

**The President's Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing  
Training and Education Listening Session**  
Written Testimony Submitted by the Anti-Defamation League  
February 9, 2015

I am David Friedman, Regional Director for the Washington, DC Regional Office of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and Director of National Law Enforcement Initiatives for ADL.

We very much appreciate the opportunity to participate in this important listening session. On January 9, the League submitted a broader statement to the Task Force on policing practices that can promote effective crime reduction while building trust and collaborative relationships between law enforcement officials and the communities they serve and protect. This statement will focus quite specifically on our training initiatives and expertise.

**The Anti-Defamation League and Law Enforcement**

Founded in 1913, the Anti-Defamation League ("ADL") is one of the nation's most respected civil rights organizations. ADL is also the foremost non-governmental authority on extremism, hate groups, and domestic terrorism. ADL's work with law enforcement was an outgrowth of our efforts to combat extremism and hate crimes and our advocacy on behalf of civil rights and equal justice. Working both on the national and grassroots levels through our network of 27 regional offices, ADL is regarded as the most important non-governmental partner of law enforcement.

ADL is the leading organization in the fight against hate crimes. Forty-five states and the District of Columbia have enacted hate crimes laws based on or similar to the model we created more than three decades ago. In Washington, we chaired the national coalition of more than 200 civil rights, advocacy, religious and law enforcement organizations which helped secure the passage of the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act in 2009. ADL is also at the forefront of national and state efforts to train law enforcement officials and civic leaders to deter and counteract hate crimes.

ADL's dual role as one of the country's leading civil rights organizations and a strong partner of law enforcement is unique. It gives us a singular understanding of the needs and expectations of the people and communities in our nation and of the men and women who serve and protect us.

**ADL Leadership in Education and Training for Law Enforcement**

Education and training constitute the largest part of ADL's operations. We are one of the nation's leading providers of educational resources for schools and academic institutions to combat bias, discrimination and stereotyping and to reduce intergroup conflict and increase

understanding. ADL trains thousands of law enforcement personnel each year through our national programs and 27 regional offices on subjects including hate crimes, anti-bias, extremism, domestic and international terrorism, and cyber-hate.

In 1998, Charles H. Ramsey, then the new chief of police of the Washington, DC Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), asked ADL and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) to develop a recruit training program for MPD. Chief Ramsey believed that examining the systematic murder, brutality and abuse that occurred during the Holocaust would strengthen recruits' understanding of their relationship to the people they serve and their role as protectors of individual rights and the Constitution. The training program that was created—*Law Enforcement and Society (LEAS)*—was revolutionary and innovative, and has had a far reaching impact on law enforcement. Shortly after recruit training had begun, Chief Ramsey expanded *Law Enforcement and Society* training to all of MPD's 3,500 sworn personnel. In 2000, the Federal Bureau of Investigation mandated that all FBI New Agents participate in *LEAS* training, a requirement that continues today. To date, more than 95,000 law enforcement professionals have participated in *LEAS* training. Federal, state and local law enforcement agencies ask for this training, which is free of charge and never marketed, because it addresses the issues that the President's Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing was empanelled to examine—ensuring that police are trusted by the community, and treat the people they serve fairly, with respect and compassion.

In envisioning *Law Enforcement and Society*, Chief Ramsey showed a profound understanding of the needs of American law enforcement and the qualities necessary for a transformative training. The men and women who go into law enforcement have chosen an inherently difficult and increasingly complicated calling. They are responsible for enforcing our nation's laws, preserving the peace, and preventing and responding to crime and terrorism. To do so, they are given powers that are entrusted to few others in our society – the authority to use force, even lethal force, and to deprive people of their freedoms. They are expected to confront danger—risking their lives to protect ours—to quell violence, and make split-second decisions about the use of force. And they must carry out these responsibilities within the framework of our country's democratic principles and values, without abusing their powers or violating individual rights or our Constitution.

With so much at stake, training and education are pivotal. But the traditional focus on technical proficiency, knowledge of the law, policies and procedures is not enough. Policing in a democracy is about dealing with people, and an officer's success depends upon having a clear understanding of one's role and the relationship to the people he or she serves. Ethics training for police too often consists merely of admonitions of what not to do, and encouragement to do the right thing through codes of conduct and statements of values. But these behaviors cannot be transformed into practice unless they are internalized. In advocating for the creation of a training program using the Holocaust as its foundation, Chief Ramsey recognized that it was imperative to reach officers not just on the intellectual level, but as “an emotional, spiritual and moral experience.”<sup>i</sup> Chief Ramsey explained, “We need to affect the way in which officers

see themselves and their role in society. We need to change what is inside them and help them see things differently.”<sup>ii</sup>

*Law Enforcement and Society* is a full day training session which begins with an examination of the Holocaust and the conduct of police under the Nazis. It is a window into an ideology responsible for exterminating people because of their identity and perceived inferiority. Looking at this history affects law enforcement participants profoundly, on the professional and personal levels, because the atrocities committed by the Nazis violate our nation’s deepest principles and their professional values.

