



Introduction

1. The Business Development Bank of Canada, *Corporate Social Responsibility*

<https://www.bdc.ca/en/articles-tools/entrepreneur-toolkit/templates-business-guides/glossary/corporate-social-responsibility>

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a company's commitment to manage the social, environmental and economic effects of its operations responsibly and in line with public expectations.

It is part of a company's approach to corporate governance and often touches every part of the business—operations, human resources, manufacturing, supply chain, health and safety, and more.

CSR activities may include:

- Company policies that insist on working with partners who follow ethical business practices
- Reinvesting profits in health and safety or environmental programs
- Supporting charitable organizations in the communities where a company operates
- Promoting equal opportunities for men and women at the executive level

Some aspects of CSR may be required by law. For example, banks and hospitals are legally required to protect people's private information. Others are voluntary.

The benefits of CSR are many...

2. J. Fraiberg and E. Pressman, *A Canadian Understanding of Director Duties*, Globe and Mail Jan. '09

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/a-canadian-understanding-of-director-duties/article1145995/>

The Supreme Court of Canada's landmark decision in the BCE Inc. case sets out a distinctively Canadian understanding of directors' fiduciary duty and has important implications for how directors make decisions.

The case concerned a challenge by a group of Bell Canada debenture holders to the proposed acquisition of BCE through a \$52-billion plan of arrangement. The debenture holders objected to the arrangement on grounds that it would result in the loss of Bell's investment-grade rating and reduce the value of their debentures.

The Quebec Superior Court approved the arrangement. In a decision that rocked corporate Canada, the Quebec Court of Appeal overturned that decision and ruled that the transaction could not proceed. The Court of Appeal found that BCE's directors had a duty to consider debenture holders' non-contractual interests and were required not simply to accept the best offer for shareholders, but to consider whether the arrangement could be structured in a way that provided a satisfactory price to the shareholders while avoiding an adverse effect on the debenture holders.

In a unanimous decision, the Supreme Court overturned the Court of Appeal and reaffirmed its holding in *Peoples Department Stores (Trustee of) v. Wise* that the directors' fiduciary duty is owed at all times to the corporation and not to shareholders or any other stakeholders...

Although the Supreme Court said that in considering what is in the best interests of the corporation directors "may" look to the interests of various stakeholders (including shareholders, employees, creditors, consumers, governments and the environment), in practice directors will need to consider the impact of their decisions on affected stakeholders. This is because the Supreme Court found that the duty of directors to act in the best interests of the corporation "comprehends a duty to treat individual stakeholders affected by corporate actions fairly and equitably".

In circumstances where stakeholders' interests conflict, the court noted that "[t]here is no principle that one set of interests - for example the interests of shareholders - should prevail over another set of interests. Everything depends on the particular situation faced by the directors and whether, having regard to that situation, they exercised business judgment in a responsible way."

3. Rabbi Moses Maimonides (Rambam, 12th century Egypt), *Mishneh Torah*, Hilchot Matnot Aniyim 10:7

מעלה גדולה שאין למעלה ממנה... נותן לו מתנה או הלואה או עושה עמו שותפות או ממציא לו מלאכה כדי לחזק את ידו עד שלא יצטרך לבריות לשאול

The highest level of tzedakah, beyond which nothing is higher... to give him a gift or loan or create a partnership with him or provide him with work, to strengthen his hand until he no longer needs to ask from others.

4. Rabbi Yosef Karo (16th century Israel), Code of Jewish Law, Choshen Mishpat 176:10

המשתתף עם חבירו בסתם, לא ישנה ממנהג המדינה באותה סחורה, ולא ילך למקום אחר, ולא ישתתף בה עם אחרים, ולא יתעסק בסחורה אחרת... וכל שאינו משנה או פושע, יעשה בשל חבירו כמו בשלו (מרדכי סוף פרק אלמנה ניונית).

One who partners with another party without declaring specific policies may not vary from local custom for this kind of merchandise, may not travel elsewhere, may not partner with others in it, may not work with other merchandise... Anyone who does not vary and is not careless may handle others' merchandise like his own.

