

UJPO News



INSIDE

- Rosh Hashone Address 1
- National UJPO News .. 2
- Honourable Mentshn. 5
- What's In Order 5
- Yiddish..... 6
- Canada..... 6
- USA..... 7
- Middle East..... 8
- International.....10

Support and
subscribe to
**OUTLOOK
MAGAZINE!**
Canada's
progressive
Jewish magazine

outlookmagazine.ca
outlook@telus.net

The United Jewish People's Order is a national, nonpartisan, socialist-oriented, secular organization, serving Canada's progressive Jews in individual organizations since 1926 and collectively as the UJPO since 1945.

Volume #35, Issue #4

Banner graphic by Avrom Yanovsky, 1911-1979

UJPO Toronto Rosh Hashone/Yom Kippur Address

By Sue Goldstein, Jacquie Chic and David Abramowitz: presented by David Abramowitz on September 14, 2015 and Jacquie Chic on September 22, 2015

The image of Syrian child Aylan Kurdi lying dead on the shores of Turkey has evoked an outpouring of emotion and promises of responses yet to materialize. But after five years of war in Syria all such action both here and internationally is too little too late. Nor is Syria the only hot spot. Think of the already immense problems in Iraq, Yemen, and Palestine. The fact is that people who are fleeing bombing desperately search for a better life: they (not always successfully) attempt perilous journeys from all over the world – Africa, South and Central Asia, Eritrea, Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Dominican Republic and its recent Nuremberg-like laws (revoking citizenship and expelling Dominican-born Haitians) to name but a few.



Sketch by Rafat Alkhateeb

The Harper government and other international aggressors point the finger everywhere but at themselves. The truth is that the death and destruction we are witnessing is the result of murderous imperialist strategies that have at their root the intensification of wealth and power in fewer and fewer hands. They claim to lead a war on poverty but have converted it into a war on the poor. It is waged on the other side of the globe and also in our own backyards. Black people are gunned down by power-tripping cops gone wild. The justice system shrugs it shoulders accepting the desperate and obvious lies of the perpetrators. It was self defense judges declare. They had no choice they proclaim. Meanwhile someone's son, father, husband, mother, wife or daughter is never to return home. In the same vein, Toronto police "card" Black residents without reason and in the name of so-called community policing all of it in appalling violation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The pattern is clear. Refugees flee distant countries but in our own communities the same persecution, death and destruction plays out over and over all of it motivated by racism, greed and power lust. The link between life threatening impoverishment here and abroad is never made but we must make it.

The war on the poor often seems perpetual and permanent. But is it? What can we do? What must we do? And what is our responsibility in this tragedy if we do nothing?

Silence is complicity. When Black Lives Matter takes to the streets we must be there. When Idle No More speaks we must listen and stand with them. Refugees looking to make a home amongst us must be welcomed, nurtured and supported rather than consigned to ongoing poverty and destruction.

The UJPO is currently in contact with others with similar concerns and plans to formalize its involvement and action within the next month – stay tuned.

In this New Year, let each of us continue pressing for freedom and economic security for all. Looking away is not an option. Not acting is unforgivable. ♦

<http://ujpo.org/ujpo-rosh-hashone-2015-address/>

Our winter issue will feature an article on Joe Hill, early IWW labour activist, falsely executed November 19, 1915.

NATIONAL UJPO NEWS

FROM TORONTO

By Julia Barnett, Board of Directors President

Fall got off to a start with our Jewish New Year observances – which included a moving political commentary on the world refugee crisis [see page 1] and a poignant song called “Upon Our Shores” written by David Rovics. UJPO Toronto is committed to working with other organizations and the Syrian community as the refugee crisis continues. As well, UJPO Toronto partnered with a number of other groups and co-sponsored the following events:

- (a) Film: On the Side of the Road — with Doing Jewish Off the Grid and Independent Jewish Voices (Nov. 3 at the Bloor Cinema, 506 Bloor Street West)
- (b) Holocaust Education Week events: Indigenous & Jewish Experiences: Change and Continuity — with Ve’ahavta, Facing History and Ourselves, and the Equity Studies Program at New College on Nov. 4 at the William Doo Auditorium, University of Toronto
- (c) Commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide – with the Sarah Corning Centre for Genocide Education on Nov. 7 at the Winchevsky Centre

UJPO Toronto has been actively engaged in Social Justice actions, rallies and political endorsements that includes the following:

- The James Graff Memorial Lecture featuring Dr. Sara Roy on Oct. 6.
- Rally: Solidarity with the Palestinian Popular Resistance – city-wide rally held on Friday Oct. 16.
- Syria: a teach-in held on Sunday Oct. 18 – speakers included Rasha El-Endari, Syrian archaeologist and solidarity activist, and Bayan Khatib, Syrian medical relief activist.

UJPO Toronto endorsed the statement: Stop the Killing — End the Occupation produced by the International Jewish Network [see page 8].

We had a Strategic Planning session on Oct. 3 with members of Boards of Directors, committees and staff who identified the following five priorities:

- (1) Seek financial clarity and begin fundraising
- (2) Develop, integrate social, cultural and political programming
- (3) Strengthen alliances
- (4) Increase membership
- (5) Communications

We are committed to our Archive project which is an ongoing effort to create a system of accessible archival holdings so we can preserve our long and rich history. As this project unfolds we will keep everyone updated.

