

## POLICE EDUCATION IN HUNGARY

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### Introduction

Since our crime rate is rising year by year, there is an urgent need to improve contemporary police work in the United States. To achieve this improvement, police administrators must relinquish their isolationist policies by not only encouraging the analysis of existing American police forces, but by studying the police systems of the other parts of the world as well. These comprehensive studies may aid police administrators in the evaluation of their own work, and in addition may inspire innovations to improve their department.

It is strange, but true, that nations often attempt, by close and clandestine observation of the organization, to observe and emulate the training and equipment of foreign armies, whereas, in the field of police science, this effort--which could prove extremely beneficial--is missing. A few examples of this deficiency will be sufficient to establish this point.

It is difficult to find any articles or books written in English on the Mexican police system. Neither will one be able to locate any English books written on the French police system, the Gendarmerie. Our knowledge of the Communist police is negligible. Consequently, systematic and authoritative studies of the different police systems of the world are missing from the American and English libraries.

### Result

As a result of this deficiency, one might think that our police system has--in every respect--the highest degree of effectiveness of any police force in the world. The new regulations of the California Commission on Peace Officers' Standards and Training require that officers "at the date of hire or within 24 months from date of hire, have been awarded no less than six college semester units or nine quarter units by an accredited college." An article in The Police Chief stated: "California is now the first state in the United States, and the only major unit of government anywhere in the world, to require some level of college education to practice the police profession."<sup>1</sup> In order to appreciate the validity of this observation, it is useful to examine the educational requirements of the old Hungarian police system.

### The Hungarian Police System

Until 1881, Hungary closely followed the example of the English police system, having county police forces with elected heads--called "Pandours"--and city police forces. These police departments were completely independent of one another.

In 1881, Hungary changed her police system to the French system (Gendarmerie), which was and still is common to most European countries, with the exception of those which are English- and Soviet-dominated. This French system existed in Hungary until the end of

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1. Gene S. Muehleisen, "California's Professionals," The Police Chief, XXXVII (March, 1970), p. 44.

World War II, when the new government--like the other Communist countries--abolished the old system and established the "People's Police."

Between 1881 and 1945, the police system of Hungary consisted of the National Police (Gendarmerie) and the City Police.

1. The National Police was established in 1881 after the example of the Lombardian Gendarmerie originated by Napoleon in 1800 when he occupied Northern Italy, and of the Austrian Gendarmerie created by Emperor Franz Joseph in 1849.

The Hungarian National Police was responsible for maintaining law and order outside of the larger cities of the entire country. It was a semi-military police force with strict discipline and thorough training. What Bruce Smith said about the organization of the Pennsylvania State Police also applied to the Hungarian National Police:

From the very beginning it operated as a mounted and uniformed body which, using a widely distributed system of troop headquarters and substations as a base of operations, patrolled the rural and semi-rural portions of the entire state, even to the little-frequented byways and lanes. In its highly centralized administrative powers, its decentralized scheme of structural organization, and its policy of continuous patrol throughout the rural areas, the Pennsylvania State Police constituted a distinct departure from earlier state practice.<sup>2</sup>

2. The city police were responsible for law and order in cities having a minimum population of ten thousand. (In England today, "a

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2. Bruce Smith, Police Systems in the United States (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960), p. 149.

community with less than 50,000 [population] must be amalgamated with the county force. Those communities with more than 50,000 have an option of remaining autonomous, or merging force."<sup>3</sup>) The city police systems--like the National Police--were divided into small units, having sometimes only eight to ten policemen, which covered a few blocks of the city. The members of these units knew almost everybody living in their subdistrict, and their main job was crime prevention and investigation of minor law violations. The major crimes were investigated by the specialized units of the district headquarters.

Every city had a right to make a contract with the National Police for policing the territory of the city when it was not satisfied with its own police force. The city held the right to terminate the contract at the end of a specified period of time in order to re-establish its own police force.

#### Educational Requirements of the National Police

Like our new Postal Service which distinguishes between its officers and employees, the Hungarian National Police, as well as other European police forces, made a distinction between officers and policemen. The officers were in the higher commanding positions, employed in administrative positions and middle management. They were the "teachers" of the department. The policemen worked as patrolmen in crime prevention, traffic law enforcement, and investigation of

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3. William H. Hewitt, British Police Administration (Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, 1965), p. 54.

misdemeanors. The master-sergeants investigated the major crimes, and they were the leaders of the small substations in the villages having only eight to ten men.

From 1935 until the dissolution of the force in 1945, the educational requirements for officers of the National Police were the following:

1. The candidate had to have a doctorate degree or a minimum of a master's degree--called an "absolutorium"-- in the combined fields of law and political science from an accredited university or college; or

2. He had to graduate from the National Military Academy of Budapest (which was a four-year college) after his high school education.

3. In addition, the candidates with a university or military academy degree had to go to the special school of the National Police for a minimum of twelve months of postgraduate work, which included a three-month internship.

