
CORE FACTORS OF POLICE CORRUPTION ACROSS THE WORLD

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ABSTRACT

In the present article, the author examines the institutional and cultural factors that account for police corruption in various countries. He shows how police corruption arises primarily from deficiencies in four major areas: *(a)* recruitment, training and promotion; *(b)* resources, such as pay and equipment; *(c)* systems of accountability within departments, courts and the law; and *(d)* cultural traditions that inhibit the development of professional police standards. Recent efforts to combat police corruption are discussed and additional measures for minimizing it are suggested.

INTRODUCTION

Acts of corruption by people in power have long shaken public faith in government, but the loss of public faith is particularly acute when those acts involve the police. That is because the public relies on the police to uphold the law, protect the community and assist it in times of need. Police are also the most visible arm of government for most citizens and a yardstick by which they measure authority. When an officer acts illegally, he dishonours both himself and the law and justice system he represents.

Unfortunately, the organizational culture of the police does encourage some officers to commit acts of corruption. Such acts might involve taking monetary bribes, abusing their authority or concealing criminal enterprises. More importantly, they might also involve violation of human rights or ethnic and racial discrimination. When police organizations fail to punish travesties of justice, they inadvertently foster a culture of corruption that breeds discrimination, deception and greed.

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In the discussion that follows, the author explores core elements of the culture of corruption and shows why citizens of some countries have come to distrust their police. He also explores the broader societies that spawn renegade officers and shows why their citizens have equally negative attitudes towards legal and judicial systems that condone police lawlessness (*The Economist* 7 May 1994). A culture of corruption arises primarily from failures in four key areas: (a) recruitment, training, and promotion; (b) resources, such as pay and equipment; (c) systems of accountability within departments, courts and the law; and (d) cultural traditions that inhibit the development of professional police standards.

The concept of corruption used here in addressing these four factors is more inclusive than the standard definition of the term as an abuse of authority resulting in monetary or personal gain. This conventional definition excludes a broad category of related offences, such as outrageous police shootings or incidents of brutality that blatantly violate human rights. Those incidents should also come under the rubric of corruption because they reflect an underground police culture that subverts official standards of accountability.

Police corruption exists because police culture embraces and protects officers even when they intentionally kill an innocent person. Police culture is an outgrowth of the group camaraderie that links men who continually confront the dangerous and morally ambiguous world of the streets. A distinct ethic and code of behaviour distinguish the insulated world of police culture and they differ significantly from those outside the police world. Also integral to police culture is a tendency to close ranks in silence and to cover up knowledge of an officer's wrongdoing with a collective blanket of self-preservation (Crank 2000).

The mentality of "us versus them" implicit in police culture not only sets officers apart from ordinary citizens and creates a barrier to full involvement in the community, it also has a profound impact on the dispensation of justice (Amendola 1996). That is because an officer's sense of group identity can supersede his legal responsibility to testify against colleagues who have violated the law. The average police officer finds it difficult to betray fellow officers, even when those officers are involved in criminal matters; when he puts their welfare above his own integrity, he confirms the intimate ties that bind police officers (Weisburd et al. 2001). An entrenched esprit de corps exists because officers depend on each other for their very lives as they confront the violent and hostile world of policing. Every police officer knows that neither ordinary civilians nor the law will save him in the wee hours of the morning as shots crack out through the air; only a brother officer will do that. He owes that brother officer his unquestioning allegiance and complicit silence; and within this code of silence is the inherent flaw of a police culture that sanctions its members' lawlessness, particularly when race, ethnicity or economic class motivates an officer's actions. Indeed, the harm that police corruption can inflict on the moral authority of law enforcement is its greatest danger because it undermines both public trust in the law and the ability of the police to do their job.

RECRUITMENT

In order to understand police corruption, a global phenomenon with grave social repercussions, it is necessary to examine its basic elements, the officers themselves. Who are the officers that police departments recruit? How are they trained? And what are the criteria for promotion? Answering these basic questions involves determining whether departments have procedures to do adequate background checks on recruits, psychological tests that accurately measure their suitability for police work, impartially administered written and physical examinations and training that imparts integrity and self-control. Police departments in which corruption is rife generally have weaknesses in these basic areas. As a result, some of their officers have dangerous criminal tendencies that undermine confidence in law enforcement.