The Morris Winchevsky School season has begun and as a

new initiative we have classroom assistants made up of our youth leaders engaging with the children attending Shule.

Future plans are unfolding including our Annual General Meeting with guest speaker Bayan Khatib, a Syrian medical relief activist, on Saturday Nov. 28.

We are organizing a Chanukah family-friendly celebration on Dec. 13 featuring music with Mitch Smolkin and presentations by our Shule students.

Last but not the least, other upcoming plans include hosting the annual Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations (CSJO) conference in Toronto in May 2016. More news to follow as plans unfold. ♦



For Holocaust Education Week, UJPO Toronto and the Sarah Corning Centre for Genocide Education (SCCGE) cosponsored a memorial of “The 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide” at the Winchevsky Centre. An SCCGE Armenian panel described its project documenting survivors’ and their descendants’ voices/images. Shlomit Segal MC’d.

FROM VANCOUVER

By Carl Rosenberg

After a quiet summer, I have a few fall activities to report on in which Vancouver members of UJPO (and the secular Jewish community generally) have been involved.

The High Holidays observance at the Peretz Centre on Sept. 20 featured readings, group singing led by David Millard and Elliott Dainow, the blowing of the *shofar* by David Berson, the singing of *Kol Nidre* by Stephen Aberle, and a *yiskor* service, followed by apples and honey and other sweet treats. The Vancouver Jewish Folk Choir sang “*Yesh Kochavim*” (There Are Stars). The stirring Hebrew lyrics by Hannah Senesh close with, “As we live our days, these are the ways we remember.” The music is by Jeff Klepper, and the English translation by Jeff Klepper and Daniel Frelander. The program was organized mainly by Claire Osipov, and MC’ed by Gyda Chud.

The season’s first *Fraytik tsu Nakht* – the monthly secular shabbes gathering at the Peretz Centre – was on Friday, Sept. 25. The guest speaker was Michael Asch, who has spoken before at the FTN about other members of his distinguished family: his grandfather, famed Yiddish novelist Sholem Asch, and his father Moses Asch, founder of Folkways Records. Michael has matched their rich accomplishments with a distinguished record of his own. He is a Professor of Anthropology at the University of Victoria and a specialist in Aboriginal rights, and tonight he gave a talk based on his recent book, *On Being Here to Stay: Treaties and Aboriginal Rights in Canada*. He drew fascinating

parallels between Aboriginal claims and Jewish demands for national-cultural self-determination expressed in movements such as the Bund in Eastern Europe.

On Sunday, Oct. 18, at the Peretz Centre, there was a concert by Vancouver's premier Klezmer band, Tzimmes, whose members are Moshe Denburg (lead vocals, guitar), Saul Berson (clarinet/sax/flute), Yona Bar-Sever (lead guitar and vocal backup), Time Stacy (bass) and Phil Belanger (drums). The group was joined by a former member, Yiddish singer/songwriter Myrna Rabinowitz. Unfortunately, I didn't get to attend this concert, but I'm told it was excellent and enthusiastically received by a large audience. (I have heard and enjoyed the music of Tzimmes on other occasions over the years.) The only drawback, I'm told, was that there were many songs in Hebrew at the expense of Yiddish songs, which would have better befitted the Yiddishist history and cultural heritage of the Peretz Centre.

This was the first concert in the Sid and Sarah Sarkin Music Series, which will showcase a variety of outstanding Jewish musicians in the Vancouver area. In addition to being long-time UJPO activists, the Sarkins were among the leading founders of the Peretz Centre in 1945. An eloquent tribute to the Sarkins was written by Gallia Chud, who was an early activist in the Peretz Centre (as well as UJPO) together with her late husband (and *Outlook* co-editor) Ben Chud. Gallia recalled that Sidney was a machine operator and popular union organizer, and was jailed for his union activity, and that Sarah taught hundreds of children in preschool and Kindergarten over the years at Peretz. (She earlier attended the world-famous Sorbonne in Paris.) "Sidney was always considered an intellectual 'guru' who was consulted often by many politicians and trade union organizers Together, their love for Yiddish and everything the Peretz Centre valued was paramount to their continuing activity here and we honour them for their everlasting contribution."

The series in their name is funded by a bequest from the Sidney Sarkin estate. (The executor is long-time Vancouver UJPO activist Harold Berson.)

In our *Outlook* corner, we held our annual fundraising event on Sunday, Sept. 27. Instead of our usual lasagna supper, we held a more informal afternoon social event, featuring drinks and snacks, and a superb presentation by Vancouver writer and *Outlook* contributor Ken Klonsky. Ken talked about his work with the Innocence Project, a campaign on behalf of wrongfully convicted prisoners. Gyda Chud served as a capable MC, and Marion Pollack gave an excellent fundraising speech. The event, as always, was a warm and *heymish* one which gave the Outlook community – editors, writers, volunteers, readers – a chance to come together, but unfortunately it failed to raise the much-needed funds we had hoped for. ♦

FROM HAMILTON

By Lyn Center

In early October, our Hamilton members and friends had a "schmooze and nosh" at my house. I presented my research

paper on the history of the Yiddish language and we came up with a good number of Yiddish words that have entered the English language. On December 6, we will hold a Chanukah party.

