board is also empowered to confer honorary doctoral degrees to persons who distinguish themselves in the conduct of police research or contribute to the enhancement of the field.

It became clearly evident to the research team how broad and tedious the executive responsibility of the director of the Academy and his staff can be. Nevertheless, the managerial style demonstrated by Director Darwish, the American - educated Chief Executive with a Ph.D. from New York University, proved most progressive, firm, and effective. The Academy operates by the team concept. System analysis is the method of operation and management by objectives is the basic tool. Each college and/or institute stands as an administrative entity whereby its director and staff officers determine their objectives, plan the time limit for their achievement, and balance them out within the master plan decided upon by the Academy. Arbitrary decisions and intra-academy rivalry are always shunned and a healthy environment of productivity prevails.

The Darwish system of management has been so efficient and popular to have earned him the longest tenure in that office in history. He has captured the imagination of the many thousands of officers the academy has graduated since 1975, and his name became a legend in the police community. So successful has Darwish and his Academy been recently, he has initiated modified versions of it in other Middle Eastern nations and lectured about it in many European and American conferences.

a) THE POLICE COLLEGE

The Academy functions as an autonomous super system for educating and professionalizing police forces within the country. While police cadets are required to pay modest tuition and university fees, the major bulk of the Academy's budget is paid

by the Ministry of Interior as requested annually by the Board. While the four colleges of the Academy serve equally essential purposes, the Police College (the pre-service component) stands out as the largest, the oldest, the most important, and certainly the best known. According to a 1981 data, the college population consisted of 4,000 cadets, 257 instructors, and about 3,000 civilian and police auxiliary personnel.<sup>(5)</sup> Cadets join the police college at the age of 18 upon completion of high school education and live on campus for the next four years of schooling. In 1978 more than 5,000 students applied for admission but only 600 of the best caliber who passed the required physical and psychological test were admitted. This great interest in joining the college indicates the level of prestige this institution enjoys especially when compared with other prestigious fields like medicine or engineering. The curriculum, as mentioned earlier, puts strong emphasis on the study of law and completing a full-fledged degree in law. Concomitant studies include a wide variety of police subjects. Like in any criminal justice program in the U.S., they include police operations and tactics; criminal investigation; traffic laws and traffic control; forensic science; civil defense; and general police regulations. Of greater importance to the educational program at the college is the instillment of discipline and moral qualities. Thus the system stresses the importance of honor and duty. The cadet's appearance and behavior are constantly observed and monitored. Whenever correction becomes necessary the cadet may be referred to an in-house counselor but stern disciplinary actions might have to follow if the young officer does not shape up. Graduates of the police college are appointed by the Ministry of Interior to serve as second lieutenants of police (equivalent to first line supervisors in the U.S.) in police departments and sub-stations across the country. Due to the large investment in these young and promising officers, the Ministry requires that they serve in police functions for a minimum of five years. Beyond that, the officer



might choose to resign and practice law, become a state prosecutor, a professor, or pursue other employment. A very insignificant minority in each class, however, choose to.

b) THE COLLEGE FOR SPECIALIZED POLICE OFFICERS

This is the second component of the police Academy. University graduates in needed technical skills like medicine, engineering, psychology, and chemistry can join the college. Civilian personnel in the Ministry of Interior can also join. The age limit for the former is 28 and for the latter is 40. Both, however, have to pass physical and psychological tests for admission. The course of study in this college is one academic year. The curriculum consists basically of legal studies, police rules and regulations, and military training. Graduates are given the rank of first lieutenants unless they had previous civil service with the ministry. In this case they are given a rank equivalent to their previous civil status. Graduates of the college have been filling essential positions in numerous police agencies, hospitals, clinics, crime labs, data banks, and other technical facilities.

c) THE COLLEGE FOR RESEARCH AND POST-GRADUATE STUDIES

This is the third component of the police Academy. It was designed to meet the need for further higher education among police officers and with the goal of creating a core of police educators, researchers, and philosophers. No other tests are required for admission except a notoriously hard academic entrance exam. No wonder when one strolls on its beautifully manicured campus, one is likely to see a disproportionately large number of spectacled, rather skinny, older officers rattling off some of the latest in criminological theory or arguing over the interpretation of a minute clause in the penal code.

The college offers a Master degree in three areas: Management and Police Organization, Criminological Theory, and Public Security. The degree is awarded upon

completion of academic requirements in two of the three areas. The college also offers a Ph.D. degree to those who are interested, capable, and qualified among the graduates at the Masters level. At the present time there are 89 police officers who have earned a doctoral degree in Egypt. The ratio of police doctorate holders to the total population of officers is about 1%, a ratio which is considerably higher than the same in the United States and Great Britain combined.

d) THE COLLEGE FOR DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

This is the fourth component of the police Academy. It is charged with in-service training of police officers at all stages of their career. At present, the college comprises two independent institutes.

1. The Police Officers Training Institute:

This Institute operates three regular courses which vary in duration from 4 weeks to 8 weeks. These courses are designed to meet the need for upgrading middle management personnel and consist of:

The first command course for officers at the rank of Lieutenant and Captain

The Intermediate Command course for officers at the rank of Major and Lieutenant Colonel.

The Criminal Investigation Course for officers qualifying for detective work.

