

Special& Session : Integrity and Corruption Issues as They Apply to
Other Security Forces
February 25, 1999

Moderator: Michael de Feo
Assistant Director of FBI , Office of Professional Responsibility

Purpose: To examine strategies and share experiences both successful and not successful in the fight to monitor corruption within police forces and other investigative agencies.

Findings: Mr. de Feo presented strategies that have not been successful in reducing corruption among police forces including limiting the budgets of police forces, inattention to internal controls, reliance on using the judicial and legislative branches to regulate police, and allowing minor misconduct to be tolerated within police forces as long as there is not a public scandal. The panelists each shared methods that are proving successful in their country.

Ms. Yam outlined in brief the 24 year history of Hong Kong's Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) which investigates all reports of corruption in the civil service, and reports directly to the Chief Executive of Hong Kong. The main source of complaints is from the public. Ms. Yam emphasized the public's confidence is critical to ICAC's success. Corruption in the police force has been minimized, though cases continue to be investigated. In recent years, more investigations center on customs officials, and allegations of corruption originating in the private sector.

Police Chief Pennington detailed the abuses of power rampant within the New Orleans police force when he became chief in 1994. With the assistance of a FBI investigative unit, five years later nearly one-third of the force has been either arrested, dismissed, or disciplined, and new officers hired. Methods that have worked include creation of a separate Public Integrity Unit to monitor the police, doubling of the officers' salaries, limiting of off-duty employment, a rotation system for assignments, and effective prosecutions of police abuse cases.

Mr. Tantawi, Director of the Administrative Control Agency (ACA) in Egypt, gave a thorough explanation of the extensive checks and balances within that agency which has been the watchdog of the Egyptian civil service since 1964. He outlined the clear code of conduct that government employees abide by, as well as how the ACA itself is monitored by a Special Operations Department.

Ambassador Tufo emphasized that to successfully attack corruption the target must be clear and attainable. In Hungary, the focus is to root-out corruption related to Russian-speaking organized crime rings. Mr. Pinter, Hungary's Minister of Interior, outlined steps his government has taken, and the importance of international cooperation in order to share and gain insight to new methods of fighting corruption. The Q and A session lasted nearly 30 minutes with questions on details of the approaches the panelists had shared as well as suggestions for more advanced anti-corruption strategies in this electronic Information Age.

Panel Participants: Ms. Lily Yam, Hong Kong; Mr. H. Ahmed Tantawi, Egypt;
Mr. Richard Pennington, New Orleans, LA; Mr. Peter Tufo, U.S. Ambassador to
Hungary; Mr. Sandor Pinter, Hungary