The museum at Hamilton's Conservative shul, Beth Jacob, is currently running a very interesting exhibit on Henry Balinson, the creator of Hamilton's first Yiddish newspaper (1930's and 40's) called *The Jewish Voice of Hamilton*. Balinson was also the founder of the city's Workmen's Circle. Our member Paul Weinberg has organized a tour for our group of the exhibit, to be led by Wendy Schneider, the co-chair of the museum and the editor of *Hamilton Jewish News*. The tour will take place on January 17 at 2:00. Wendy has agreed to join us afterward at a nearby coffee shop to discuss the exhibit. ♦

FROM WINNIPEG

By Henry Shorr

- Over 30 people attended our annual Barbeque/Schmooze Fest on August 27. We reviewed our last year's activities and asked the audience for input on programs for next year.
- On September 17 the Jewish Heritage Centre of Western Canada and UJPO Winnipeg co-sponsored the opening of "Free Discussion is the Key to Peace, The Political Cartoons of Avrom Yanovsky". During her presentation, Anna Yanovsky read a letter of greetings from Solly and Barbara Blaser. Afterwards there was a ribbon cutting ceremony and viewing of the exhibit. The cartoons were beautifully mounted and the opening was a great success. We also received positive coverage in the *Jewish Post and News*. [See the following article, and read the article, "Commenting With Cartoons" by Rebeca Kuropatwa, that appeared in *Jewish Independent*, Oct. 16, 2015, and is posted on our blog at ujpo.org/blog.]

Many thanks to Solly Blaser for mounting and packing the collection and arranging to get it to Winnipeg. As stated in Barbara and Solly's letter, we have a great treasure in the work that Avrom left to us.

- Anna Yanovsky made a very generous donation to UJPO Winnipeg during her visit here. We have earmarked \$1000 of the donation for the North End Jewish Folk Choir. We are researching how we will allocate the balance of the donation so that it has the biggest impact. We can't thank Anna enough for her generosity.
- In conjunction with the Yanovsky exhibit, UJPO and the Jewish Heritage Centre will sponsor a panel discussion, "Political Satire: Freedom of Speech". A reception will follow.
- As of September 29, we had 22 paid memberships for our new year. We are working on increasing our membership.
- The North End Jewish Folk Choir will be working on new material for the upcoming season.
- The annual *Outlook* Fundraising Brunch scheduled for Sunday November 1 features a speech by Cecil Rosner, Managing Editor of CBC Manitoba, on "Why Should We Care About a Public Broadcaster."

- After a long interlude, the UJPO Book Club meeting took place on November 1. ♦

Jewish Heritage Centre and United Jewish People's Order mount exhibit of drawings of radical cartoonist Avrom Yanovsky

By Bernie Bellan, *The Jewish Post & News*, September 30, 2015



Anna Yanovsky, Avrom Yanovsky's second wife, who told stories of Avrom's love for both Communism and Zionism.

One time, when I was interviewing Shimon Fogel, the CEO of CIJA (The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs), I asked him why CIJA doesn't attempt to be more inclusive of Jewish organizations that aren't as establishment as Jewish federations. Fogel asked me to give him a for instance. I said: "the United Jewish People's Order". He replied that he'd never heard of them.

That statement spoke volumes to me. Like 'em or

not, radical Jewish organizations have constituted an important role in Canadian Jewish history. The fact that they're now marginalized by the "machers" who claim to represent us (and I don't recall ever being able to vote to make Shimon Fogel a spokesman for me), is a reflection of the abandonment of so many of the principles that used to animate Jewish leaders in this country.

So – when the Jewish Heritage Centre of Western Canada combined forces with the United Jewish People's Order to mount an exhibit focused on the life of a radical cartoonist by the name of Avrom Yanovsky, I can just imagine what someone like Shimon Fogel would have to say about that. (No doubt he'd actually be totally indifferent – unless the exhibit was also part of a huge fundraiser as well.)

Who was Avrom Yanovsky? According to an article submitted by the Jewish Heritage Centre to this paper in early September (and which appeared in our Sept. 9 issue), Yanovsky was born in Ukraine in 1911 and came to Canada with his family in 1913.

A member of the original Peretz Shule graduating class (in 1925), Yanovsky was an avowed communist who never abandoned his radical beliefs. He was also a committed Zionist, however; something that was quite typical of many of the early Zionists – hard as that might be for anyone observing Israel's transformation into a prototypical capitalist state might find difficult to accept.

A talented cartoonist, Yanovsky studied art in Winnipeg with LeMoine Fitzgerald, one of the Group of Seven, then

moved to Toronto in 1930 where he established himself as a leading cartoonist for numerous radical publications.

On Thursday, September 17, the Jewish Heritage Centre and United Jewish People's Order launched an exhibit of Yanovsky's work titled "Free Discussion is the Key to Peace" – "The Political Cartoons of Avrom Yanovsky".

Prior to the ribbon cutting launching the exhibit, those in attendance were treated to a talk by Yanovsky's widow, Anna, along with a lengthier (and quite animated) lecture by York University Associate Professor Ester Reiter (who told me afterward that her maiden name is Kulak; she's the mother of famed musician Daniel Kulak).

