

# U.S. Police Routinely Travel to Israel to Learn Methods of Brutality and Repression

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*When McKinney, TX police officer David Eric Casebolt [brutally took down](#) a teenage girl at a pool party in June, he was using a form of martial arts called Krav Maga in which he [trained exclusively](#). These combat techniques were developed by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF).*

This is a small reflection of a larger reality that exists in U.S. law enforcement, one that helps explain the brutality and militarization that now characterizes so many police forces. Since 9/11, cops have been [traveling abroad](#) to learn from one of the most repressive and dangerous State forces in the world today—the Israeli military and intelligence apparatus.

Political commentator John Miranda [recently stated](#) that police brutality is directly linked to the training some officers receive in Israel.

As for the increase in police brutality within the United States, I think this definitely can be pointed towards the Israeli training that the Department of Homeland Security is giving all of American police officers.

Some police officers are actually being flown to Israel for the training, not all of them but some, and then those that are flown to Israel, they come back home and they train the head officers in the training that they've gotten in Israel.

All these incidents, it is not just happening to African Americans. Police are literally being brutal with all Americans.

At least 300 high-ranking U.S. sheriffs and police from all over the country, as well as FBI and US Customs and Border Protection agents, have traveled to Israel to learn first-hand the most efficient means of subduing populations. The purported reason is counterterrorism, but protests and crowd control methods are commonly discussed.



Police are not learning from the Israeli criminal law sector that deals with Jewish residents. U.S. police are learning from Israel's military justice system, which controls Palestinians through paramilitary and counterinsurgency tactics. Residents of Gaza and the West Bank live in what is essentially a giant prison camp, where oppression and brutality from the IDF is a way of life. The use of excessive or deadly force for crowd control is rarely questioned.

Three organizations are responsible for sending U.S. cops to Israel for training—the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), the American Jewish Committee's Project Interchange and the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs. The ADL [insulted victims of police brutality](#) last

month when it honored the St. Louis Police Department (SLPD) just days ahead of the anniversary of Michael Brown's killing. The SLPD was the first department to enroll in ADL's training program.

The St. Louis Chapter of Jewish Voices for Peace issued a scathing statement in response: *"We have cringed as the ADL positions itself locally as a champion of racial profiling legislation while sending US police – including former St. Louis County Police Chief Tim Fitch – to train on population control in Israel, an apartheid police state with more than 60 years of sophisticated expertise in racial profiling, mass incarceration, settler colonialism, and ethnic cleansing targeting the non-Jewish indigenous Palestinian people."*

This occupation-style policing has made its way to U.S. cities and towns and has become standard operating procedure at any protest of government. Also, the very same equipment used by Israeli military for crowd control—tear gas grenades, triple chaser gas canisters, and stun grenades—were used at demonstrations in Ferguson, Oakland and Anaheim. The LRAD (long-range acoustic device) was also used by both Ferguson police and Israeli military forces.

Rashid Khalidi, the Edward Said professor of modern Arab studies at Columbia University, notes how militarized U.S. police reflect the training that is received in Israel and spread throughout the ranks.

If American police and sheriffs consider they're in occupation of neighborhoods like Ferguson and East Harlem, this training is extremely appropriate – they're learning how to suppress a people, deny their rights and use force to hold down a subject population.

To complement this Israeli military training that ramped up in the mid-2000s, the Pentagon and Homeland Security started the [1033 program](#) which funneled billions of dollars of military-grade equipment to local law enforcement. MRAPS and military weapons have become all too familiar on American streets.

What order-following, state-sanctioned thug is going to refuse the most advanced tactics and tool of repression?

Shakeel Syed, executive director of the Islamic Shura Council of Southern California, described how U.S. police tactics are "a near replica" of Israeli military crowd control tactics.

Whether it is in Ferguson or L.A., we see a similar response all the time in the form of a disproportionate number of combat-ready police with military gear who are ready to use tear gas at short notice. Whenever you find 50 people at a demonstration, there is always a SWAT team in sight or right around the corner.

This increasingly common scenario is indicative of law enforcement that views the populace as the enemy. Peaceful protests of unjust government practices are fundamental to the progression of society. Police with militarized tactics and gear are the progenitors of violence.

Jimmy Johnson of the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions [explains](#) how the training

of U.S. law enforcement by Israeli military represents a grave threat to the idea of democracy.

Israeli methods are sought out and adopted for their perceived quality, largely led by the government's marketing of them. But the relationships established between agencies of order, whether they be drug enforcement, civil policing, customs officials, tactical police units or any other, are done entirely outside the democratic realm...This is the danger of agencies of authority going through processes of professionalization and integration with their foreign counterparts. It's often a strictly technocratic regime that can affect the public greatly but is done without its active knowledge or participation.

If we are to end the militarization of U.S. law enforcement, one of the most important parts of that will be stopping the training of police by the Israeli military and intelligence apparatus. We do not want their methods of repression and brutality replicated here.

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