

# UJPO News

Volume 30, FALL, 2010, Issue #4

The United Jewish People's Order (UJPO) is an independent, national, socialist-oriented, secular organization

Serving Canada's  
Progressive Jews as  
individual  
organizations since  
1926 and as  
the United Jewish  
People's Order since  
1945!

From our National Office

## UJPO – 65 Years Young

By DAVID ABRAMOWITZ and LYN CENTER

At a 1945 convention in Toronto, with delegates attending from Montreal and Winnipeg, the national organization of the United Jewish People's Order was formed. It was the child of Toronto's Labour League (established in 1926) and Montreal's Workers' Circle (established in 1927), as an organization of class conscious, active trade unionists. By 1947, the UJPO had additional branches in Hamilton, Niagara Falls, Windsor, Calgary and Vancouver. Our membership exceeded 2,500 people.

Albert Abramowitz (David's father), wrote in the 1986 national convention booklet: "From the very beginning, we turned our organization into a cultural centre. We had three Yiddish shules, two kindergartens, dance groups, drama groups, orchestras, camps and a credit union." We also established and continue to maintain cemeteries in Montreal and Toronto.

Through the years, we have worked along with the labour movement for better working conditions, shorter hours, higher wages, sick benefits, vacations, retirement pensions and medical care. We have raised funds for local Jewish entities such as the Baycrest Centre in Toronto, and for progressive organizations in Israel, such as Ghetto Fighters' House and the New Israel Fund.

Today, we continue to oppose war and to press for peace in the Middle East. We continue to provide a home to progressive, secular Jews wishing to preserve our inherited ideals of social justice, we open our arms to all who share our ideals, and are committed to developing new and innovative forms of activity. We take great pride in celebrating this significant 65th anniversary!

In Toronto we will commence a year of celebrations with a gala concert on November 20 during our weekend National Annual General Meeting of executive members from across the country. A full AGM report will be included in our winter issue. Keep tuned for the celebrations in Winnipeg and Vancouver.

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### Rosh Hashone - Yom Kippur 2010

Toronto, Winchevsky Centre, September 9 and 17, 2010

Numerous media commentators have rightly recognized that the forthcoming mid-term elections in the U.S. may have given impetus for the recent initiation of Israeli-Palestinian talks (to demonstrate that the government is fulfilling its campaign promises).

At last April's *Peysakh Seyder* in Toronto, the UJPO regretted the delay of the U.S. initiative to commence Israeli-Palestinian peace talks. Our expressed hope that the Israeli government would consider a negotiated resolution of the complex, long-standing issues to ensure its own security would *seem* to have become a reality. Israel's long-overdue admission that there is now a partner in peace, however, may now be inaccurate.

The UJPO also hoped last *Peysakh* that the differing Palestinian factions could ultimately unify, and participate with one voice, in meaningful negotiations.

This has not happened. Until *all* Palestinians are represented at the negotiating table no meaningful peace treaty can be reached. This issue became more complex with the killing of four Israelis by Palestinian gunmen, an act which the UJPO unequivocally condemns.

In a few days the Israeli imposed settlement building freeze expires. Unless it is renewed and enforced more regrettable violence can be anticipated. While in some areas the freeze has already been breached by settlers in retaliation to the aforementioned attack, the UJPO calls on the Israeli government to renew and enforce this freeze.

Recent Israeli statements on a shared Jerusalem, and two independent states living side by side in security and peace have been the UJPO'S decades-long position. The path ahead is fraught with pitfalls from extremism on both sides. Overcoming them will take time and perseverance by both parties. It is our sincere hope that these obstacles, as difficult as they may be, can and will be overcome.

## UJPO sections report

### From Vancouver

By CARL ROSENBERG

Our home in Vancouver at the Peretz Centre for Secular Jewish Culture continues to be a place for a variety of exciting activities, including the monthly *Fraytig Tsu Nakht* (FTN) (Friday eve), which always has absorbing presentations on diverse topics. The most recent FTN featured a presentation by long-time Peretz and *Outlook* activist Al Stein on Jewish gangsters (The Jewish underworld of North America), reminding us that the Jewish people, like all peoples, have produced a full range of human types—nefarious characters as well as heroes (and all those in between).



*Fraytig Tsu Nakht* buffet

One of the most important of recent activities in which Vancouver UJPOniks and other secularists have taken part was the event held over the Labour Day weekend, hosted by the Peretz Centre: "J-West: Connections and Continuity," the second annual West Coast Regional Conference for Secular, Humanist and Cultural Jews. The conference attracted participants (100 people) of all ages, from Los Angeles, San Francisco, Portland, Cleveland, Seattle, and even New York, as well as Victoria and of course Vancouver, active in a variety of cultural, secular and humanist Jewish organizations, including the Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations (CSJO), the Society for Humanistic Judaism (SHJ), and the Jewish Labor Committee.