Our questions

- What is included in "corporate social responsibility"?
- Why would we expect a corporation to be involved in this, if it could harm stakeholders?
- Who decides whether a corporation should take on a particular CSR initiative?

Q1: What is included in "corporate social responsibility"?

5. Piskei Din Rabbaniim 5:132 (Case #5637)

כמו שכל יחיד ויחיד נדרש לוותר על החשש והדאגה על שלו, למען שמור על עניני חבירו; כך גם הציבור, על-ידי מייצגיו, אל לו להכניס עצמו יתר על המידה לחששות, ואל לו לבקש חשבונות רבים, כאשר עומדת השאלה של קיום חוב כלפי היחיד. כי גם הציבור אם תמיד ידקדק לומר שלי קודם, נמצא פורק מעליו עול גמילות-חסד וצדקה, ויהא מורה-דרך רע ליחיד.

Just as each individual is summoned to release his concern and worry for his own in order to protect the next person's needs, so a community, via its representatives, may not go too far into concerns, and may not make many calculations, when the question arises of fulfilling their debt to the individual. For with the community, too, if they were to perpetually be exacting, saying, "Mine precedes," then they would remove the yoke of generosity and tzedakah from themselves, and they would be a bad model for individuals.

6. Rabbi Moses Nachmanides (13th century Spain) to Leviticus 19:2

התורה הזהירה בעריות ובמאכלים האסורים והתירה הביאה איש באשתו ואכילת הבשר והיין, א"כ ימצא בעל התאווה מקום להיות שטוף בזמת אשתו או נשיו הרבות, ולהיות בסובאי יין בזוללי בשר למו, וידבר כרצונו בכל הנבלות, שלא הוזכר איסור זה בתורה, והנה יהיה נבל ברשות התורה. לפיכך בא הכתוב, אחרי שפרט האיסורים שאסר אותם לגמרי, וצוה בדבר כללי שנהיה פרושים מן המותרות.

The Torah prohibited *arayot* [forbidden sexual relations] and forbidden foods, and permitted marital relations and eating meat and wine, such that a hedonist could find a way to be immersed in [impropriety], drinking wine and eating meat gluttonously, speaking as he wishes of all depravity, for no prohibition in this regard is mentioned in the Torah; he will be depraved within the bounds of the Torah. Therefore the text followed its list of explicit prohibitions by instructing as a general rule that we should be separated from [certain] permitted practices.

7. Rabbi Moses Nachmanides (13th century Spain) to Deuteronomy 6:18

אי אפשר להזכיר בתורה כל הנהגות האדם עם שכניו ורעיו וכל משאו ומתנו ותקוני הישוב והמדינות כלם, אבל אחרי שהזכיר מהם הרבה... חזר לומר בדרך כלל שיעשה הטוב והישר בכל דבר...

The Torah could not state all human conduct with neighbours and friends, and all interactions, and the needs of civilization and all nations. But after it mentioned many of them... it returned to state a general rule, to act in the way that is good and straight in all matters...

8. Talmud, Bava Metzia 30b

רבי ישמעאל ברבי יוסי הוה קאזיל באורחא, פגע ביה ההוא גברא הוה דרי פתכא דאופי, אותבינהו וקא מיתפח. אמר ליה "דלי לי", אמר ליה כמה שוין? אמר ליה פלגא דזוזא. יהיב ליה פלגא דזוזא ואפקרה. הדר זכה בהו. הדר יהיב ליה פלגא דזוזא ואפקרה. חזייה דהוה קא בעי למיהדר למזכיה בהו, אמר ליה "לכולי עלמא אפקרנהו ולך לא אפקרנהו."... והא רבי ישמעאל ברבי יוסי זקן ואינו לפי כבודו הוה! רבי ישמעאל ברבי יוסי לפנים משורת הדין הוא דעבד, דתני רב יוסף...

Rabbi Yishmael son of Rabbi Yosi was walking on the road, and a man carrying a load of wood encountered him. He put the wood down, and rested. He then said to him, "Pick it up for me." [Rabbi Yishmael] said to him: How much is it worth? He replied: Half a zuz. [Rabbi Yishmael] paid half a zuz, and declared [the wood] ownerless. The man claimed it. [Rabbi Yishmael] again gave him half a zuz, and declared [the wood] ownerless. He saw the man going to claim it, and he said to him, "I have declared it ownerless for the world, but not for you."... But Rabbi Yishmael son of Rabbi Yosi was a *zaken*, and this did not suit his dignity! Rabbi Yishmael son of Rabbi Yosi went beyond the line of the law...

