

June 9, 2020

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CC: Emily Bromberg, CoS

SUBJECT: Law Enforcement Training in Israel

This options memo provides potential strategies on how we move forward on our law enforcement training programs in Israel. As of now, these trips are on hold at the CSC level, but regional offices are not prohibited from arranging a regionally-focused trip.

BACKGROUND

ADL has been taking law enforcement officers to Israel for educational and training purposes since 2004. We have involved 500-600 law enforcement officers and partners. These trips have built bonds, created trust, and helped to deepen ADL relationships with federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies and leaders. These investments have generated value for regional offices because the stronger relationships have helped ADL with the investigation of hate crimes and protecting local communities.

During these trips, officers meet with Israel National Police (INP), academics, journalists and other Israeli officials to learn about how the INP fights crime and terrorism. They have never participated in tactical training exercises with the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) or the INP. They did not learn how to apprehend or restrain individuals, nor to conduct interrogations or apply any related practices.

On the other hand, the trips are costly, are of questionable programmatic value, and are incredibly controversial. Each trip costs approximately [\$115,000] directly due to travel and related costs, and upward of \$200,000 per year in the staff time it takes to support the trips and defend the trips from controversy. These costs can potentially skyrocket if additional indirect costs are taken into consideration, such as the lost donor revenue and the increase in staff time and other resources it requires to defend ADL advocacy positions while hosting such a controversial program. Further, the impact is unclear. The law enforcement officers tell us that they enjoyed their trip and that they helped "bond," but it is not clear that those officers change policies to reduce antisemitism upon their return, or that they increase activities to counter white supremacy. We have not performed an impact evaluation for the program, nor is it clear what would be measured by one. During challenging budget times, it is difficult to defend a program that is so expensive with such an unclear return on investment.

Further, ADL has been criticized for its close relationship with law enforcement for many years. In Ferguson MO, the local ADL office gave an award to the local police chief following the riots

which drew understandable controversy. Shortly afterwards, JVP launched their Deadly Exchange (DE) campaign which charges that the law enforcement leaders who participate police exchanges with Israel learn how to brutalize people of color and do so after returning to their departments. The DE campaigns are distort, misrepresent, and mislead about the purpose, itineraries and the activities of these trips. Nonetheless the campaign has gained traction because it plays on real concerns about the treatment of minority communities and militarization of law enforcement. Through FOIA requests to police departments about these trips and misinformation campaigns, JVP has created doubt about the program and led two participants to withdraw. Moreover, in light of the very real police brutality at the hands of militarized police forces in the U.S., we must ask ourselves difficult questions, like whether we are contributing to the problem. That is, we must ask ourselves why it is necessary for American police, enforcing American laws, would need to meet with members of the Israeli military. We must ask ourselves if, upon returning home, those we train are more likely to use force. We hope that that is not accurate, and certainly JVP distorts the truth, but it is a time in American history to ask ourselves these hard questions.

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Following the death of George Floyd, the cries for Defund the Police have gained ground in the media, on the streets and the halls of government. This rallying cry encompasses a range of policies and practices administered by all levels of law enforcement, but all are seen as reinforcing systemic racism.

In light of the current moment, broad public criticism is, rightly, building around the use of force and treatment of people of color and the militarization of local law enforcement agencies. Among the various demands made upon law enforcement, such as cutting budgets or reexamining basic police practices, agencies and their unions will look for easy wins. The issue seems poised to gain traction in the months ahead based on recent developments such as the debate in the DC Council, the statements by an NAACP local leader in Massachusetts, and the broader push on demilitarization of US LE agencies. ADL often is swept up into these criticisms, sometimes called out by name, because of our prominence as an NGO and as a result of the cumulative effect of DE campaigns that have slandered ADL for many years.

In this regard, pullback on international law enforcement exchanges seems likely. It is a low-cost concession that public officials can make to appease community activists and create breathing room. Moreover, when such exchanges involve work with foreign countries who are earning international opprobrium, regardless of the merits of such criticism, pulling back is an easy call.

As a result of this probable outcome, it would be wise for ADL to plan proactively about next steps for our law enforcement training exchanges.

OPTIONS

ADL put a pause on law enforcement training in 2019 as we wanted to reevaluate the program and look forward. Now we need to consider our options and select a go-forward path for this line of activity. There are three possible directions:

A. TERMINATE LAW ENFORCEMENT EXCHANGES ALTOGETHER

In light of mounting criticism, ADL will stop leading law enforcement exchanges. We already have put a pause on these programs. However, we now will end them entirely and make an internal/external announcement.

PRO: clean; simple; satisfies activists demands; easy to explain

CON: could imply culpability when ADL does not believe we did anything wrong; could be used as basis for detractors on both the right and left of the political spectrum.

B. CONTINUE LAW ENFORCEMENT EXCHANGES

ADL can aggressively push out a narrative that refutes the claims against our program. We can do so and, as we explain our cause, we will stand with law enforcement.

PRO: consistent with past practice; shows solidarity with law enforcement

CON: entirely inconsistent with political winds; would jeopardize relations with civil rights groups; will make ADL a target, which could draw increased negative attention on law enforcement; expensive

C. REFRAME LAW ENFORCEMENT EXCHANGE

In light of rising criticism, ADL should widen the appeal and increase the value of this type of LE engagement, we should tee up a new effort – "Institute for Global Dialogue" (IGD). This would be launched as an entirely new program. To put it together, we should develop IGD in collaboration with partner organizations. Candidates could include the Center for Policing Equity, a think tank focused on data driven solutions to improve policing techniques, which has currency with activists. Alternatively, we could look at partners such as the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) and the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement officers (NOBLE), or other notable LE groups. Their engagement and support will validate the effort and give it credibility with law enforcement agencies and public officials.

IGD can focus on cutting edge issues that are important to police around the world -- and, as such, include issues such as investigating hate crimes, combating extremism, and addressing implicit bias. We also should expand the geographic orientation dramatically. Rather than a narrow focus on US-Israel, we should widen the aperture to include North

America - Middle East and Europe, a repositioning that will include Israel but also give us an opportunity to explore new markets and more diverse issues. This would appeal to IACP and NOBLE.

PRO: Dialogue is more passive and potentially not as offensive as training; engaging law enforcement agencies in multiple countries can alleviate focus on Israel; explicitly articulating goals of IGD will exclude military-type jargon or references; opportunity to raise money; allows ADL to build/strengthen relationships with local LE agencies

CON: Draws attention to the critique of ADL; critics could paint IGD as junkets or simply traditional training in another form; complicated to execute with partners; will take time to implement and could distract from other core priorities; very expensive.

D. Temporally Pause Exchanges Due to Strategic Priorities and Funding (12-24months)

Pro's: In 2020 and 2021 we have no budget lines for national LE exchanges, only two regional offices still do them and only one may still be interested in doing them. Regional offices could still fundraise for LE work and we could direct funding to ADL For Good or something else. When pressed, we could say we are taking time evaluate our LE programs, we hired a new VP of LE, and if the timing is right we could plan a mission for late 2021 or 2022.

Con's: Delays but does not solve the problem.

RECOMMENDATION

Programs staff recommends that ADL pursue Option A. This is the best approach because it allows us to shed critical budget commitments and eliminate a program with limited impact and high controversy.

DECISION

- Option A: Terminate LE Exchanges
- Option B: Continue LE Exchanges
- Option C: Reframe LE Exchanges
- Option D: Pause and reflect
- Need more options