In New Orleans, United States of America, for example, lenient recruitment procedures allowed a woman with murderous instincts into the police force. Antoinette Frank initially failed the civil service psychiatric evaluation upon applying to the New Orleans Police Department in 1993. Undeterred by this rejection, Ms. Frank hired her own psychiatrist to find her fit, and this initiative earned her a place in the department when a second civil service psychiatrist found her suitable after comparing the two previous evaluations. This evaluation procedure was entirely within department guidelines. It is arguable, however, that the department should have demanded higher proof of Ms. Frank's mental health and more rigorously monitored her during her probationary period, since the decision to hire Ms. Frank had tragic consequences. The department's faulty judgement call became apparent in 1995, when Ms. Frank and an accomplice entered a restaurant in New Orleans where they held up and executed a security guard and two of the owner's children. To add to the horror of the incident, Ms. Frank had moonlighted at the restaurant before, knew the family and even responded to their call following the shooting as though she knew nothing about it. Though lenient department procedures had allowed her in as a police officer, the court that sentenced her to death recognized her for the criminal she really was (*Baton Rouge Advocate* 1997; Human Rights Watch 1998a; Amendola 1996).

In Mexico, some officers are also criminals because the country is only in the incipient stages of setting up a computerized database to check applicants' records. Departments have little means of determining whether applicants have been fired by another department or convicted of crimes elsewhere in the country, a serious liability in a nation where many applicants have a personal history involving lawbreaking, violence and drug consumption (Lichfield 2000). As a result of inadequate background checks, Mexican police departments have unwittingly let too many unsavoury characters enter their ranks. Some recruits have ties to distributors of narcotics or stolen goods and see police work as an opportunity to expand their distribution and sales network. Others have been police officers for most of their lives and have wandered from one department to another, after being discharged for violent behaviour, corruption or links to drug trafficking (Botella and Rivera 2000).

Equally unreliable are recruitment procedures and examinations in rural India, where rich farmers perpetuate their economic advantage by paying their relatives' way into the police force. The practice of bribery plays such a substantial role in the recruitment process that it has spawned an underground industry, involving government clerks and retired policemen who lobby for persons seeking police jobs. Money also talks as recruits with supportive relatives bribe examiners during physical tests and obtain leaked test papers before written exams. The result of these antics is a law enforcement system in which the poor find it difficult to obtain police assistance. That is because some police officers are too busy accommodating their rich and generous relatives by denying justice to poor farmers or cheating them out of their land (Jeffrey 2000; Bayley 1969; Verma 1999; Singh 1984).

Determining the morale of officers also poses a challenge for Hungarian police departments, which fired 240 officers for corruption in 1999. Low pay was reportedly not the source of epidemic corruption that year, since the Government had recently approved the single biggest pay raise in 20 years. Instead, the root of corruption among officers was faulty recruitment criteria. Selection procedures, as the Minister of the Interior of Hungary concluded, did not yield a reliable psychological profile of candidates and there were shortcomings in recruitment exams. As a result, successful candidates did not always prove fit for duty (Kosztolanyi 1999; Fogel 1994).

TRAINING

Training can theoretically mitigate some of the errors in recruitment and provide some important safeguards against corruption. It should give officers basic lessons in integrity, such as respect for citizens' rights, a sense of civic duty and self-control. It should teach them the limits of their authority and give them a basic understanding of the law, so they know when they are transgressing it. It should also instil a desire in officers to protect their integrity, not because they fear apprehension, but because they know corruption is wrong (Goldstein 1975). In short, training in integrity should produce officers committed to the ideal that they embody the "thin blue lines", as Americans call it, between order and disorder, between honest citizens and hoodlums. Unfortunately, officers in some countries come away from training with a fuzzy conception of this symbolic barrier against crime and anarchy. Poor training methods only serve to exacerbate the blunders in recruitment that preceded them.

Poor training has been blamed for the violent instincts of some Argentine police officers. Among other things, Argentina's police have been accused of involvement in a bloody terrorist bombing, the mafia-style murder of a journalist, drug trafficking and cattle rustling (Rotella 1999). Police committed a third of the killings that took place in Buenos Aires during the late 1990s. The reason, according to human rights groups that study the police, lies in bad training that fails to impart self-control or

effectively define the legal parameters of police authority. As a result, some Argentine police officers carry on as a law unto themselves (*The Economist* 1 May 1999).