The conference featured workshops and discussions on various aspects of Jewish life, culture, identity and continuity. Unfortunately, I was only able to attend the Saturday portion of the conference (along with the *Fraytig Tsu Nakht* the night before), but the events I attended that day were excellent—the keynote addresses by Bernice Kastner and Sam Ruben, Gene Homel's presentation on "Shifting agendas and changing attitudes toward the Holocaust since World War Two," and Avril Orloff's presentation on "Compassionate Listening: strategies to apply in the Middle East and other areas in conflict." I have no doubt that the events the next day were equally fascinating. I would especially like to have heard Faith Jones on "Sex, politics and Yiddish—poetry you should get to know" and Joanne Naiman on "Why Jews love a debate, but not about .... Well, you know." (Sylvia Friedman attended Faith's presentation, among others, and found it very informative.)

The conference gave all the attendees and participants a much-needed opportunity for face-face discussion, which



Leslie Dyson

is essential to maintaining "connections and continuity" in any community. In *Outlook* (an important resource for the secular Jewish world) we will feature an article on the conference by CSJO Executive Director Rifke

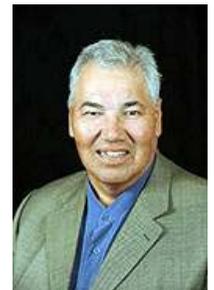
Feinstein. Many thanks and congratulations to Leslie and Shane Dyson and all the other conference organizers and presenters for their wonderful contributions. Vancouver Jewish secularists—UJPOniks, Peretzniks, *Outlook*niks and others—are proud that our city and community was a venue for this important event.

### From Winnipeg

By Dora Rosenbaum

At our opening meeting on September 12, with the encouragement of Roz Usiskin, the combined executives of the Winnipeg UJPO and the Sholem Aleichem Community (SAC) established board structures. Pending elections some volunteered for immediately necessary positions: Membership co-chairs - Harriet Zaidman and Karen Naylor; Program chair - LeeAne Block will head a volunteer committee; Treasurer - still being sought. SAC will continue to co-sponsor certain events.

We held our *Outlook* Magazine Fund-raising Luncheon on September 23. Our guest speaker, Justice Murray Sinclair, Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. From his topic, "What we can learn from each other", he compared those who pulled through the Indian Residential Schools and those who survived the Nazi Holocaust, drawing parallels between both groups and lessons each can learn from the other. He also shed light on his Commission's work, its impact on Canadian aboriginal people in particular, and Canadian society in general.



Justice Murray Sinclair

We haven't established our next forum at press time but our choir continues to grow. All members are very enthusiastic and we enjoy singing Jewish folk songs. We will be singing at the Sharon Seniors' Home in November as well as at the SAC Chanukah party in December.

Sigh - winter is nigh - soon - WINTERPEG!  
Warm regards to all.  
Dora

**Winchevsky Theatre Club, November 25, 8 p.m.**

**"BETHUNE IMAGINED"**

**Factory Theatre, 125 Bathurst Street**

**Tickets \$25 - call 416-789-5502**

**before our ticket block is sold out**

## From Toronto

By DOVID SHLOYME



UJPO archivist Ruth Grossman (right) with Brampton Mayor, Susan Fennell, holding plaque

In our last issue Camp Naivelt activities were still in full swing (and we were honoured with an official plaque designating Camp Naivelt as a Heritage site).

But the concluding 85<sup>th</sup> Anniversary camp banquet was truly its crowning glory. In addition to many

significant cultural presentations that night Ester Reiter decided "Our History in Song" would be a fitting way to mark the event. Shifra Cooper, now in her second year in music at University of Toronto, took a multi-age group (from 4 to 74) and assembled an incredible choral ensemble. It was magnificent as attested by the large audience and in 18 year old Ezra Lipton's description of Camp's youth contingent which follows.



Shifra Cooper (left) and a portion of the Naivelt Singers at Camp's closing concert.



## Naivelt Swarming with Excitement and Potential

By EZRA LIPTON

This summer, Camp Naivelt marked its 85th anniversary, and to celebrate, many campers of past and present were there to commemorate, bringing with them archival materials and their memories. And though it was a celebration of the past, there was an equally strong focus on the future. This was because of the strong commitment and work by the youth of Naivelt.

Over the past couple of years, the youth and young adults in our community have been looking to be active in our events and activities, and they certainly have been. For example, for the past few years Abby Cope has played a major role in the planning and realization of Camp's annual end-of-season banquets. This year's 85th was no exception, and she took on the daunting task with utmost success. Many other members of the Naivelt youth community also helped in any way they could (no matter how menial the job).

Not only did youth help plan the 85th event, they also helped organize a large part of the entertainment. Shifra Cooper (see above photo) worked tirelessly, organizing and teaching the songs of Naivelt throughout the years to a multi-generational choir. Earlier in the summer, both Shifra and Lucas Meilach- Boston worked alongside Martin

Van de Ven during Naivelt's popular Music Camp week, where they used their musical talents to help and teach other musicians at Camp.



