



1. Charles H. Ramsey, Chief of Police, Washington DC, *To Better Serve and Protect*
Holocaust Centre of Toronto, 2004 Holocaust Education Week, Opening Night Program

<https://mpdc.dc.gov/release/better-serve-and-protect-preserving-peace-and-protecting-human-rights-through-lessons>

I left that first visit to the museum haunted by the photographs and the other images and information that I had been exposed to. I also left with a vague sense that inside that museum there were lessons – vitally important lessons for myself and, really, for every police officer. I didn't have a clear idea of what those lessons were, but I knew that they were there ... somewhere.

So a few days later, I decided to go back and tour the museum again ... on my own, this time. And I lingered for several hours trying to take it all in again and sort things through. It was during that second visit to the museum that I realized what had haunted me so much during my first trip. It was the fact that the police – local law enforcement ... my chosen profession – had played such an important role in the Holocaust. I wasn't aware of that fact, and I figured that most police officers today probably weren't aware of it either.

2. Charles H. Ramsey, Chief of Police, Washington DC, *To Better Serve and Protect*

The Holocaust training also reminds us that local police must never become so politicized – as they were in Nazi Germany – that we exist primarily to carry out the will of political leaders ... or to simply look the other way when political agendas or atrocities are carried out. Our power – our authority as police officers – come not from the politicians. Our power and authority come from the people. And above all else, our role as police officers is to protect and preserve the rights of the people – the right to assemble, the right to speak, the right to worship, the right to petition and criticize one's government, the right to be secure in our homes, our possessions and our beliefs. Defending these rights – for all people ... all of the time – is what ultimately defines us as police officers. And we can never allow those principles to be undermined or eroded.

The Job Description

3. Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act, Paragraph 18

It is the duty of members who are peace officers, subject to the orders of the Commissioner,

(a) to perform all duties that are assigned to peace officers in relation to the preservation of the peace, the prevention of crime and of offences against the laws of Canada and the laws in force in any province in which they may be employed, and the apprehension of criminals and offenders and others who may be lawfully taken into custody;

(b) to execute all warrants, and perform all duties and services in relation thereto, that may, under this Act or the laws of Canada or the laws in force in any province, be lawfully executed and performed by peace officers;

(c) to perform all duties that may be lawfully performed by peace officers in relation to the escort and conveyance of convicts and other persons in custody to or from any courts, places of punishment or confinement, asylums or other places; and

(d) to perform such other duties and functions as are prescribed by the Governor in Council or the Commissioner.

4. Deuteronomy 16:18

You shall place judges and officers at all of your gates, which Hashem your Gd gives you for your tribes, and they shall judge the nation righteously.

5. Commentary of Rabbi Avraham Ibn Ezra (11th century) to Deuteronomy 16:18

"And officers [*shotrim*]" – These are the rulers [*moshlim*], as in "*shoteir* and *mosheil*" (Proverbs 6:7) and "the *mishtar* of the heavens over the land (Job 38:33)". Meaning: The judge judges, and the officer compels the criminal.

6. Exodus 21:19

If [the victim] rises and walks about in the market, then the assailant is absolved; only, he must pay for [the victim's] period of rest, and heal him.

7. Leviticus 24:11-12

And the son of the Jewish woman declared the Name and cursed, and they brought him to Moshe. His mother's name was Shlomit bat Divri, of the tribe of Dan. And they put him under guard, for it to be explained to them from Gd.

8. Numbers 15:33-34

And those who found him gathering wood brought him to Moshe and to Aharon and to the whole nation. And they put him under guard, for what should be done to him had not been explained.

9. Talmud, Ketuvot 86a

Rav Kahana said to Rav Pappa: Within your view, that repaying a creditor is a mitzvah, what happens if [the debtor] says, "I don't wish to perform this mitzvah"?

10. Rabbi Moses Maimonides (12th century Egypt), Laws of Holidays 6:21

The courts must establish *shotrim* on festivals, to patrol and search in gardens and orchards and along rivers, lest men and women gather there to eat and drink and come to sin...

11. Talmud, Bava Batra 89a

"[Honest weights and measures] shall be for you" – This teaches that they appoint officers for measures, although not for prices. The house of the Prince appointed officers for both measures and prices... as Rami bar Chama cited Rabbi Yitzchak: We appoint officers for both measures and prices, due to cunning people.

12. Jerusalem Talmud, Bava Batra 5:5

Leviticus 19:36 says, "Just scales, just stone weights, etc." The Sages said: For any mitzvah [like this] where the reward is [biblically] stated beside it, the courts do not enforce it. But Deuteronomy 25:15 says, "[Honest weights and measures] shall be for you," which we interpret to mean, "Set up enforcing officers for this," and yet you would say this?

Society's Duty

13. Rabbeinu Nisim (14th century Spain), Derashah 11

When Israel has a sanhedrin and king, the sanhedrin only judges the nation justly, not exceeding this mandate to improve the nation's affairs unless the king empowers them. But when there is no king in Israel, the "judge" incorporates two powers – the powers of the judge and the powers of the king.

14. Talmud, Moed Katan 5a

The courts go to de-thorn paths, fix roads and plazas, and measure *mikvaot*... And how do we know that if they fail to do this, then they are biblically liable for any blood which is spilled, as though they had done it? Deuteronomy 19:10 says, "[Innocent blood shall not be shed in your land...] and the blood will be on your head."...

15. Midrash Tanchuma, Shoftim 3

Rabbi Elazar said: If there is no *shoteir*, there is no judge. How so? A person is found in court to owe someone else. If there is no *shoteir* to produce payment from him, then once he leaves the court, the judge will have no means to affect him – unless he turns this person over to a *shoteir*, and the *shoteir* will produce it from him.

16. Rabbi Moses Maimonides (12th century Egypt), Mishneh Torah, Laws of Courts 1:1

There is a biblical command to appoint judges and officers in every land and area, as it is written... *Shoftim* are the judges who are fixed in court, with litigants coming before them. *Shotrim* are the wielders of the staff and lash. They stand before the judges, [and] they circulate in the markets and streets and stores to fix the prices and measures, and to strike all who are corrupt. All of their deeds are at the word of the judges, and when they see impropriety in a person then they bring him to court, and judge him according to his wickedness.

The Problem is Inherent

17. Tosefta, Bava Kama 9:11

If the court agent strikes with their authority and causes harm, he is exempt from liability. If he is excessive, he is liable.