In an even worse scenario, training in Nigeria accounts for an unsettling mixture of greed and cruelty in some police officers. According to the Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, based in Eldoret, Kenya, Nigerian police recruits, whose trainers frequently torture and mistreat them, work out their aggression while handling suspects in jail. The suspects who encounter such officers can only be pitied, since there have been instances in which Nigerian policemen tortured jail suspects for money. Odd as it may sound, however, these officers are simply practising the lessons in brutality that they drew from their trainers (Too 2002; Igbinovia 1985).

Some Mexican trainers have been similarly lax in impressing new recruits with the importance of either integrity or human rights. When taking new officers out on the street, those veteran officers confine themselves to three basic lessons that do little more than introduce a police culture of self-aggrandizement and blind loyalty: *(a)* the authority of commanders, shift officers or officials, in particular senior officials should not be questioned, no matter what misgivings a subordinate police officer may have about their orders (i.e. authority is always right); *(b)* veteran officers should teach new officers the fine points of the art of extortion, which the new officers should practise with caution; and *(c)* new officers should pay off their commander after every shift or he will assign them to a miserable and unprofitable post (Botello and Rivera 2000). Moreover, many Mexican police officers have completed only primary school, receive as little as three months training, and have a pitiful salary. The end product has been described as Mexico's "dirty cop" who commits crime instead of preventing it and is often seen stopping motorists on questionable grounds. In accordance with the rituals of corruption, the driver pays a small bribe to avoid a larger fine, the officer puts the money into his pocket and the car moves on (Sullivan 2000).

LACK OF RESOURCES

This form of petty corruption largely stems from cultural and educational deficiencies, according to Mexico's elite. "Not so", say police in Mexico and other countries, who see it as the product of simple necessity: "Everything in this job is money!" (Botello and Rivera 2000). That is the *cri de coeur* of a typical Mexican police officer as he tries to raise a family on about US\$ 4,500 a year, besides paying for gasoline, uniforms and other basic equipment. Graft, bribery and extortion are integral aspects of survival for some Mexican officers, as they are for police officers throughout the world whose departments lack the resources to pay them adequate wages and give them the basic tools that they require for their jobs.

One example is Brazil, where the average police officer makes about US\$ 300 a month and can go for years at a time without a raise. Some Brazilian police officers have been able to supplement their meagre incomes, however, by acting as "hit men" for organized criminal groups, a particularly lucrative sideline with the burgeoning of the illicit drug trade. In February 2000, one human rights group estimated that Brazilian police had participated in 2,500 killings since 1997, a figure that some law enforcement officials considered too low. In a partial state-by-state breakdown, this included more than 100 killings in Goias, 160 killings in Bahia and 500 killings in Acre, evidently one of the most violent areas in Brazil (Buckley 2000).

Acre is a prime example of how the drug trade has exacerbated police corruption and its ancillary violence. The state has historically been the scene of police lawlessness because its crippled rubber industry, its poverty and its vast stretches of jungle provide fertile ground for corruption. Throughout the 1980s, police corruption was mainly linked to numerous killings, often ordered by crime-weary merchants or landowners in property battles with rubber tappers. By the 1990s, however, the police diversified into profitable new ventures as drug trafficking became a hot industry in the state. In one recent case, 42 Acre policemen aided a drug trafficking ring by slaying numerous young men, some of them criminals, and leaving piles of mutilated bodies outside the state capital of Rio Branco. Evidence that emerged at the officers' trial revealed not only that the police had been paid well for their gory work, receiving US\$ 1,000 or more per killing, but also that they had been ordered to make their killings as brutal as possible, hacking off some victims' fingers, arms or hands and decapitating others (Buckley 2000).