The heart of *LEAS* is an interactive discussion of the role of police today. The contemporary discussion explores the stereotypes of law enforcement - how police are seen and treated by the public, and asks them how they want to be seen. The common responses are “fair, unbiased, professional, compassionate, courageous and selfless, as role models and protectors.” They discuss the reasons they chose to become police officers (“to help people, make a difference, to give back to the community,”) and speak frankly about the daily challenges of interacting with the people they serve and the struggle to prevent looking at the community in terms of “us versus them.” *LEAS* examines the centrality of trust in the relationship between the people and police, and provides strategies to assist in building trust, changing community perceptions and understanding the role of a law enforcement professional in a democracy.

*LEAS* culminates with a discussion of what prevents police from abusing their power. Ultimately, the transformational message that *LEAS* drives home is this: the only real safeguard we have from abuse is the conscious decision that officers make to act according to their profession’s core values. These values are translated into daily behavior by an officer’s understanding that the meaning of his or her identity as a professional is bound to how they want to be perceived by the people. For participants in *LEAS*, the training is a powerful reminder that their success is inextricably tied to how they are viewed by the people they serve. If they are feared, they have failed. For that reason, *LEAS* is not conducted by law enforcement trainers, but rather is facilitated by civilian trainers from ADL and the USHMM.

### ***Law Enforcement and Society Leadership Training***

The greatest demand for *LEAS* training is for training leaders and supervisors, and above all senior leaders – from more than 1,000 agencies and every state. *LEAS* is now a required component of the FBI National Academy, and FBI Academy has incorporated it into the curriculum for its National Executive Institute (NEI), Law Enforcement Executive Development Seminar (LEEDS), and Law Enforcement in Counter-Terrorist (LinCT). *LEAS* is training senior personnel of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement, United States Secret Service, the United States Marshals Service, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Fire Arms and Explosives, and Drug Enforcement Administration. *LEAS* has been integrated into Chief Ramsey’s own Police Executive Leadership Institute (PELI) and has trained senior law enforcement leaders from 85 foreign countries.

*LEAS* reinforces two central tenets of policing in a democracy relating to leadership. First, that the values of law enforcement are rooted in the relationship between police and the people they serve. Second, that one of the primary responsibilities of law enforcement leaders at all levels, from the first line supervisor to the chief of police, is to build and sustain a culture that helps to ensure that police behave according to their professional values. *LEAS* helps leaders understand that in expecting the men and women under them to act according to the values of their profession, any separation between their words and actions will undermine efforts to build trust with the community, insure integrity and prevent abuse.

### **National Expansion of *Law Enforcement and Society***

In 2004, the first *Law Enforcement and Society* training programs outside of Washington, DC, were launched in St. Louis, MO and Houston, TX through a grant provided by the Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS). In addition, *LEAS* programs are now offered in Nassau County, NY, Tampa, FL, and Arizona, and *LEAS* will be launched in Los Angeles in 2015.

### **Conclusion: The Important of Training that Builds Trust**

Law enforcement agencies and their training academies are in the unenviable position of having too many required or critical subjects to teach in too few hours. Policing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century requires that all sworn and civilian personnel have a clear understanding of their role in a democracy and their relationship to the people and communities they serve. For that reason *Law Enforcement and Society*, and training programs on hate crimes, anti-bias and cultural competency, must be integrated into the curricula for recruit, in-service, supervisory and leadership training. The days of including these subjects in training only when there is time, or after a crisis, or diminishing their importance by separating them from the core curricula, are long gone. Policing in a democracy requires that knowledge, skills and competencies which strengthen law enforcement's ability to serve and protect people in a pluralistic society be given a central place in their training and education.

### **Recommendations**

1. The Department of Justice and the COPS Office should work with ADL and the USHMM to expand *Law Enforcement and Society* training to selected jurisdictions. Special emphasis should be placed on expanding *LEAS* training to law enforcement executives.
  - a. Expand education and training opportunities that strengthen law enforcement's understanding of core values and their role as protectors of individual rights and the Constitution.
  - b. Increase leadership training opportunities for law enforcement commanders focused on ways to sustain core values and pass them on to the next generation of law enforcement.

- c. Increase training opportunities in which community groups and leaders can have an integral role, such as with hate crime training.
2. Promote the Department of Justice revised and updated federal profiling guidance for law enforcement<sup>iii</sup>, which expands protection on the basis of gender, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, and gender identity. This demonstrates the government's commitment to ensuring that law enforcement conduct their activities in an unbiased manner.
3. Congress and the Administration should support outreach programs to promote an inclusive and diverse police force that better reflects the racial, ethnic, and religious communities it serves.
4. Department of Justice and the COPS Office should promote best practices in hate crimes training. With funding from Congress, the FBI, the Justice Department, and US Attorneys should incentivize police participation in the FBI's HCSA data collection program through national recognition, targeted funding, matching grants for HCSA-related training, and replication of effective programs.

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<sup>i</sup> Charles H. Ramsey, *The Challenge of Policing in a Democratic Society: A Personal Journey Toward Understanding*, New Perspectives in Policing (June 2014).

<sup>ii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>iii</sup> <http://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/ag/pages/attachments/2014/12/08/use-of-race-policy.pdf>