Anna Yanovksy explained that her marriage to Avrom Yanovsky was his second marriage. His first wife, Nechama Gemeril, died in 1958. (Avrom and Nechama were the parents of Zal Yanovsky – lead guitarist of the famous '60s band, "The Lovin' Spoonful".) Anna spoke of Avrom's early immersion in communism. She recalled him saying that he witnessed Canadian soldiers returning from Russia in 1918, chanting "We want Soviets!" A teen during the Winnipeg General Strike, Yanovsky "observed with his critical eye the rise of individualism and capitalism from the position of a communist and a Jew," according to the Sept. 9 article in this paper.



Ester (Kulak) Reiter York University professor who gave an animated description of the life of Avrom Yanovsky.

Ester Reiter noted, however, that Yanovsky's talent as an artist could have made him a very rich man – if that had been his goal.

"Everyone commented that if he had had a little bit of a capitalist in him, he would have been a very rich man. He was part of a generation that saw a world that needed changing and was willing to commit to that."

In addition to witnessing the Winnipeg General Strike and living through the Depression of the '30s, Yanovsky also "saw the terrible anti-Semitism of a very repressive (Canadian) government," Reiter observed.

Yanovsky combined his commitment to radical beliefs with a "love for Yiddish culture", Reiter said. That interesting combination was typical of Peretz Shul students of that time, who "all hated the capitalist system and all loved Yiddish."

Why did so many north enders of that period hold radical beliefs? According to Reiter, "most of the Jewish emigrés (to Winnipeg) lived in the north end – which was about 95% Anglo – who didn't like the immigrants much." Not only did many of those Jewish immigrants arrive in Winnipeg with radical beliefs, the formative experience of living through the Depression along

with witnessing the Spanish Civil War helped to solidify their radical leanings, Reiter explained. Then, following the end of World War II, individuals such as Yanovsky observed the Canadian government allowing fascists to enter the country “to fight the Soviet Union... a policy that Avrom and other Jewish leftists found deplorable.”

Throughout his career as a cartoonist, Yanovsky sought to expose the hypocrisy, not only of capitalist industrialists who trampled on the rights of workers, but politicians who were in cahoots with those capitalists. Further, Yanovsky’s love for Israel (to where his brother Zalman emigrated in the 1930s), led him to skewer politicians who were either outright anti-Semites (such as the British Home Secretary Ernest Bevin), or others such as Canada’s Minister of Immigration in the 1950s, Jack Pickersgill, who allowed so many ex-Nazis to enter Canada.

The exhibit of ink drawings currently on display in the hall where the Jewish Heritage Centre mounts exhibits in the Asper Campus offers a comprehensive overview of Yanovsky’s work. It was first mounted at York University in 2005; subsequently it was featured as a part of Ashkenaz (the festival of Yiddish music held bi-annually in Toronto).

Following Esther Reiter’s talk, the North End Folk Choir treated guests to a spirited performance of three songs in Yiddish and one in English. In introducing the choir, M.C. Henry Shorr wryly noted that the members of the choir “would have to cut their act short because they were heading to Investors Group Field later that evening where a group called AC DC would be serving as their warmup act.”

(No doubt, Shimon Fogel would not have been amused: A leftist Jewish choir? That certainly doesn’t fit with CIJA’s model of what our Jewish community is supposed to look like, does it?) ♦



Winnipeg UJPO North End Folk Choir

HONOURABLE MENTSHN

Lessons in Positive Aging

By Kim Levis, October 31, 2015

So what do you do if you are 97 years old and are about to retire from the Board of Directors of Carewatch? Since her first retirement, thirty years ago, Bea has been a busy member of

many boards, and recipient of many awards including the Order of Ontario. In 2013, she won the Positive Aging Award from the Ontario Gerontology Association. Bea shares that honour with fellow nonagenarian: recently retired Mississauga mayor, Hazel McCallion.

Like McCallion, Bea has decided to keep her post-post retirement mind alive through new ventures. One of the best ways to grow new neural networks is to learn a new language.



Bea Levis (photo credit: Kim Levis)

Yiddish is not a new language for Bea; it was, in fact, her first language before going to public school in Southern Ontario. After many decades, however, a language gets rusty. Brushing up on Yiddish seems like a perfect project, starting with books by Sheva Zucker of the League for Yiddish and editor of *Afn Shvel*.

Re-learning Yiddish is just one of the activities in Bea’s future. She will continue going to Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra. Last Sunday, she walked up to the Elgin Theatre to see Opera Atelier’s *Armide*, and still walks to the Distillery District to see Soulpepper plays.

Keeping physically active is important at any time in life. Although Bea gets quite dizzy some days from Meniere’s disease, she still manages to go to an exercise class twice a week. She also walks daily, even if just to St Lawrence Market, St. Lawrence Library, Sugar Beach or St. James Park.

As well as learning Yiddish, Bea continues to do crossword puzzles and reads three newspapers, including *The Guardian* sent from the UK. She is part of a book club and will soon be part of a Movie Club. CBC radio and TVO provide interesting music and documentaries, and Bea and her daughters are quite taken with an evening ritual, watching William Murdoch solve mysteries by using 19th century scientific knowledge and deductive reasoning.

Bea’s most important asset is her ability to live in the here and now. Despite her love of Murdoch Mysteries, Bea does not stew in the past. Living in a vivid present and looking forward to the future are what keeps Bea young, even at age 97. ♦

WHAT’S IN ORDER

Mazl Tov

- To Christine Cushing on the marriage of her son, Michael Culkun, to Sonya Chiang on September 26, 2015

Condolences

- To the families of Vera Sher and Esther De Rosa, both former members of Montreal UJPO who lived in Vancouver, and who passed away in the past year. Esther’s husband Phil

lives in White Rock, B.C. and daughter Susan De Rosa lives in Toronto.