Some Arts Week projects on display at Camp

And during the Naivelt Arts week, Shifra and Keiran Brennan-Hinton assisted Naomi Kates, leading activities such as making clay masks and drawing.

Numerous other youth and young adults, including myself, took part in Naivelt's Youth Employment Program. Now in its second year, this program allocates money for youth so that they can spend time working at Naivelt over the summer, instead of at regular summer jobs. The jobs ranged from landscaping and gardening, to the lifting of numerous heavy objects – all aimed at improving or helping life at Camp. This summer, I also took on the role of the editor for *Naivelt News*, Naivelt's weekly newsletter. With all these opportunities not only being created, but being actively and enthusiastically taken on by members of Camp's youth community, Naivelt was swarming with excitement and potential. And in its 85th year, it appears that with all this youth involvement, another 85 years would be an accomplishable feat.

In Toronto the weekend after Camp's closing banquet we were at the Ashkenaz Festival of New Yiddish Culture. Our community table, along with others, was located in the least visited portion of the Ashkenaz site at Toronto's Harbourfront; results were disappointing. We don't feel the effort will be worth it for the next festival. On the other hand, the Toronto Jewish Folk Choir (TJFC), plagued by a rainy day and early performance time, gave one of its best performances, repeating much of its May spring concert.



Alexander Vepriusky conducts the TJFC at Ashkenaz 2010

Our fall activities listed in the last issue proceeded as expected. Our secular Rosh Hashone and Yom Kippur events were successful (photo on age 4) and our shule resumed with lower registrations which was reflected at its sukkes celebration (held at Camp Naivelt).

Illness resulted in postponing our Labour Song Fest but a portion of it was performed two weeks later at the *Outlook Magazine Brunch* by Simone Taylor and Mitzy Dolgay (both formerly with the Travelers). An

article about the *Outlook* Brunch will be featured in our Winter issue.



Rosh Hashone readers (l. to r.) Gord Meslin, Marina Sokolova (candle lighter), Tina Blazer and Elissa Hermolin (see page 3)

We joined with the Workmen's Circle, Committee for Yiddish, Max & Beatrice Wolfe Library, Reuben & Helen Dennis Museum, Beth Tzedec Congregation, and the Borochoy Cultural Centre in sponsoring the 90<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration of Simcha Simchovitch, one of the last surviving Yiddish poets, at the Jewish Book Fair on October 24.

This issue is being put to bed before our next event - the October 30 speaking engagement of Robert Meeropol the younger son of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. We'll also report on this vent in our next issue.

"BYOL – Bring Your Own Latkes!" will be our community Chanukah party in association with the *West End Secular Tribe of Progressive Jews* (The West PJ's) on Saturday December 4<sup>th</sup> at Mary McCormick Community Centre - watch the next issue for the report.

We'll meet again in the new year so  
**may you and your families have a healthy  
and prosperous year in a safe, peaceful  
world -  
a gut yor alemen !**

### **Jewish Labour, Jewish Community in Ontario - 1900-1950**

Did your ancestors immigrate to a mid-size or small community in Ontario in the early years of the last century?

If so, do you have any family stories, photos or other memorabilia about the Jewish immigrant experience that you would like to share?

I am working with others in Hamilton to create an exhibit for the Workers' Arts and Heritage Centre (also possibly online and/or traveling) to portray stories of Jewish labour and community in Ontario from 1900 to 1950.

If you have anything you would like to contribute to this exhibit, please contact me at 905-522-0448 or lyncenter@hotmail.com.

## **World's largest solar plant is in Ontario !**

by TIMON SINGH, *inhabitat.com*

01/110/10 — Canada may not be the first place you would guess to have the world's largest photovoltaic facility. In fact, if this writer was asked he'd have opted for somewhere notoriously sunny such as Saudi Arabia or Australia. However, it was announced this week by Canadian firm Enbridge Inc. and Arizona-based First Solar Inc. that the 80-megawatt Sarnia Solar Project was not only opening, but it was now the largest operational PV plant in the world. Who'da thunk it?

In times when every country is trying to diversify its energy supplies, it is refreshing to see Canada step up to the plate with such a large scale project. The Sarnia Solar Project, which sees 1.3 million First Solar modules spread over 950 acres of land, has the potential to supply the energy needs of up to 12,800 households.

Not only is the renewable energy put into the local power grid, but the construction of the plant itself was also done using the latest sustainable methods. According to Enbridge, the construction project created 800 jobs and in an effort to make as little environmental impact as possible, no water was used during construction and no waste was created. As such, the entire project was designed to have minimal visual impact on the surrounding area and construction workers made sure that minimal noise was made so as to not disturb the local wildlife.

The Sarnia project is actually the expansion of a current 20 megawatt plant that reportedly cost \$300 million (Canadian) to expand into a 80 megawatt facility. What is most interesting about the project though, is Enbridge's involvement. Traditionally the firm is a large oil and gas pipeline manufacturer, who famously had a large oil spill in Michigan, however this attempt to embrace renewable forms of energy appears to show they are weaning themselves off fossil fuels, and that can only be a good thing.