CONTROLS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Lack of accountability

Are there adequate controls over policemen such as those involved in the Acre incident, and are there accountability systems to effectively stem police corruption in Brazil? These questions received considerable attention in 1999, when 150 policemen stood trial for murdering protesters from the landless workers' movement, supposedly in return for payment from local landowners. The trial that followed the slaughter was both a failure of justice and a demonstration of corruption in Brazil's legal system. Not only was the evidence strong, but the slaughter was also filmed and aired on national television (*The Economist* 21 August 1999). In the first days of the trial, however, the jury acquitted the three senior officers who had ordered the massacre. In other words, a verdict of innocence, notwithstanding the inescapable fact that the officers were guilty, as jurors told the judge. The jury's explanation for the incongruous verdict: there was

not enough evidence for a conviction because it was impossible to tell which officers had actually shot at protesters. The jurors were apparently swayed by the defence's argument that Brazilian law requires prosecutors to link crimes to specific individuals. The prosecution countered that it was not necessary to "individualize" the crime because the police had acted collectively (Bellos 1999). In appealing the verdict, the prosecution also contended that the court had asked inappropriate questions that confused some jurors, while other jurors had accepted bribes from the police in exchange for a favourable verdict. As for the lack of evidence implicating individual officers, police investigators had made numerous highly suspicious and amateurish errors that made it impossible to tell which officers had done the killing. Investigators did not get witnesses to try to identify the officers who had been present; they did not check officers' hands or clothes for gunpowder residue; and they failed to secure information about the weapons the officers had carried, making ballistics tests unfeasible (Buckley 1999).

A possible cover-up of the evidence, a vague law, the complicity of citizens in a miscarriage of justice, a lax court system: these are the major elements that emerged from the trial. Clearly, the police do not operate in a vacuum. Instead, they respond to norms prevailing in other segments of a criminal justice system where bribery is just another way to get results. Consider the cynical comment of a high-ranking member of the criminal justice system in Rio de Janeiro: "It is less expensive for a lawyer to pay off a member of the military police at the initial stages of an investigation than to pay off a judge at a later date" (Leeds 1996). In other words, lack of accountability in policing reflects and feeds off lack of accountability in the law and judicial system (Dutil and Ragendorfer 1997; Adorno 1995).

The examples below show how police corruption arises from deficiencies in the various dimensions of accountability. Police corruption reflects a lack of institutional accountability, in which police supervisors and managers sanction their officers' misconduct or stoop to it themselves. It reflects a lack of judicial accountability, in which courts turn a blind eye to police corruption or fail to mete out fitting punishment for misbehaviour. It reflects vague or weak laws that put inadequate restrictions on police authority. And it reflects government's failure to censure police misconduct. In short, police corruption creeps in where justice's gatekeepers fail to shut the door in its face.

Corruption is liable to occur when supervisors turn a blind eye to the warning signals of police misconduct. That was true in the case of Len Davis, a police officer in New Orleans who ordered the murder of Kim Groves after learning that she had filed a brutality complaint against him. Federal agents learned about the intended murder because they had already had Mr. Davis under surveillance for alleged drug dealing and happened to be making a recording of him as he ordered the killing. That was a stroke of luck since Mr. Davis's supervisors had evidently missed, or ignored, numerous warning signs that the officer was out of control. Evidence that emerged at Mr. Davis's subsequent trial revealed that he

had been the subject of about 20 complaints involving brutality and physical intimidation between 1987 and 1992. In most instances the complaints had not been sustained; in one case, however, he had been suspended for 51 days after having hit a woman on the head with his flashlight. As one candid officer told a reporter, "He's got an internal affairs jacket [file] as thick as a telephone book, but supervisors have swept his dirt under the rug for so long that it is coming back to haunt them" (Human Rights Watch 1998a).

Supervisory negligence, or complicity, similarly accounted for widespread corruption in the Rampart division of the Los Angeles Police Department. The corruption came to light in 1999, after Rampart officer Rafael Perez, who had been caught stealing a million dollars' worth of cocaine from police evidence storage facilities, signed a plea bargain in which he promised to uncover corruption within the Los Angeles Police Department. Mr. Perez eventually implicated about 70 other Rampart officers in wrongdoing and painted a picture of a division where it was routine to conduct illegal searches, beat and shoot suspects, plant illicit drugs on them and lie under oath. In recounting these incidents, Mr. Perez also showed how the Los Angeles Police Department had created an environment that allowed corruption to flourish. Supervisors missed or ignored signs that should have tipped them off to corruption in a local police station and there was a general lack of oversight by command supervision going all the way up through the department. Moreover, "tell-tale signs" of poor performance, such as suspicious paperwork, slipped right past supervisors, not only at the Rampart division, but also throughout the 10,000 member police force (Boyer 2001; Associated Press 17 February 2000; Bandes 2001).