9. Rabbi Aharon Lichtenstein (20th-21st century USA/Israel), *Religion and Morality*, pg. 123 (*By His Light*, Chapter 6) Surely, in relating to Halakha, including those areas which one may find morally difficult, there is some role for conscience, some role for the goodness in us, particularly in an interpretive capacity. Conscience does and legitimately can have a role in helping us to understand the content and substance of the *tzav*.

10. Rabbi Eliezer Waldenberg (20th century Israel), *Tzitz Eliezer* 15:40:6-7

ועד כדי כך היה פשוט הדבר להפוסקים ז"ל שישנו חיוב כזה [לשלם לרפואת חולה-מ.ט.] על כל הסובבים את החולה עד שדנים בהיכא שהוציאו הוצאות עבור כך מבלי לשאול את החולה באם מחויב החולה אח"כ להחזיר להם ההוצאות, בהיות ומחויבים ועומדים על כך... עפ"י האמור, ברור ופשוט הדבר כי הממשלה אשר בריאות הציבור צריך ומחויב להיות בראש דאגותיה, מחובתה גם היא להקציב תקציבים כספיים כדי לעזור למניעת ההתפתחות של מחלה זו היא קוצר-ראיה בהגשת טיפול דרוש באמצעות צוות רופאים מומחים...

It was so obvious to halachic authorities that there is such a duty [to pay for an ill person's treatment] upon all of those around the ill person, to the point that they debated the case in which the community had spent for this without asking the ill person – is the ill person obligated to repay them for their expenditures, since they were obligated to do this...

Based on what has been said, it is clear and simple that the government, which must have the health of society as its top concern, must also allocate funds to help prevent the development of this disease of nearsightedness, by providing the necessary treatment via expert doctors...

11. Rabbi Chaim Or Zarua (13th century Germany), *Mahara"ch Or Zarua* 222

ואפילו אם יש להטות הדברים על פי ההלכות לחובתו של ראובן, מאחר שהוא דחוק, טוב הוא להקהל ליכנס עמו לפני משורת הדין. ועל זה נאמר למען תלך בדרך טובים וארחות צדיקים תשמור

Even if one could incline matters, by law, against Reuven, still, since he is indigent, it would be better for the community to go beyond the line of the law with him. For this it says, "So that you will walk the path of the good, and you will guard the path of the righteous. (Proverbs 2:20)"

12. Rabbi Moshe Sofer (19th century Pressburg), *Chatam Sofer Yoreh Deah* 239:9

אשה אלמנה א' היתה ביתה בקיר חומת בהכ"נ הקדושה וכשראו מנהיגי הקהלה שההיזק קרוב לבוא חשו לבה"כ ציוו להרוס גג הבית ההוא גם בה"כ הרסו קצת מגגו וד' הפליא חסדו ע"ד נס נפלא שניצל בה"כ הקדושה. הנה נראה פשוט דצריכים לשלם להאשה הזיקה דמציל עצמו בממון חברו חייב לשלם... ומכ"ש דעכ"פ משום "ועשית הישר והטוב" ראוי לשלם וכופי' את הצבור על זה, וכמ"ש בתשו' צמח צדק סימן פ"ט ע"ש היטב.

A widow lived in a home sharing a wall with the holy synagogue. When the community leaders saw that the harm [from a fire] was drawing near, they were concerned for the synagogue. They ordered the destruction of the roof of that house, as well as some of the roof of the synagogue. Gd was very generous, and with a wondrous miracle the holy synagogue was saved. It appears obvious that they must pay the woman for the harm, for one who saves himself with another person's property must pay... And certainly, at least for "You shall do the straight and the good" they should pay, and we force the community to do this, as written in *Tzemach Tzedek* 89.

Q2: Why would we expect a corporation to be involved in this, if it could harm shareholders?