To put Sarnia's accomplishment into some context, the largest solar photovoltaic project in the United States is the DeSoto Next Generation Solar Energy Center in Arcadia, Florida, which is rated at 25 megawatts.



World's largest solar plant - Sarnia, Ontario

Meanwhile the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) in Saudi Arabia, the largest in the country, is only rated at 2 megawatts. However, the UAE is currently developing a 100 megawatt plant, so Sarnia's record might not be theirs for long....

## UJPO's Venezuela fact-finding

### ✈ and solidarity tour

By RONNEE JAEGER

Sam and I are organizing a solidarity and fact finding tour to Venezuela in the fall of 2011. This tour, as like the Israeli tours, is sponsored by the National Board of UJPO. We are in the process of organizing, lining up contacts, and will begin sending material to interested people. There is an attempt in Bolivia, Ecuador and Venezuela to create an alternative society to the neo-liberal capitalist system so firmly in place throughout most of the world (enforced through military means).

The mainstream press sounded an alarm about the redistribution of land but generally there is no reportage except to denounce Venezuela's president Hugo Chavez.

There are alternative press reports of the excellent and universal health care, huge leaps in literacy and school attendance of children. The government speaks of participatory democracy and housing as a human right.

It is important to see and meet people involved in this hopeful effort. They need support.

What is the tie-in between the Israel-Palestine situation, (and the three tours UJPO sponsored) and a Venezuela fact-finding and solidarity tour?

On the Israel-Palestine tours we met with people working towards a just peace, since the popular press ignores the reality of the occupation, and the lives of the Palestinians under the occupation (and also, as we saw, within Israel). Similarly, the mainstream press reported with alarm the redistribution of land in Venezuela under the Chavez government, while ignoring the poverty, illiteracy, and difficult lives of the majority of the population under the previous governments.

The leap in public health, literacy, and school attendance under Chavez is never mentioned in the press. As in our trips to Israel-Palestine, we need to see the "facts on the ground", and offer support to the goals of participatory democracy, social housing as a human right, and the building of an egalitarian society. Israel-Palestine is a heart-breaking story, while Venezuela offers hope for social change.

I am looking at the ongoing changes in the three countries plus Cuba in terms of an alternative to capitalism. We all need to learn what is going on and the mainstream media is of no help, as they oppose the very goals of this experiment e.g. the predictable horror over land redistribution. As a supporter of the goals of the revolution I think it is important to bring honest and helpful criticism as well as honest reporting into the discussion as part of our solidarity building.

This tour is a continuation for Sam and me and the UJPO of the concern for social justice, and solidarity for those working towards this goal. We plan this tour for the fall of 2011, and invite anyone interested to contact us at [ronneej40@bell.net](mailto:ronneej40@bell.net).

## Hungary's Sludge Pond Catastrophe Could Happen Here!

*Alberta's tar sands tailings ponds alone cover a Vancouver-sized area, and safety plans are secret.*

By GILLIAN MCEACHERN, *TheTyee.ca*

15/10/10/ — As we watch the toxic tailings sludge devastate land and water in Hungary, Canadians wonder "could it happen here?" Canada does, after all, have tailings ponds across the country to contain the toxic byproducts of mining and tar sands production. But surely a country as developed and responsible as Canada would have strong regulatory safeguards in place to prevent such an accident compared to Hungary, right?



Tailings pond in Alberta. Photo: NRDC.

Now is the time to ask our federal government just that question, as it ponders granting approval for a new tar sands mine, proposed by French energy company Total, which would add two more tailings ponds and produce 12.5 billion litres of toxic tailings every year.

Total's Joslyn mine, if approved, would add to what is already a massive toxic liability in northern Alberta. Tar sands tailings ponds already cover an area larger than the City of Vancouver, and hold back 840 million cubic metres of toxic waste left over from tar sands production. The contaminated material is held back by unlined, earthen dams reaching as high as 300 feet. Worldwide, tailings dams are 10 times more likely to fail than other types of dams, and there have already been problems with some of the tar sands tailings dams.

The Alberta government says that companies have emergency response plans for tailings breaches, but none of these are open to public scrutiny. Given the proximity of the ponds to downriver Saskatchewan and Northwest Territories, the potential transboundary impacts of a major spill mean that the federal government has a responsibility to prevent that from happening.

Minister Prentice recently signaled that the federal government recognizes it needs to step up to meet its legal responsibilities regarding the tar sands when he appointed a science panel to review the pollution monitoring in the Athabasca River. Yet so far the federal government is generally hands off regarding the safety of

the tailings dams, and has no emergency response plan to deal with a spill.