- To Ann Sargent and Louis Fishauf on the passing of Brenda Fishauf
- To the Kelson family on the passing of Miriam Kelson
- To Gord and Roz Doctorow on the passing of Roz's mother, Bertha Starr
- To Joe Jacobs and Sara Latha on the passing of Joe's mother, Ann Jacobs
- To Jude MacDonald on the passing of her father Alexander Sutherland MacDonald

Speedy Recovery

- To David Abramowitz, Sol Blaser, Sam Blatt, Lyn Center, Mari Drexler, Ruth Grossman, Howard Kaplan, Charles Poynton and Howard Tessler.

YIDDISH

What must be forgotten: the survival of Yiddish in Zionist Palestine

September 27: Anti-Yiddish Riots

By Yael Chaver, *Jewish Currents*, Sept. 26, 2012

A mob of several thousand Jews protested outside the Mograbi Theater in Tel Aviv on this date in 1930 against the



screening of one of the first feature-length Yiddish-language talkie movies, *Mayn Yidishe Mame* ("My Jewish Mother"), starring Seymour Rexite. The rioters included several members of the so-called "Army for the Defense of the Hebrew Language" who broke into the theater, threw ink at the screen and smoke bombs at the crowd. The police eventually broke through the mob and made arrests, but the protestors returned a second time and forced the screening to end, although many of the viewers refused to leave the theater until the lights were shut off. This was just one of numerous violent attacks on Yiddish culture in pre-statehood Palestine, where Hebraists were intent on repressing the language that they held in contempt.

"Yiddish was a force to be reckoned with in this period. It provided the name for and was an integral part of the Yiddishist movement that posed an alternative to Zionism. . . . The language issue became a convenient tool of political conflict within contemporary Jewish culture." ♦

<http://jewishcurrents.org/september-27-anti-yiddish-riots-12291>

CANADA

UJPO letter to the new PM

November 9, 2015

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington St.
Ottawa ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister,

As a non-partisan, socialist-oriented, cultural and educational organization we are among the majority of Canadians who want a significant change in the philosophy and policies of our government and are pleased that the best election campaign succeeded.

In anticipation of the 2015 election, our National Board adopted four priorities which we consider significant, necessary changes: a) restoration of door-to-door mail delivery and saving Canada Post; b) implementation of a national minimum wage policy; c) an affordable child-care policy; d) an improved CPP.

We trust that Canada Post's announced two year moratorium to cease installing community "superboxes" will become permanent. We anticipate your government's policy in the near future per your response of October 7, 2015, "**A Liberal government will stop Harper's plan to end door-to-door mail delivery in Canada, and undertake a new review of Canada Post to make sure that it provides high quality service at a reasonable price to Canadians, no matter where they live. A Liberal government will act responsibly and swiftly on this issue.**" Note that that the national petition on the "change.org" website has already amassed more than 229,434 supporters. We await your swift action.

A national minimum wage of \$15 an hour should become a priority. It already exists in several U.S. jurisdictions. In a consumer driven economy where the national government has constantly lowered taxes, increasing individuals' purchasing power creates a growing tax source and a potential lowering of personal debt. This won't address resultant rising prices, but with a firm commitment to monitoring changes in the Consumer Price Index it may be possible for a reasonable balance to evolve. This would mesh with your campaign for Canadians to "**...have money in their pockets to save, invest, and grow the economy – to bring back fairness and to strengthen the heart of the Canadian economy**" and, we hope, encourage Provincial jurisdictions to follow suit.

The ability to afford childcare is paramount to parents who require it. Our concept of a child-friendly policy centres on the ability of parents to also, as your campaign said, "**...have money in their pockets to save, invest, and grow the economy...**". Your "**Canada Child Benefit (CCB): one fair, tax-free monthly child benefit...**" puts \$6,400 tax-free dollars into "**... the pockets of the middle class and those working hard to join it.**" It is fairer than the policy of the former government. A CCB

of \$6,400 prorated for 50 weeks would be \$128 weekly. Whether this will be adequate to subsidize real child-care costs, however, should be monitored and upgraded as required.

Improving the CPP will impact lower and mid wage earners' future retirement. We were encouraged when Ontario undertook developing its own plan and are further pleased by your announcement to re-institute retirement at age 65 and your commitment when addressing CARP on October 24, 2014, to **"...work with the provinces and territories, with workers, with employers, and with organizations like CARP to enhance the Canada Pension Plan...the CPP itself must be enhanced."** We will monitor developments.

We see promise with the apparent change to First Nations issues and priorities, the promised withdrawal of Canadian Forces from Iraq and Syria, and the prospect of no more omnibus bills. We do not support the draconian Bills C24 and 51, nor, from the meager information available to date, the TPP and TTIP.

Canada needs real change. With the broadly based reflection of our multicultural nation in your new cabinet, the challenge is that you fulfill your campaign's vision.