13. Professor Milton Friedman, *A Friedman Doctrine*, Sept 13, 1970

<https://www.nytimes.com/1970/09/13/archives/a-friedman-doctrine-the-social-responsibility-of-business-is-to.html>

What does it mean to say that "business" has responsibilities? Only people can have responsibilities. A corporation is an artificial person and in this sense may have artificial responsibilities, but "business" as a whole cannot be said to have responsibilities, even in this vague sense...

This process raises political questions on two levels: principle and consequences. On the level of political principle, the imposition of taxes and the expenditure of tax proceeds are governmental functions... Here the businessman—self-selected or appointed directly or indirectly by stockholders—is to be simultaneously legislator, executive and jurist. He is to decide whom to tax by how much and for what purpose, and he is to spend the proceeds—all this guided only by general exhortations from on high to restrain inflation, improve the environment, fight poverty and so on and on...

On the grounds of consequences, can the corporate executive in fact discharge his alleged "social responsibilities"? On the one hand, suppose he could get away with spending the stockholders' or customers' or employees' money. How is he to know how to spend it? He is told that he must contribute to fighting inflation. How is he to know what action of his

will contribute to that end? He is presumably an expert in running his company—in producing a product or selling it or financing it. But nothing about his selection makes him an expert on inflation...

14. Rabbi Yosef Karo (16th century Israel), Code of Jewish Law, Choshen Mishpat 183:5

נתן מעות לשלוהו לקנות לו חטים, בין לסחורה בין לאכילה, והלך וקנה לו שעורים, או בהפך, אם היה בהם הפסד הוא לשליח; ואם היה בהם ריוח, הוא למשלח...

If one gives money to his agent to buy wheat – as merchandise or food – and he buys barley, or the opposite, then any loss belongs with the agent, and any profit with the principal...

15. Rabbi Moshe Isserless (16th century Poland), Code of Jewish Law, Yoreh Deah 177:22

ובמקום שנהגו לתת מעשר מריוח המעות, אין המקבל יכול ליתן המעשר אלא יתן חציו לנותן והוא יתנונו למי שירצה (מרדכי פרק הגוזל).
And in a place where they customarily give a tenth from the proceeds, the managing partner may not give the tenth, but he must give half to the investor, and he will give it to whomsoever he chooses. (Mordechai to Bava Kama)

16. Talmud, Shabbat 119a

עשירים שבארץ ישראל במה הן זוכין? אמר לו: בשביל שמעשרין שנאמר עשר תעשר עשר בשביל שתתעשר.

“What is the merit of wealthy Israelis?” He replied: They tithe; as it is written, “*Aser ti’aser*” – “*Aser* (tithe) so that *titaser* (you will be tithed again) [or: *titasher* (you will become wealthy)].”

17. Don Cleary, President, Marriott International in Canada, *To be successful, align CSR with business goals and community needs*, Globe and Mail Dec. 4 '18

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/business/careers/leadership/article-to-be-successful-align-csr-with-business-goals-and-community-needs/>

The 2018 Edelman Earned Brand study recently revealed that nearly two-thirds (64 per cent) of consumers around the world now buy on belief. These belief-driven buyers will choose, switch, avoid or boycott a brand based on where it stands on social issues they care about.

Most of the world’s largest corporations have brought corporate social responsibility (CSR) into the forefront of their core business strategies, yielding many benefits for the communities these corporations support. CSR also yields a variety of benefits ranging from reputation management and increased revenues to brand differentiation and attracting and retaining employees. Benefits aside, Marriott International, with our size and scale, also has a global responsibility and a unique opportunity to be a force for good...

In the years to come, companies that align their CSR objectives with business goals and community needs will be the most successful. They will forge a deeper connection with consumers, employees and other stakeholders while creating greater value for the company as well as the communities in which they operate.

18. Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, *Corporate Social Responsibility*

<https://canadabusiness.ca/managing-your-business/day-to-day-operations/management-leadership/corporate-social-responsibility/>

A growing number of businesses have recognized an increasing consumer demand for products and services from organizations that take responsibility for their impact on the environment, the communities where they operate, their employees, their stakeholders and the general public. As a good corporate citizen, your business decisions will be aligned with an ongoing effort to make every impact of your business positive... Your active attention to it will affect your business' conscience, as well as your bottom line.