The culture of corruption that produced the Rampart scandal also accounted for an act of gratuitous and revolting brutality that two police officers in the city of New York inflicted on Haitian immigrant Abner Louima. The horror of the incident is not simply that two police officers in a police station in New York felt free to sodomize a man with a wooden stick, leaving him with severe internal injuries. It is also a graphic expression of the underlying racism that taints American police departments and emboldened the two white officers to deny Mr. Louima's humanity as they defiled his body. It is the fact that none of the other officers present at the police station asked any questions. In addition, it is the fact that no officer at the station formally reported the alleged attack and, in the months following the incident, only two officers came forward to provide useful information. Even worse was the complicity of the New York Police Department Internal Affairs Bureau in the web of deception surrounding Mr. Louima's ordeal. A nurse at the hospital where Mr. Louima was subsequently treated reportedly called the Internal Affairs Bureau to report his injuries, but her complaint was not properly lodged or submitted to the district attorney's office, as required. In other words, the Internal Affairs Bureau, charged with rooting out incidents of abuse, had also followed the rules of police culture by keeping silent (Human Rights Watch 1998b; Bandes 2001).

Deficiencies in the law

In the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, a police culture that also engenders corruption draws support from laws that inadvertently sanction the code of silence and require an unusually high burden of proof to convict an officer of wrongdoing. As a result of these idiosyncrasies in the law, departments have found it difficult to dismiss officers, even though some of them have been involved in bank robberies and drug dealing and others have been paid to suppress evidence and gather information on the strength of prosecution cases (Chesshyre 1998). The flaws in the law became particularly apparent in 1999, when the Crown Prosecution Service refused to press charges against 80 London officers from the Metropolitan Flying Squad questioned during the country's biggest police corruption investigation. Evidence against the officers was not strong enough to proceed with criminal charges, even though two former members of the Flying Squad who testified to setting up robberies and perverting the course of justice also convincingly implicated dozens of officers in similar crimes (Hopkins 1999). The reason for the untouchable corruption of the Metropolitan Flying Squad lies in the excessive legal protection afforded officers. As the Home Affairs Select Committee of the House of Commons and the Association of Chief Police Officers complained, the law errs by granting the right of silence to officers under investigation and by applying the criminal case standard of "beyond reasonable doubt" to cases involving officers rather than the "balance-of-probabilities" standard used in civil cases (Campbell 1998).

While the rigid standards of British law shield corrupt police, Russian Federation law goes astray by inadvertently giving them lucrative opportunities. Extortion and bribery are fostered by vague statutes that give the police unlimited powers to verify business fraud and by unrealistically high tax rates that force small businessmen to resort to "creative accounting", as one sympathetic lawyer called it. These same exorbitant tax rates that make many small businessmen lie about their profits also make them vulnerable to official bribes. This is because Russian law allows any police officer, even a traffic officer, to check the price list of any business. In a typical scenario, police officers come to see a small businessman at his store and confiscate goods worth about 60,000 roubles or US\$ 2,200. They inventory the goods and take them away, leaving the businessman with almost no goods in his store. The next day, the businessman is ordered to appear at a police station, where the police whisper in his ear, "Give us 30,000 roubles, and you can have your goods back." (Lambroschini 2000; Wilson and Walsh 1997).

Institutional corruption

The existence of police corruption in the Russian Federation has been the subject of much political and social commentary. It is new, however, to Japan, where the media has recently been awash with tales of high-level

police corruption. It is hard to tell whether the spurt of recent news about institutional corruption stems from an erosion of Japanese moral values or whether the Japanese police have been particularly successful in concealing their flaws from the public eye. It is certainly true that Japanese police managers understand the police code of silence. It is all carefully spelled out in a Yokohama police manual used in several departments. The manual's "Guidelines for Measures to Cope with Disgraceful and Other Events" advises that, when police scandals erupt, press and television reporters should be told as little as possible, because exposing internal corruption would only erode public trust (Fisher 1999). In the past, the strategy of discretion, or genuine virtue, worked very well indeed, since the Japanese public implicitly trusted its police (Bayley 1991). Then, in 1999, a series of scandals revealed several offences committed by individual officers and organized attempts to cover them up. Disgraceful episodes involving drugs, blackmail and embezzlement shamed police departments throughout Japan, including those in Nagasaki, Aichi, Kyoto and Saga (Takeshi 2000; Hiromitsu 2000).