Apart from these regular courses, numerous other courses are offered on need basis. These include such courses like Police Communication, Passports and Immigration, Prison Management, Civil Defense, Hostage-taking Situations, among others.

2. The Police Senior Command Institute:

This Institute is perhaps the most prestigious school in the Academy system. It is limited to training senior command officers who constitute the Ivy

League of the Egyptian police at the ranks of Brigadier and Full General (the equivalent to deputy commissioners and commissioners in the U.S.).

The courses offered focuses on managerial development and executive leadership and particularly inasmuch as these talents could upgrade the quality of performance and increase productivity in police departments. Participants are specially exposed to the management of the "big picture" with its interdependent facets. They receive instruction, and participate in seminars and debates, pertaining to economic growth, social problems, as well as domestic and interracial politics. Problem solving is the main concern of this Institute.

While enrollemnt in this program is not mandatory, failure to signing up -- or successfully completing it -- is perceived as a major detriment to one's chances to serve as a police comissioner which is the dream of each and every young cadet when he joins the police college in his freshman year.

As a result of this "revolutionary" training model championed by the modern Academy, police professionalism and performance in Egypt have risen considerably. The National Institute of Criminology, originally created in 1956, was later reorganized, expanded, and renamed the National Center for Social and Criminological Research. The Center was brought into a close relationship with the Academy and its research projects were synchronized with those of the research components of the latter institution. Joint research projects were initiated and developed and exchange between the staff of the two institutions became a common practice. The Center consequently branched out into new areas of study including the effects on crime by emerging industrialization, rural development, drug abuse, and other

matters of social change. Later, in 1972, another center was created in conjunction with the U.N. and was named the Institute for Social Defense. This Institute was to spread modern criminological thought and techniques in Egypt and the Arab world through comparative research and comprehensive training for all officials concerned with the criminal justice system including magistrates, prosecutors, social workers and even legislators.<sup>6</sup> The Institute for Social Defense was also brought in a close affinity with the Academy and a healthy cooperation between their staffs ensued.

Another result of the Academy model was a drastic change in the police mentality toward the public. Graduates who are now well immersed in the concepts of police community relations became more determined than ever to change the old police image of coercion and repression into one of a true service style. An understanding approach to crime prevention has become the routine in the process of social control. Officers in the cities now often engage in a one-on-one tutoring of delinquent youth, of soccer ball players on city streets, or of speeding drivers on Egypt's dusty highways. Police related topics are frequently discussed by impressive police speakers on the TV screen, and police athletic teams win more often than lose in national ball leagues. In Morn's article, the author described the level of dedication some police commissioners had for the cause of true police community relations by telling the story of a 1979 blue-ribbon task force consisting of 50 police commissioners who disguised as ordinary citizens and visited 45 police stations in Cairo and Giza to see first-hand how policemen and civilian personnel treated the general public.<sup>7</sup> The findings of that task force became the base for a new national plan designed to further improve relations between the police and the public. In rural areas, especially in the vendetta-stricken South,

police chiefs and commissioners get personally involved in the process of arbitration between feuding families, tribes, or clans. The number of successful arbitration sessions (which culminated in a pledge of non-aggression) has increased in 1979 (from 1978) by 23% in the province of Sohag, by 50% in the province of Asyut, and by 67% in the province of Qena.<sup>8</sup>

A valuable side-product of the Academy concept, was the creation of Egypt's national police computer system. In 1977 the new national computer system which is housed on the fourth floor of the Ministry of Interior building was installed with the help of a major French company and included a net work of IRIS 50 main computers, Mitra 15 satellite computers, and hundreds of terminal units. The system which has now been improved provide in addition to the usual processing of information, a capability to analyze information, program alternative solutions to common police problems, and accommodate major operational research. Many of these capabilities and the information they produce have been utilized by the researchers in the Academy and in its component colleges at no charge.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Unlike most nations of the world, the rate of serious crimes in Egypt has been going down since 1960. It has been hypothesized that the causes behind that decline were basically cultural, social, religious, or even political. These causes which may in fact have contributed to the initial lower state of criminality in Egypt cannot -- especially in modern times -- be accredited with the ability to reducing crime. Instead, it is suspected that the contemporary "revolution" in police training and reform in Egypt has been a main reason behind that decline

The police "Academy" of Egypt and its four major colleges and training institutes form a comprehensive system of police education and development unmatched in other countries. The Academy is in charge of training police officers from enrollment as a freshman cadet to the commissioner rank. Graduating officers receive a full-fledged law degree and a degree in Police Administration and Science. Later in their careers, the Academy offers graduates opportunities for Masters and a Ph. D. degree. Besides, a system of interrelated training courses cover the whole span of the officer's career.

## Footnotes

1. Frank Morn, "Egyptian Crime and Crime Control", International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice, Winter 1981, Vol. 5, No. 2.
2. Egyptian Public Security Report, 1980, Pg. 2.
3. Ibid
4. The Police Academy, Cairo, Publication of the Academy, 1981, Pg. 1
5. Ibid, Pg. 4.
6. Institute of Social Defense Publication, Cairo.
7. Frank Moru, op.cit.
8. Egyptian Public Security Report, op.cit, Pg. 28.