19. Global Affairs Canada, *Responsible Business Conduct Abroad*

<http://www.international.gc.ca/trade-agreements-accords-commerciaux/topics-domaines/other-autre/csr-rse.aspx>

When companies operate in an economically, socially and environmentally responsible manner, and they do so transparently, it can create shared value. Identification and mitigation of social and environmental risks are increasingly important for business success abroad as the costs to companies of losing community support, in terms of social conflict, reputation and the bottom line, may be significant. As Canadian firms take advantage of global opportunities, there is

an increasing understanding that incorporation of responsible business practices into investments and operations abroad not only benefits local economies and communities, but makes good business sense.

20. The Business Development Bank of Canada, *7 tips for putting corporate responsibility at the heart of your business* <https://www.bdc.ca/en/articles-tools/business-strategy-planning/manage-business/pages/corporate-responsibility-7-key-steps.aspx>

Being a socially responsible business often involves higher material and labour costs. But there is a business case to be made for being a good corporate citizen. In a competitive labour market, employees are drawn to companies that have a good track record for responsible behaviour, such as environmental protection. By being a good role model, a company will attract people who have skills such as innovativeness, leadership and the ability to work in teams. And by treating employees responsibly, costly employee turnover is minimized.

It is also good for a business to stand out from the crowd—for the right reasons of course. Being a good corporate citizen can help a company differentiate itself...

21. Dr. Moses Pava, *Business Ethics: A Jewish Perspective*, pg. 42

To summarize, in [Robert H.] Frank's view the key to understanding how altruism can be sustained is the idea that reputation matters. In a world where reputations are meaningless, the self-interested come to dominate. In a world where reputations are completely accurate and freely available, altruists come to dominate.

22. Jeff Furman, cited in *"Linked Prosperity:" Interview with Ben & Jerry's Jeff Furman*, Sept. '18

<https://www.tides.org/our-community/corporate-partners/linked-prosperity-ben-jerry-jeff-furman/>

There's no doubt that the social mission is the key to how we differentiate our company. I've been quoted saying that Ben & Jerry's would be irrelevant if we didn't have a social mission. There's a lot of good local brands that make great quality ice creams. If we didn't exist, and you walked into your supermarket, it would be just as full of ice cream. How we stand out is the fact that we push back on all those injustices. We have some shelf space, and we try to make a difference.

23. Talmud, Sanhedrin 73a

מניין לרואה את חברו שהוא טובע בנהר או היה גוררתו או לסטין באין עליו שהוא חייב להצילו תלמוד לומר לא תעמד על דם רעך
How do we know that one who sees another drowning in a river or being dragged by a beast or being beset by bandits must act to save him? The Torah says: Do not stand by as your peer's blood is shed.

24. Talmud, Bava Metzia 83a

רבה בר בר חנן תברו ליה הנהו שקולאי חביתא דחמרא, שקל לגלימיהו. אתו אמרו לרב, אמר ליה הב להו גלימיהו. אמר ליה דינא הכי? אמר ליה אין, "למען תלך בדרך טובים." יהיב להו גלימיהו. אמרו ליה "עניי אנן, וטרחינן כולה יומא וכפינן ולית לן מידי!" אמר ליה זיל הב אגרייהו. אמר ליה, דינא הכי? אמר ליה, אין, "וארחות צדיקים תשמר."

Porters broke Rabbah bar bar Chanan's wine barrels, and he took their cloaks. They told Rav, who told him to give them their cloaks. He asked, "Is this the law?" Rav replied, "Yes, 'So that you will walk the path of the good.' (Proverbs 2:20)" The porters said, "We are poor, we worked all day, we are hungry and we have nothing!" Rav told him, "Pay them." He asked, "Is this the law?" Rav replied, "Yes, 'And you will guard the path of the righteous.' (ibid.)"

25. Professor Milton Friedman, *A Friedman Doctrine*, Sept 13, 1970

<https://www.nytimes.com/1970/09/13/archives/a-friedman-doctrine-the-social-responsibility-of-business-is-to.html>

Of course, in practice the doctrine of social responsibility is frequently a cloak for actions that are justified on other grounds rather than a reason for those actions.