After the postgraduate work, the candidates were obligated to sign a contract for twenty years of service within the National Police. They were then promoted into the rank of second lieutenant of the National Police. It is worth noting that, because of the high prestige of this force, there were always so many volunteers that only about ten percent of them could be accepted.

Although the minimum educational requirement for regular policemen was six years--and later eight years--in the elementary school, many of them had two to six years in high school, which had at that

time an eight-year program. In addition, the candidates had to pass the prescribed entrance examination. They were then trained at the police school for twelve complete months. After this training, the candidates had to sign a six-year contract and were transferred to a substation where, during the first three years, they went on duty with experienced older policemen.

Before promotion into the rank of sergeant, policemen were required to return to the school for an additional six months of training. To be a substation leader of eight to ten policemen, the sergeants were trained for four months in the area of middle management. This marked the third time in their careers that they had trained at the school.

#### Educational Requirements of the City Police

The policemen of the city police departments had the same training as the members of the National Police. The city police had its centralized training facilities near Budapest, and every city policeman received his basic training in the same school.

Educational requirements for officers of the city police were divided into two classes. For those who wanted to be in administrative positions, a doctorate degree in the combined fields of law and political science was mandatory. For those who wanted a commanding level position, a master's degree or high school diploma (the latter required at that time eight years of study) was required.

Statistical Data

According to the Almanac of the Hungarian National Police, on January 1, 1944, this force had 483 officers. From this number, 123, or 25.4 percent, were employed in police schools as instructors; the others were in leadership or administrative positions. The high percentage of teaching positions shows the importance of the teaching policy of the force. Job rotation was very common within the organization, and after a couple of years the teachers became administrators and vice versa.

From the 483 officers, 137, or 28.3 percent, had doctorate degrees. The other 346 had master's degrees ("absolutorium"), or had graduated from the military academy.

The following statistics show the number of officers with doctorate degrees at the time their commissions were awarded them. During the years omitted from this table, no one was commissioned with a doctorate degree.

Year	Number of Recruited Officers	Number with Doctorate	Percentage with Doctorate
1911	4	1	25.0
1915	49	5	10.2
1918	10	1	10.0
1925	5	1	20.0
1928	8	2	28.0
1929	13	4	30.7
1930	4	1	25.0
1931	8	2	25.0

1934	2	2	100.0
1935	31	17	54.8
1936	28	23	82.1
1937	43	27	62.7
1938	26	17	65.3
1939	74	34	45.9

In addition, the force had 28 reserved offices, all lawyers or judges with doctorate degrees.<sup>4</sup>

According to the above-mentioned source, on January 1, 1944, Hungary had eighty-nine city police departments, seventeen border offices, and ten water police units. The doctorate degrees of its leaders are shown by the following table:

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>With Doctorate Degree</u>	<u>Without Doctorate Degree</u>
City Police Chief	55	34
Assistant Chiefs	26	15
Leader of a border office	17	3
Chief of Water Police	10	0

In percentage, 68.9 percent of the city police chiefs and their assistants had doctorate degrees, and the other 31.1 percent had lower degrees.<sup>5</sup>

4. Michael Benedek, Csendorseg Zsebkonyve (Budapest: Csendorsegi Lapok Kiadasa, 1944), pp. 13-43.

5. Ibid., pp. 416-424.



## Police Education in the United States.

The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice dealing with the educational requirements of the police forces of the United States reported in 1967 that "more than 70 percent of the nation's police departments have set the high school diploma level as the educational requirement for employment. About one-fourth of the agencies require no more than some degree of elementary education."<sup>6</sup>

The same source, discussing the educational level of police administrators, reports:

The 1964 national survey conducted by the International Association of Chiefs of Police disclosed that only 33.6 percent of the police administrators had attended college, and of this figure, only 9.2 percent possessed one or more college degrees. . . . Although a great majority of the chief administrators in our nation's police departments have achieved enviable records as outstanding police officers, only a few have achieved the appropriate level of training and education in management and administration to administer a law enforcement agency.<sup>7</sup>

### Recommendations

The author of this paper recommends the following changes in educational requirements for the members of large, local police forces: 1) A bachelor's degree in Police Science and Administration

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6. The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, Task Force Report: The Police (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1967), p. 10.

7. Ibid., p. 127.

for the positions of police lieutenant and captain; 2) A master's or doctor's degree for the position of police chief or sheriff.

In addition, he recommends:

Open the high ranking police officer positions for lateral entry and let the traditional candidates compete with lawyers, judges, city managers, business executive officers, etc.;

Following the example of England, establish one National Police College for the training of chiefs, sheriffs, and other higher ranking police administrators of the local police forces;

Increase the length of the training periods of the local police forces and establish for their training one police school within each state; and

Do not require patrolmen to have college degrees. Those with degrees will stay within the department only if they have a chance for leadership positions.