### The nightmare scenario

Let's imagine what could take place. An earthen dam holding back 50 years worth of toxic waste at a tar sands mine bursts, and within hours, billions of litres of tailings have poured into the Athabasca River that flows north. The toxic slurry makes its way to the Athabasca Delta, a World Heritage Site and nesting ground for migratory birds from across the continent. It moves through the Mackenzie River basin, which drains a fifth of Canada's water supply and is the traditional homeland to dozens of Aboriginal communities, as well as countless birds, caribou, and other wildlife. Toxic tailings could finally make their way into the highly sensitive Arctic Ocean.

Drinking water for people downstream is contaminated with polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, a known human carcinogen, heavy metals and naphthenic acid, which harms liver, heart and brain function. Communities can no longer rely on fish as a staple food. And, over time, the aquatic ecosystems of the Athabasca and Great Slave Lake show the chronic symptoms of the toxic waste dumped into their waters.

The Alberta government tells people the company has a plan to deal with this sort of thing, but it soon becomes evident that the company is largely powerless to deal with a catastrophe of this scale. Federal officials watch as the toxic waste crosses out of Alberta into the Northwest Territories, and now it's their problem, but they have no emergency response plan of their own.

### Put away the rubber stamp!

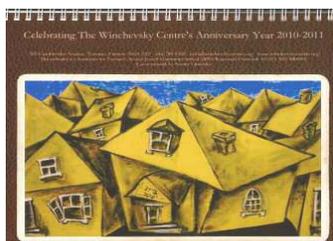
Sound like hyperbole? The recent Hungarian event wasn't the first and won't be the last toxic tailings disaster. Two years ago, an earthen dyke burst at the Tennessee Valley Authority's coal plant in Kingston, Tennessee. The dyke had been holding back billions of litres of toxic coal ash, and within hours, nearly four billion litres -- enough to fill 1,600 Olympic-sized swimming pools -- spilled into the nearby Emory River and the downstream community of Harriman, eventually also reaching the Clinch and Tennessee rivers.

It happened in Hungary. It happened in the U.S. It can happen in Canada.

Will it take a tar sands catastrophe to get the Canadian government's attention?

Let's figure out how to deal with the risk of the toxic ponds already there rather than rubber-stamp new ones.

Get your 2010-2011  
Winchevsky Centre  
Fund-raising Calendar  
before the second printing  
runs out. A lot of photos too!  
**It lists Jewish holidays  
and our Centre's events.  
An indispensable reminder  
and it's only \$18. Drop in or call 416-789-5502 soon.**



## Middle East News Clips

### Fatah official says two-state solution is over

By KHALED ABU TOAMEH &  
HERB KEINON, *jpost.com*

12/10/10 — Washington urges Palestinian Authority to present counter-proposal to keep negotiations on track.

The Palestinian Authority has concluded that the peace process based on a two-state solution has failed, a senior Fatah official said on Tuesday.

His statement came as PA officials repeated their rejection of Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's proposal to extend the settlement construction moratorium if the Palestinian leadership recognized Israel as a Jewish state.

### Settlement freeze necessary for peace

By JPOST.COM STAFF

14/10/10 — Jordanian Foreign Minister Nasser Judeh emphasized the importance of a settlement freeze to peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians, Xinhua News reported.

Judeh reportedly made the remarks during a meeting with Marc Otte, European Union special envoy for the Middle East peace process. Judeh told Otte that he appreciates the EU's role in advancing the peace process.

### Jewish population in Israel is declining

*Despite a million immigrants over the past two decades, the percentage of Jews in the Israeli population is declining.*

By ARNON SOFFER, *haaretz.com*

04/10/10 — I took up Moshe Arens' suggestion, made in this [newspaper] last month ("Demographic bogey"), to take a look at the figures of the Central Bureau of Statistics that he finds so encouraging. And what do I find? For one, that the statistics bureau deals only with data within the Green Line, namely Israel, and data about the Jews of Judea and Samaria. As far as the Arabs in the territories are concerned, we will have to look elsewhere.

What is so encouraging about the figures for 2010? I found that within Israel, Jews constitute 75.5 percent of the population, but that the proportion in 1998 was 79.2 percent, and 81.7 percent in 1988. In other words, the

percentage of Jews in the Israeli population is constantly declining, in spite of the influx of about 1 million immigrants over the past two decades.

According to the forecasts, in 2015 the percentage of Jews will decline to 73.5 percent, and will drop to 70.6 percent by 2025. Only in 2030 will there be, for the first time, a miniscule increase in the proportion of Jews, bringing us to 72 percent. What is there here to make Arens happy?

If to this harsh data we add foreign workers, immigrants from Africa, tourists who did not return to their homeland and Palestinians who enter the country and don't return home, then the percentage of Jews drops to 70 percent of the inhabitants of Israel. What's so wonderful here? It's an unpleasant picture.