To illustrate, it may well be in the long-run interest of a corporation that is a major employer in a small community to devote resources to providing amenities to that community or to improving its government. That may make it easier to attract desirable employees, it may reduce the wage bill or lessen losses from pilferage and sabotage or have other worthwhile effects. Or it may be that, given the laws about the deductibility of corporate charitable contributions, the

stockholders can contribute more to charities they favor by having the corporation make the gift than by doing it themselves, since they can in that way contribute an amount that would otherwise have been paid as corporate taxes.

In each of these—and many similar—cases, there is a strong temptation to rationalize these actions as an exercise of “social responsibility.” In the present climate of opinion, with its widespread aversion to “capitalism,” “profits,” the “soulless corporation” and so on, this is one way for a corporation to generate goodwill as a by-product of expenditures that are entirely justified in its own self-interest.

It would be inconsistent of me to call on corporate executives to refrain from this hypocritical window dressing because it harms the foundations of a free society. That would be to call on them to exercise “social responsibility”! If our institutions, and the attitudes of the public make it in their self-interest to cloak their actions in this way, I cannot summon much indignation to denounce them. At the same time, I can express admiration for those individual proprietors or owners of closely held corporations or stock holders of more broadly held corporations who disdain such tactics as approaching fraud.

26. Prof. V. Kasturi Rangan, Lisa Chase and Sohel Karim, *The Truth About CSR*, Harvard Business Review
<https://hbr.org/2015/01/the-truth-about-csr>

Most companies have long practiced some form of corporate social and environmental responsibility with the broad goal, simply, of contributing to the well-being of the communities and society they affect and on which they depend. But there is increasing pressure to dress up CSR as a business discipline and demand that every initiative deliver business results. That is asking too much of CSR and distracts from what must be its main goal: to align a company’s social and environmental activities with its business purpose and values. If in doing so CSR activities mitigate risks, enhance reputation, and contribute to business results, that is all to the good. But for many CSR programs, those outcomes should be a spillover, not their reason for being. This article explains why firms must refocus their CSR activities on this fundamental goal and provides a systematic process for bringing coherence and discipline to CSR strategies...

Best-practices companies operate coordinated and interdependent programs across the CSR portfolio. Some of their initiatives indeed create shared value; some, though intended to do so, create more value for society than for the firm; and some are intended to create value primarily for society. Yet all have one thing in common: They are aligned with the companies’ business purpose, the values of the companies’ important stakeholders, and the needs of the communities in which the companies operate. These companies, of course, stand in stark contrast to those that are focused solely on creating value for their shareholders.

Q3: Who decides whether a corporation should take on a particular CSR initiative?

27. Rabbi Yosef Karo (16th century Israel), Code of Jewish Law, Choshen Mishpat 290:7

...והוא מוציא ומכניס ובונה וסותר ושוכר ונוטע וזורע ועושה כפי מה שיראה שזה טוב ליתומים, ומאכילן ומשקן ונותן להם כל ההוצאה כפי הממון וכפי הראוי להם...

...And he spends, collects, builds, demolishes, hires, plants, sows and does as he sees fit for the orphans. And he feeds them and gives them their expenditures according to their means and as is appropriate for them...

28. Rabbi Yosef Karo (16th century Israel), Code of Jewish Law, Choshen Mishpat 290:15

אין פוסקים עליהם צדקה, אפילו לפדיון שבויים, מפני שמצות אלו אין להם קצבה. מיהו אם פסק עליהם צדקה לאחשובינהו כדי שיצא עליהם שם טוב, והם אמודים לכך, שפיר דמי.

We do not assess them for *tzedakah*, even to redeem captives, because these mitzvot have no limit. But if he assesses them for *tzedakah* to give them status, so that they will develop a good reputation, and they can afford it, this is fine.

29. Mishnah, Terumot 4:4

האומר לשלוחו "צא ותרם" תרם כדעתו של בעל הבית. אם אינו יודע דעתו של בעל הבית תרם כבינונית, אחת מחמשים...