Two particular incidents threw the spotlight on the lack of institutional accountability within the Japanese police. The first involved a system-wide effort by the management of the police in Kanagawa to cover up the possession and use of stimulant drugs by an assistant police inspector. If the inspector's crime was somewhat lurid, the nature of the cover-up effort was even more sinister. Although the police found a syringe at the officer's home, they not only hid the fact, but also claimed that they could find no evidence after searching the premises (Hiromitsu 2000).

In the second incident, the head of the Niigata Prefectural Police and the chief of the Kanto Regional Police Bureau were drinking and playing mah-jong at a hot spring inn on the day that a 19-year-old woman was rescued after a child molester had held her captive for nine years. The head of the Prefectural Police not only failed to return to police headquarters to supervise the kidnapping investigation, but also allowed his subordinates to prepare false reports on the circumstances in which the woman had been taken into protective custody in an attempt to conceal their apparent negligence. The department claimed to have found the woman, though she was actually discovered at her abductor's home by health-care officials drawn there by his erratic behaviour. Moreover, investigators had previously failed to follow up a meaningful clue to the woman's whereabouts (Sims 2000; Takeshi 2000).

Considering the depths of duplicity involved in the Niigata incident, the officers involved came off very lightly indeed. The National Public Safety Commission, which supervises the police in Japan, found both the head of the Niigata Prefectural Police and the chief of the Kanto Regional Police Bureau to be derelict in their duties and forced them to resign. A spokesman for the Prime Minister of Japan responded by acknowledging that the reprimand of the two police officials had been sadly inadequate. Unfortunately, he went on, the Government's hands were tied because police supervision rested solely in the hands of the National Public Safety Commission (Sims 2000). In shifting the responsibility to the National Public

Safety Commission, the Government relegated the two officials to a comfortable retirement. Although the law requires the Commission to supervise the police, it does not specify the scope of its authority or set down any supervisory provisions. It also fails to provide any staff or offices for the prominent citizens who typically serve as members of the Commission. As a result of those gaps in the law, the police themselves actually run and control the Commission (Hiromitsu 2000). Even in Japan, with its long tradition of elaborate rules, rigid hierarchies and strict codes of behaviour, the police have largely escaped official control.

Cultural background

The gaps in official accountability are evidently much more visible in Mexico, which has a long-standing reputation for corruption (Parker and Gallagher 1997). Consider the following incidents: opposing groups in Mexico's police force battled in the streets with clubs and fists after authorities had accused their commanders of having stolen US\$ 115 million from the police organization's retirement fund; a ranking official in the federal attorney-general's office committed suicide and investigators subsequently found more than US\$ 1 million in unexplained cash in his safety deposit boxes; "hit men" gunned down members of the federal anti-drug police, and authorities later attributed the attack to a "settling of accounts" by drug smugglers that the police had double-crossed. The ordinary police officer on the street who extorts money from motorists and demands protection money from persons with illegal street stalls is only the most visible sign of the prevalent corruption in Mexican society (Althaus 2000).

Sanctioned by cultural mores

Mexico is just one of many countries throughout the world whose cultural mores have discouraged professional police standards from developing. Corruption flourishes particularly well in Latin America, Africa and former communist countries (Uildricks and Van Reenen 2001; Heymann 1997) because of the failure of officials to provide efficient services and the desire of citizens to flout the law when convenient. All this is aggravated by a Byzantine maze of laws and regulations that encourages the public to offer tips to bureaucrats in exchange for short cuts through the red tape (Althaus 2000). Police corruption, together with the low professional standards that engender it, grows out of deeper social and historical trends.