But in recent months Arens has been preaching in favor of the annexation of Judea and Samaria to Israel (according to him, that is the way to prevent the existence of two states in this narrow space). Of course, that poses a serious demographic problem. So what does Arens do? He receives data from some American team, which enables him to count how many Arabs live in Judea and Samaria, how many have left, how many are leaving and how many will leave the Land of Israel in the future. He also keeps tabs on the number of births and deaths and asserts "scientifically" that only 1.5 million people live in Judea and Samaria. If we erase 1 million Arabs from the board, then there is a Jewish majority in the Land of Israel; the redeemer has come to Zion and the demographic bogey is dead.

But I don't rely on American teams, and instead turn to the head of the Civil Administration in the Israel Defense Forces, who reports to me that there are presently about 2.6 million Palestinians living in Judea and Samaria, and in Gaza their number is estimated at 1.5 million. Anyone who doesn't rely on the IDF can access the figures of the Palestinian statistics bureau, whose last census was held in 2007, under the aegis of representatives of the Norwegian government; their numbers are similar to those of the IDF (after subtracting the residents of Jerusalem who were already counted by the Israeli statistics bureau). In both cases it turns out that, not counting Gaza or foreign residents, Jews constitute 59 percent of the total population in the Land of Israel. If you do count Gaza and foreign residents, there are somewhat fewer Jews than there are Palestinian Arabs.

There is no choice but to deal with forecasts for the next decade or two, and it turns out that by then the proportion of Jews will have declined to 42 percent. That means an end to the Jewish entity in the Middle East. The demographic bogey, then, is alive and threatening after all, and we still haven't discussed the density of the population or the issues of internal security that we can expect from a hostile population of millions of people.

There is no choice but to tell Arens that the right-wing Betar ideology on which he was raised went bankrupt a long time ago and it won't help if he virtually erases 1.5 million Arabs from the territories. They are here. The conclusion is frighteningly simple: Whoever brings about the establishment of a single binational state in the Land of Israel will doom the Jews of Israel to destruction. We,

the sane majority who still live here, will not allow anyone to do that.

*The writer is a professor emeritus at the University of Haifa.*

## No to Racism! No to Fascism!

*gush-shalom.com*

TEL AVIV — Close to 10 thousand demonstrators of all ages, Jews and Arabs, marched on Saturday, October 16, 2010, in the streets of Tel-Aviv in protest against the racist laws which are about to be enacted by the Knesset, headed by the law that requires non-Jews who ask for citizenship to swear allegiance to Israel as a "Jewish and democratic state".

The protesters marched from the Likud headquarters to the Ministry of Defense, shouting "Jews and Arabs – refuse to be enemies!", "No allegiance to racism!", "Democracy cannot be built on racist laws!", "Wake up – Fascism is already on the march!"



**Protesting the discriminatory loyalty oath, actress Hana Meron reads the Declaration of Independence (Photo Haaretz, by Moti Milrod)**

Demonstrators carried the two-flag signs of Gush Shalom, red flags of Hadash, green flags of Meretz, Peace Now flags and stickers of several peace and human rights groups. One of stickers said "I am not loyal to Lieberman!" – causing Uri Avnery to remark that it is a mistake to put all the blame on Lieberman instead of pointing to the main culprit, Binyamin Netanyahu. One of the protesters carried a sign saying "No citizenship without loyalty" – in German, alluding to the Fascist past



*nif.org*

The last Saturday of October, Jon Stewart, the host of Comedy Central's *The Daily Show*, led a rally in Washington to "restore sanity."

The same Saturday, at the same time, Israelis, came together in Tel Aviv to mark the 15th anniversary of the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. New Israel Fund representatives attended both events carrying the above poster.

## This Winter in Jerusalem!

Learn Yiddish in Jerusalem!  
Yiddish Course at Beit Ben Yehuda!

beit-ben-yehuda.org

Beit Ben Yehuda and Leyvik House are offering an International Yiddish language Course at three levels: beginners, intermediate and advanced. The course comprises ten days of intensive Yiddish language study, weekend activities, afternoon trips and other events to get to know Israel.

The Jerusalem Winter Course is taught by professional, experienced teachers Miriam Trinh, Eliezer Niborski and Daniel Birnbaum. During the course you will not only gain an understanding of the language but also immerse yourself in Yiddish culture and history. Leyvik House, the Israeli Center for Yiddish Culture in Tel-Aviv, is in charge of the professional learning program. The course will take place at Beit Ben Yehuda in Jerusalem, where accommodation is also provided for participants who wish to stay at the Guesthouse. Each class is limited to 20 students.

### Prices:

Option 1: Course + Accommodation in single bedroom: 710 Euro per person

Option 2: Course + Accommodation in double bedroom: 626 Euro per person

Option 3: Course + Accommodation in a triple bedroom: 530 Euro per person

Option 4: Course without accommodation: 370 Euro per person

### Included:

40 hours of Yiddish lessons + 16 hours guided homework

Guided tours in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv

Two shows of Jewish and Yiddish music

Meetings with Yiddish writers and journalists

Guest lectures by various Yiddish scholars

Extracurricular activities

Coffee and refreshments in the breaks

Free Wi-Fi

### Registration and Information:

yiddishcourse@gmail.com - Tel: 00-972-52-861-8296

Beit Ben Yehuda: www.beit-ben-yehuda.org

Leyvik House: www.leyvik.org.il



Simone Taylor and Sid (Mitzi) Dolgay performed at Toronto's *Outlook Magazine* Brunch mentioned on page 3. (Report in next issue)

## Despite pressure, Pete Seeger won't cancel participation in Israeli-organized peace rally

By SUE FISHKOFF, *jta.org*

SAN FRANCISCO: 14/10/10 (JTA) — No one tells Pete Seeger what to do.