Yours sincerely,

David Abramowitz, President

United Jewish People's Order

on behalf of the UJPO National Board ♦

USA

Protesters rally for higher U.S. fast-food wages, union rights

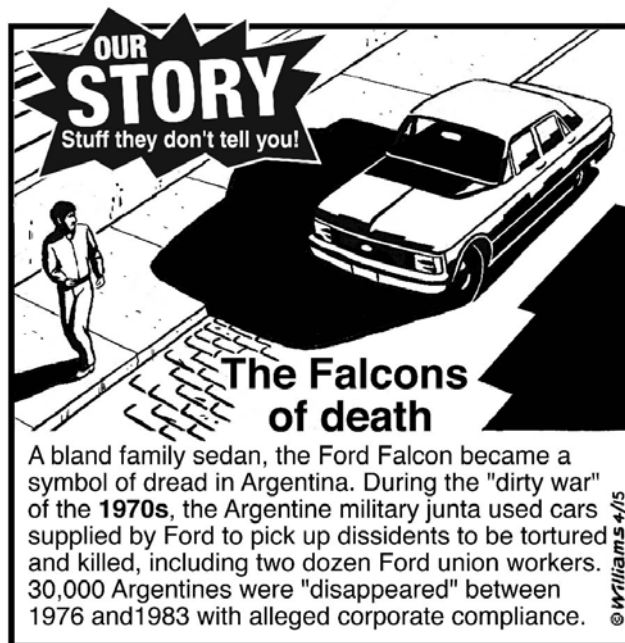
By Laila Kearney, Reuters Media, Nov. 10, 2015

Thousands of protesters took to the streets across the U.S. on Tuesday to demand a \$15-an-hour minimum wage and union rights for fast food workers, a campaign intended to attract support from national political candidates ahead of the 2016 elections.

Organizers said thousands of low-wage workers walked off their jobs in some 270 cities across the country to take part in the "Fight for \$15" campaign.

A rally by several hundred activists outside a Milwaukee arena where the televised Republican presidential debate was taking place briefly became tense when one protester burned an American flag. The crowd dispersed not long after police moved in to extinguish the small fire.

Hundreds of demonstrators took to the streets in New York, where they were joined by Mayor Bill DeBlasio, and some 500 marched through downtown Los Angeles. Events were also held in Detroit, Philadelphia and Minneapolis. Leaders said that workers from McDonald's Corp, Wendys Co, Restaurant Brands International Inc's Burger King, Yum Brands Inc's KFC and other restaurants would take part.



But Lisa McComb, a spokeswoman for McDonald's, said that only "a handful" of its employees took part in protests she called "staged events," and only three walked off their jobs.

"To date since these days of action have begun, this is the smallest actual McDonald's employee participation that we're aware of," McComb said. McDonald's is the world's biggest restaurant chain and a high-profile target of the marches.

In a move apparently timed to show solidarity with the movement, Pittsburgh Mayor William Peduto and New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, both Democrats, hiked the minimum hourly wage to \$15 for city and state government workers, respectively. The increases will be phased in over several years.

The protests were aimed in part at gaining political support for a minimum hourly wage of \$15 and union rights as income inequality looms as an issue in the November 2016 presidential election.

The minimum wage for fast-food workers will rise to \$15 by 2018 in New York City and statewide by 2021. Many U.S. cities and municipalities have a higher base rate than the federal hourly minimum of \$7.25.

Among Democratic presidential candidates, front-runner Hillary Clinton, who backs a federal minimum of \$12 an hour, and Martin O'Malley tweeted support for the protests and strikes.

Another Democratic presidential candidate, Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders, told about 250 mostly black and Hispanic protesters in Washington that U.S. workers deserved a living wage. Industry lobby groups contend the proposed pay raises would be unsustainable and cause them to cut jobs.

Michael Mabry, the chief operating officer of Texas-based Mooyah Burgers, Fries and Shakes, said base pay of \$15 would reduce entry-level jobs. Restaurants also could cut staff and thus drive away customers, he said.

"There are unintended consequences when you make a blanket statement of \$15 an hour," Mabry said. ♦

(Reporting By Laila Kearney in New York, Ian Simpson and Lacey Johnson in Washington, Emmett Berg in Oakland, Justin Madden in Chicago and Phoenix Tso and Dan Whitcomb in Los Angeles; Writing by Ian Simpson and Dan Whitcomb; Editing by Bill Trott, Andrew Hay, Bernard Orr and Lisa Shumaker.)

<http://s1.reutersmedia.net/resources/r/?m=02&d=20151110&t=2&i=1093808110&w=&fh=&fw=&ll=644&pl=429&sq=&tr=LYNXNPEBA90V0>

MIDDLE EAST

Ministers approve banning boycotters from entering Israel

A Bayit Yehudi bill would also keep non-citizens or permanent residents who boycott settlements out of the country.

By Lahav Harkov, Jerusalem Post, Sept. 19, 2015

A bill calling to ban people who call to boycott Israel from entering the country received the Ministerial Committee for Legislation's approval on Monday.

The initiative by MK Yinon Magal (Bayit Yehudi) states that anyone who is not a citizen or a permanent resident and calls for or encourages boycotts of Israel or belongs to an organization that does so will not be able to receive a visa or residency permit.

"It cannot be that someone who is trying to harm the State of Israel can enter it freely," Magal said after the bill was approved.

According to Magal, "anyone who calls to boycott Israel is using terrorism against it, and it is unthinkable that he would be allowed to move freely throughout the country without being bothered."