If one tells his agent, “Go tithe,” he tithes according to the owner’s personality. If he doesn’t know the owner’s personality, he should tithe at the intermediate level, two percent...

30. Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan (19th-20th century Poland), Mishneh Berurah 14:12

נ"ל פשוט דאם נתקלקל הטלית או אחת מציציותיה אצל השואל אף שהיה ע"י אונס ולא החזיר לו כמו שלקחה אינו יוצא בהמצוה.

It appears obvious to me that if the *tallit* or one of its strings becomes damaged in the possession of the borrower, then even if this was unavoidable, if he did not return it in the condition it was in when he took it, he did not fulfill his mitzvah.

Q4: Does legislation for socially responsible conduct have binding authority as "the law of the land"?

31. Mishnah Keritot 1:7

מעשה שעמדו קינים בירושלים בדינרי זהב אמר רבן שמעון בן גמליאל המעון הזה לא אלין הלילה עד שיהו בדינרין נכנס לבית דין ולימד האשה שיש עליה חמש לידות ודאות חמש זיבות ודאות מביאה קרבן אחד ואוכלת בזבחים ואין השאר עליה חובה ועמדו קינים בו ביום ברבעתים

Once, bird offerings in Jerusalem cost gold dinarim. Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel said: By the Temple! I will not sleep tonight until they cost standard dinarim. He entered the court and taught, "A woman who needs to bring offerings for multiple births or impurities brings one offering..." Bird offerings dropped to a quarter-dinar that day.

32. Rabbi Avraham Gombiner (17th century Poland), Magen Avraham 242:1

אם הערלים מיקרין השער דגים נכון לתקן שלא יקנו דגים וראיה ממשנה ספ"א דכריתות (צ"צ)

Should the non-Jews elevate the price of fish, it would be good to enact that they not purchase fish [for Shabbat]...

33. Rabbi Shimon Greenfeld (19th-20th century Hungary), Shu"t Maharshag 2:125

הן אמת דלהשוכרים הוא טובה ותיקון, אבל לבעל הבית המשכיר הוא קלקול וחסרון, שאדם אחר משתמש בשלו בעל כרחך, ומאי חזית דאזלת בתר השוכרים לקרותו תיקון? זיל בתר המשכירים דהבית והחנות הוא שלהם והוי קלקול!

True, this is good and beneficial for the renters, but for the landlord who rents it out this is harm and loss, for someone else uses his property against his will. Why follow the renters to call it 'benefit'? Follow the landlords, for the house or store is theirs, and this is harm!

34. Rabbi Yehoshua Rokeiach (19th century Poland), Ohel Yehoshua 11

אולם שמוע שמעתי מאחי הרב הגדול שאאמו"ר זלה"ה חזר מזה, ואמר לו מילתא בטעמא, כי דברי הש"ך לא נאמרו רק בדורות הראשונים שכל נמוסי המלכות נחתכו ונקבעו רק ע"י המלך ויועציו, משא"כ בדורות הללו שכל מדינה יש לה בית נבחרים מכל המדינה פרלמנט וכל החוקים נחתכים עפ"י הנבחרים האלה מעתה כל מה שעושים ומתקנים לטובת המדינה הוה כקיבלו עליהם כל החוקים יען שכל אנשי המדינה בוחרים צירים לבית הנבחרים ושולחים אותם לתקן להם תקנות טובות ומועילות אשר על כן בדברים שבממון אף שהוא היפך מד"ת יש להם הכח והעזו לתקן תיקון המדינה, וכל מה שעשו הנבחרים נחשב כמו שעשו הקהל בעצמם תקנה דשלוחו של אדם כמותו

However, I have heard from my brother that our great father recanted. He explained logically that the Shach's words were stated in earlier times, when the laws of the government were designed and established only by the king and his advisors. This is not so in these generations, when each nation has a parliament of elected officials from throughout the land, and all of the laws are designed by these elected officials. Therefore, all that they do and enact for the good of the population is as though the population had accepted all of these laws, because the entire population chooses emissaries to the parliament and sends them in order to issue good and effective enactments. Therefore, in financial matters, even against the Torah, they have authority and strength to enact for the population, and all that the elected officials do is considered as though the population themselves had enacted it; one's agent is like himself.