At 91, the iconic folk singer has penned hundreds of protest songs, railing against everything from the Vietnam War to global warming. He was blacklisted in the 1950s, he slept under the stars with striking



Folk singer Pete Seeger, with banjo, records a song at his home in Beacon, N.Y. in May 2010 for an Israeli-organized peace rally. He is accompanied by Walker Rumpf on guitar and Arava Institute for Environmental Studies alumni Zack Korenstein and Sarah Schuldenfrei. (Michael Hardgrove photo)

farmers and he still reads the Communist *"People's World"* -- along with *The New York Times*, of course.

Yet despite his opposition to Israeli policies in the West Bank and Gaza, Seeger refuses to heed calls to boycott an upcoming peace event organized by an Israeli institution.

In recent weeks, Seeger has rejected calls by individuals and organizations demanding that he cancel his participation in "With Earth and Each Other: A Virtual Rally for a Better Middle East," an online event promoting peace through cross-border cooperation and scheduled for a November 14 global broadcast at [www.withearthandeachother.org](http://www.withearthandeachother.org).

"My religion is that the world will not survive without dialogue," Seeger told JTA in an interview from his home in Beacon, N.Y. "I would say to the Israelis and the Palestinians, if you think it's terrible now, just think ahead 50 years to when the world blows itself up. It will get worse unless you learn how to turn the world around peacefully."

Seeger was invited to perform for the online peace rally by event organizers Friends of the Arava Institute, the North American fund-raising arm of the Arava Institute for Environmental Studies. The institute works with Arab and Jewish leaders to solve the region's environmental challenges cooperatively.

Thirty other organizations have signed on to the event, ranging from Peace Child Israel to the Jewish National

Fund.

Actor Mandy Patinkin will emcee an event that will feature group viewings organized around the world from San Francisco to Bonn, Germany.

Activists from the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement have been pushing Seeger to cancel, posting open letters to him on their websites.

Seeger says he's going forward and already has recorded two songs: "*Od Yavo Shalom*" (Hebrew for "Peace Will Yet Come") and a Lebanese song in Arabic performed with alumni of the Arava Institute. And he may break into song spontaneously during the live broadcast, too.

That doesn't mean that he supports Israeli policies toward the Palestinians, Seeger says; quite the contrary.

He is a longtime donor to the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions, an organization that became so critical of Israel that it was dropped by the New Israel Fund years ago, and readily decries what he calls "monstrous" Israeli military actions against Palestinian civilians.

Seeger made his first trip to Israel in 1964 with his wife and children, and spent time on several kibbutzim, where he recalls being "impressed by the energy."

He visited again right before the June 1967 Six-Day War, performing the hit song "Tzena, Tzena, Tzena" before a crowd of tens of thousands in Tel Aviv. "Tzena," which he recorded in 1950 with The Weavers, remains the only Hebrew-language song to make it to the top of the U.S. music charts.

Right before that trip, Seeger stopped off in Lebanon.

"I was told not to mention I was going to Israel the next week or I might not make it," he said. "I hadn't realized how serious the situation was."

Things "have gone from bad to worse" in the Middle East, says Seeger, who notes that he rarely travels anymore except for occasional trips to New York City.

Holding up the example of the Montgomery bus boycott as the key to ending racial segregation in the American South, Seeger says he does not oppose nonviolent efforts, including an economic boycott, to end the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. But standing in the way of promoting dialogue makes no sense, he said.

"I understand why someone would want to boycott a place financially, but I don't understand why you would boycott dialogue," Seeger said. "The world will not be here in 50 years unless we learn how to communicate with each other nonviolently."

The online peace rally, which begins at 1p.m. EST on November 14, presents itself as nonpolitical.

"The purpose is not to take a side or suggest what a peace process should look like, but to raise the voices of those on all sides who yearn for peace and show that there is another side of the conflict in which people are striving to work together for the betterment of all," rally co-chair Mohammed Atwa said in a news release.

"It will be a long struggle, taking generations," Seeger said of Israeli-Arab peace. "But if we don't try, we abandon the world to those who believe in violence."

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## Dramatic rescue of 33 Chilean miners hides a brutal reality for Chile's people

By JOHN PILGER, *TruthOut.org*

The rescue of 33 miners in Chile is an extraordinary drama filled with pathos and heroism. It is also a media windfall for the Chilean government, whose every beneficence is recorded by a forest of cameras. One cannot fail to be impressed. However, like all great media events, it is a facade.