MKs from Zionist Union, Yesh Atid, Kulanu, United Torah Judaism, Shas and the Likud co-sponsored Magal's initiative.

The bill defines "boycott" according to the 2011 Anti-Boycott Bill as "Deliberate avoidance of economic, social or academic ties or ties to a person or other body just because of his connection to the State of Israel, its institutions or regions under its control, in order to harm it economically, social or academically."

The words "regions under its control" would make the bill, should it become law, applicable to people who specifically call to boycott the West Bank.

The bill also does not delve into the possibility of contradicting the Law of Return, which states that anyone Jewish or with at least one Jewish grandparent can become a citizen of Israel, in cases in which such a person calls to boycott Israel or the West Bank.

The proposal also allows the interior minister to make exceptions to the law under special circumstances, which are not listed, but could be added in legislative committees.

The bill's explanatory portion points out that in recent years there has been an increase in calls to boycott Israel.

"It seems that [boycotts are] a new front in the war against Israel, for which the state, thus far, has avoided properly preparing," it reads. "This bill is meant to prevent people or representatives of companies and organizations that call to boycott Israel to act within our territory to promote their ideas." ♦

<http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Politics-And-Diplomacy/Ministers-approve-banning-boycotters-from-entering-Israel-427375>

Stop the killing — end the occupation

This statement was initiated by an international Jewish network of groups and individuals working for justice in Palestine. We reclaim Jewish identity not as a nationalist identity but as one that celebrates our diverse roots, traditions and communities wherever we are around the world. We believe that it is essential for there to be a global Jewish voice to challenge Israel's destructive policies, in solidarity with the Palestinian struggle. This international Jewish network aims to become that voice.

As members of Jewish communities around the world, we are horrified by the wave of violence that is sweeping the streets of Palestine/Israel, costing the lives of over 30 people, both Palestinians and Israelis in the past two weeks alone. A two-year old girl in Gaza was the youngest of four Palestinian children who were killed in the past two weeks. A 13 year-old Israeli boy is in critical condition after being stabbed nearly a dozen times. Over a thousand people were injured in the same period. Fear has completely taken over the streets of Jerusalem, the center of this violence. Israelis shooting Palestinian protesters in and around East Jerusalem. Palestinians stabbing and shooting Israeli civilians and policemen in the middle of the streets. Israeli forces killing Palestinian suspects when they are clearly not a threat and without trial. Palestinians throwing stones at passing cars. Israeli mobs beating up Palestinians or calling on police to shoot them. Humiliating strip searches of Palestinians in the streets – all of these have become a daily occurrence in the city in which we are raised to pray for peace, as well as other places in Israel, Gaza and the West Bank.

While violence is visible on the streets, it is also occupying people's minds and hearts. Fear is bringing out the worst of people, and the demand for more blood to be shed, as if this will repair the damage done. Fear and racist rhetoric are escalating the situation. The Israeli government is once again responding in a militarised way: there have been hundreds of arrests; Palestinian access to the Al-Aqsa mosque compound has been limited; parts of the Muslim quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem have been closed to Palestinians; open-fire regulations have been changed to allow the use of sniper fire against children; a minimum sentence for stone throwing has been introduced, including for over 150 children arrested in East Jerusalem alone in the past few weeks; and now there are talks of enforcing a curfew, or even a closure, of East Jerusalem.

All these constitute collective punishment on the entire population of East Jerusalem with over 300,000 people. In the

past, these measures have proven themselves ineffective at ending violence. Decades of dispossession, occupation and discrimination are the main reasons for Palestinian resistance. Further Israeli military repression and ongoing occupation and siege will never end the Palestinian desire for freedom nor will it address the root causes of violence. Indeed, the current actions by the Israeli government and army are likely to create further violence, destruction, and the entrenchment of division. Only justice and equality for all will bring peace and quiet to the residents of Israel and Palestine.

As a group of Jews from around the world we believe that immediate change needs to come from the Israeli government and Israeli people. It is incumbent on all Jews around the world to pressure the Israeli government – and those who follow and support its words and deeds – to change its approach. The military crackdown must cease immediately, Palestinians must be allowed complete freedom of movement. It is also a responsibility of Jewish people worldwide to obligate the countries in which we live to immediately cease the economic and military support of the ongoing Israeli occupation in Palestine and siege of Gaza.

We call on our Jewish communities, and our broader communities, to publicly insist on an end to the violence, occupation, siege and military response and instead demand equality and freedom for the Palestinian people and justice for all. ♦

Signed by:

Shomeret Shalom Rabbinic School & Learning Center

Independent Jewish Voices Canada

Australian Jewish Democratic Society (AJDS)

United Jewish People's Order – Canada

Women in Black, Melbourne

Sahar Vardi, Jerusalem

David Comedi, Argentina

Daniel Mackintosh, London

Ilana Sumka, Belgium

Yael Shafritz, London

Rabbi Brant Rosen, Chicago

Rachel Diamond, London

Jordy Silverstein, Melbourne

Forty Arab and Jewish Mayors issue call for end of violence in signed statement

Inter-Agency Task Force on Israeli Arab Issues, Oct, 13, 2015

A group of 40 mayors and heads of councils from the north of Israel convened an emergency meeting on October 13th in Maalot-Tarshiha with the purpose of calming tensions and putting an end to the wave of violent attacks.