In Mexico, the absence of professional police standards is a historic error that dates back more than a century. Following its independence in 1810, Mexico plunged into lawless pandemonium as different factions fought for political control of the Government. It was not until 1890, after dictator Porfirio Diaz had taken power, that the country made any attempt to create a disciplined police force. But that effort lasted only 20 years, and even then security forces often stole from the poor. Diaz's

reign ended with the 1910 Mexican Revolution and political tumult resumed until 1930, a year after the creation of the Institutional Revolutionary Party. For some reason, the Party decided not to create a professional police force, and the negative consequences of that omission snowballed in the 1980s with the advent of economic instability and extensive drug trafficking. Many of the police who emerged from these decades of political and economic chaos have been described as "small-scale entrepreneurs who pay a franchise fee to corrupt commanders for a gun and a badge" (Corchado and Lawrence 1999; Pimentel 2000).

The low professional standards of some officers in the Russian Federation also have deep roots in the past. Corrupt police in the Russian Federation are the true sons of a "Mother Russia" whose citizens are hardened by centuries of paternalistic, bureaucratic inefficiency under the tsars, followed by decades of callous corruption at the hands of the communist security service. Under the old communist command economy, authorities always tolerated a certain amount of crime, since shady deals, and even theft, were necessary to make the rigid system work. Commodities were illegally traded with the full knowledge of law enforcement officers who themselves profited. True, the police did police, but only in the service of the State or self-enrichment. As a result, the crime fighters of the post-communist Russian Federation lack a strong tradition in law enforcement beyond self-aggrandizement and loyalty to the rulers of the day. Now they, like the police in many countries, must learn to defend public interest according to new professional standards (Land 1998; Fogel 1994; Kertész and Szikinger 2000).

ADDRESSING CORRUPTION: A NEW INITIATIVE

There has been some recent progress on this front as countries throughout the world take steps to root out police corruption. In Japan, the Kanagawa Prefectural Police and the Yokohama District Prosecutor's Office have tightened procedures for handling internal affairs' investigations and are prosecuting some criminal acts in court that they previously resolved through disciplinary action (Takeshi 2000). Hungary has established a roving team of 18 high-ranking police officers to investigate complaints about the service and has appointed a special "customs commando" to rid its ports of police corruption (Land 1998). Brazil has passed a law requiring police officers accused of murder to be tried in civilian court rather than in military court, where sentences are rare (*The Economist* 21 August 1999). Mexico has taken steps to ensure that hired officers are not opportunists who see police work as a mother lode of bribes: since 1999, police officers in the federal attorney-general's office (known as the PGR) have been required to undergo lie detector, psychological and drug tests, and have received 18 rather than 4 months of training. In addition, PGR officers now receive higher salaries, an extremely important reform in a job where bribery is common (*The Economist* 11 December 1999).

TACKLING CORRUPTION

While these measures have indisputable value, they do not address all the core factors of police corruption. As discussed above, police corruption has roots in both police institutions and the societies that engender them. Corruption exists because many departments are not doing a good job of hiring, training, paying and disciplining their officers. It is fostered by vague laws that give police too much discretion and by judges who give them too much leeway. It is concealed by a police culture that dispenses the rough justice of the streets and closes ranks around renegade officers. And it is sanctioned by cultural mores that stoically accept corruption as an everyday inconvenience rather than fuming against it.

Laws must be passed with zero tolerance for corruption. Government must give departments enough resources to provide their officers with the training and equipment required to carry out their responsibilities; and police must, of course, be paid adequate wages. Appropriate monitoring procedures must be established to ensure that police serve the public in accordance with the law, rather than becoming a law unto themselves. Law enforcement agencies must establish a strong code of ethics as a guide and then make sure that all officers understand it, that it becomes second nature through training and that the example of command reinforces its importance (Williams 1992). In addition, mechanisms must be established to detect and suppress corruption at the earliest possible stages. Such mechanisms might include early warning systems, such as Risk Analysis Management System (RAMS II) and Integrated Quality of Service Indicator (QSI), developed by the Police Foundation of Washington, D.C., which help identify and assist troubled officers before they engage in serious misconduct (Williams 1996). They might also include independent external review groups or federal investigation programmes, such as the Police Misconduct Pattern or Practice Program of the United States Department of Justice. While such measures cannot eradicate all the underlying sources of corruption, they do have the potential to restore public trust in the police as the most visible arm of government and the law.

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