The accident that trapped the miners is not unusual in Chile and is the inevitable consequence of a ruthless economic system that has barely changed since the dictatorship of Gen. Augusto Pinochet. Copper is Chile's gold, and the frequency of mining disasters keeps pace with prices and profits. There are, on average, 39 fatal accidents every year in Chile's privatized mines. The San Jose mine, where the trapped men work, became so unsafe in 2007 it had to be closed - but not for long. On 30 July last, a labor department report warned again of "serious safety deficiencies," but the minister took no action. Six days later, the men were entombed.

For all the media circus at the rescue site, contemporary Chile is a country of the unspoken. At the Villa Grimaldi, in the suburbs of the capital Santiago, a sign says: "The forgotten past is full of memory." This was the torture center where hundreds of people were murdered and disappeared for opposing the fascism that General Pinochet and his business allies brought to Chile. Its ghostly presence is overseen by the beauty of the Andes, and the man who unlocks the gate used to live nearby and remembers the screams.

I was taken there one wintry morning in 2006 by Sara De Witt, who was imprisoned as a student activist and now lives in London. She was electrocuted and beaten, yet survived. Later, we drove to the home of Salvador Allende, the great democrat and reformer who perished when Pinochet seized power on 11 September 1973 - Latin America's own 9/11. His house is a silent white building without a sign or a plaque.

Everywhere, it seems, Allende's name has been eliminated. Only in the lone memorial in the cemetery are the words engraved "Presidente de la Republica" as part of a remembrance of the "ejecutados politicos": those "executed for political reasons." Allende died by his own hand while Pinochet bombed the presidential palace with British planes as the American ambassador watched.

Today, Chile is a democracy, though many would dispute that, notably those in the barrios forced to scavenge for food and steal electricity. In 1990, Pinochet bequeathed a constitutionally compromised system as a condition of his retirement and the military's withdrawal to the political shadows. This ensures that the broadly reformist parties, known as Concertación, are permanently divided or drawn

into legitimizing the economic designs of the heirs of the dictator. At the last election, the right-wing Coalition for Change, the creation of Pinochet's ideologue Jaime Guzman, took power under President Sebastián Piñera. The bloody extinction of true democracy that began with the death of Allende was, by stealth, complete.

Piñera is a billionaire who controls a slice of the mining, energy and retail industries. He made his fortune in the aftermath of Pinochet's coup and during the free-market "experiments" of the zealots from the University of Chicago, known as the Chicago Boys. His brother and former business partner, José Piñera, a labor minister under Pinochet, privatized mining and state pensions and all but destroyed the trade unions. This was applauded in Washington as an "economic miracle," a model of the new cult of neoliberalism that would sweep the continent and ensure control from the north.

Today, Chile is critical to President Barack Obama's rollback of the independent democracies in Ecuador, Bolivia and Venezuela. Piñera's closest ally is Washington's main man, Juan Manuel Santos, the new president of Colombia, home to seven US bases and an infamous human rights record familiar to Chileans who suffered under Pinochet's terror.

Post-Pinochet Chile has kept its own enduring abuses in shadow. The families still attempting to recover from the torture or disappearance of a loved one bear the prejudice of the state and employers. Those not silent are the Mapuche people, the only indigenous nation the Spanish conquistadors could not defeat. In the late 19th century, the European settlers of an independent Chile waged their racist War of Extermination against the Mapuche who were left as impoverished outsiders. During Allende's thousand days in power, this began to change. Some Mapuche lands were returned and a debt of justice was recognized.

Since then, a vicious, largely unreported war has been waged against the Mapuche. Forestry corporations have been allowed to take their land, and their resistance has been met with murders, disappearances and arbitrary prosecutions under "anti terrorism" laws enacted by the dictatorship. In their campaigns of civil disobedience, none of the Mapuche has harmed anyone. The mere accusation of a landowner or businessman that the Mapuche "might" trespass on their own ancestral lands is often enough for the police to charge them with offenses that lead to Kafkaesque trials with faceless witnesses and prison sentences of up to 20 years. They are, in effect, political prisoners.

While the world rejoices at the spectacle of the miners' rescue, 38 Mapuche hunger strikers have not been news. They are demanding an end to the Pinochet laws used against them, such as "terrorist arson," and the justice of a real democracy. On 9 October, all but one of the hunger strikers ended their protest after 90 days without



**Chile's indigenous Mapuche population's peaceful protest in Santiago, Chile.**  
(Photo: Patricio / Flickr)

food. A young Mapuche, Luis Marileo, says he will go on. On 18 October, President Piñera is due to give a lecture on "current events" at the London School of Economics. He should be reminded of their ordeal and why.

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**Toronto, Saturday, November 20, 7:00 p.m.**

**Gala Anniversaries Celebration**

Winchevsky Centre - 50; UJPO - 65;

David Abramowitz - 75; Camp Naivelt - 85

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