The group issued a joint statement, signed by all, calling on Netanyahu and Abu Mazen to meet and resolve the current escalations, warning that long-term efforts to strengthen relations can be lost “with the flick of a knife.”

“We are destined to live together and we have to find a way to live in partnership and peace,” declared Mayor of Migdal Haemek, Eli Barda. Similarly, Saleh Suleiman, Head of the Council of Beunai Nogidat, said to his fellow mayors: “I tell you it is possible to live together. I share the pain of all the families and I am against violence and condemn the attacks and murders. I am attacked quite a bit but I do not care. We must resist the ways of the leaders.”

The full statement signed and distributed by the group of mayors, is as follows:

We the undersigned mayors, Jewish, Druze, Circassian and Arab, living in Galilee in coexistence and shared life, appeal to you in a sincere letter out of our common desire, shared by our citizens, for a peaceful and prosperous life.

In every aspect of our daily lives, we work towards a shared and sustainable life together, and despite current events the majority of our citizens promote tolerance and reject violence. Yet, in recent days, we find ourselves greatly concerned with what we see on the streets of Israel and the general reality.

We believe that a courageous meeting between the two leaders can lead us all from crisis to opportunity. In our opinion, such a meeting will lead to a process of dialogue that would bring hope to both peoples.

We would appreciate if you would accept us as a delegation of Jewish and Arab leaders from the Galilee to hear our ideas and recommendations. ♦

See more at:

<http://www.iataskforce.org/activities/view/381#sthash.Pkmuaj8V.dpuf>

WATCH: Jewish extremist tries to stab 'rabbi for human rights'

By Michael Schaeffer Omer-Man, Oct. 23, 2015, +972 Magazine

Volunteers and activists were accompanying Palestinian olive harvesters in the West Bank to help protect them from settler attacks. A right-wing Jewish extremist threw stones at and attempted to stab president of Rabbis for Human Rights, Arik Ascherman, following an olive harvest coordinated with the Israeli army on Friday. Nobody was significantly injured in the incident.

Rabbi Ascherman and a group of Israeli and international activists arrived to accompany Palestinian farmers to their privately owned olive orchard, located near the illegal Israeli outpost of Gideonim.

Following the harvest, the Palestinian farmers noticed suspected Israeli settlers stealing olives and another setting fire to the hillside. Rabbi Ascherman said that because firefighters did not arrive quickly, he went to try and put out the fire himself.

At that point, the masked man who set the fire, ostensibly a settler from the nearby outpost, tried to prevent Rabbi Ascherman from reaching the site of the blaze, threw stones at

him and pulled out a knife and repeatedly swung it toward him. The man kicked and punched Ascherman.

Rabbi Ascherman and other activists remained at the scene in order to direct the army and police toward the attacker, he said in a statement, but it took police 30 minutes to arrive. At that point the attacker had already fled.

Rabbis for Human Rights often accompanies Palestinian farmers in order to help protect them from settler attacks.

The organization's website explains: "Our presence in the groves with the farmers helps keep them safe, as extremists are far less likely to cause problems when they know Israelis and internationals are present."

The incident on Friday was far from the first time Rabbis for Human Rights and the Palestinians they accompany have come under settler attack.

For an in-depth look at Israeli settler violence and the authorities' inability to cope with it, I suggest reading Larry Derfner's feature, "Settler violence: It comes with the territory." ♦ <http://972mag.com/watch-masked-settler-tries-to-stab-rabbi-for-human-rights/113146/>

Ed. Note: To see a video of the attack and the interview by Amy Goodman (Democracy Now) with Arik Ascherman, go to http://www.democracynow.org/2015/10/26/knife_wielding_israeli_settler_attacks_founder

Also note: Members of the UJPO Tours to Israel/Palestine all had evenings of presentation with Rabbi Ascherman. As well, UJPO has co-sponsored presentations by Rabbi Ascherman in Toronto.

INTERNATIONAL

Congo: The Hidden Genocide

By Sue Goldstein, UJPO

When you open up your mobile telephone, do you think of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)? Likely not, but here's why you should: cellular phones and the other ubiquitous electronic devices many of us use have a link to the Congo, and that link is coltan. Coltan is a rare earth mineral and is shorthand

for Columbite-tantalite. The mining of Coltan is fueling the genocide there. Since 1998, between five and six million people have been killed in the DRC and it is estimated that over one million women and girls have been brutally raped.

Yet there is a stifling silence on all of this. As the Western World currently turns its weepy eyes towards Paris, lowering flags to half-mast, calling for vengeance, and increased security at the cost of certain freedoms, the conflict in the Congo remains invisible. This is the largest mass killing since the end of the Second European World War, and if it's mentioned at all it is relegated to the back pages of the newspapers. So what are the questions we must ask: Who benefits from this silence and why?

The Democratic Republic of Congo is a large country in central Africa, home to a wealth of minerals and natural resources. According to Maurice Carney of Friends of the Congo, 80 % of the world's reserves of coltan, 30 % of the world's cobalt, and 10 % of the world's copper is found in the DRC. And it is this very richness coupled with racism and colonialism that has brought on two major genocides. "You have to look at the corporate influence on everything that takes place in the Congo," Carney says.

The first Congo genocide took place between 1885-1908, after King Leopold of Belgium declared the land and its resources to be his personal possessions. It is estimated that under his rule 10 to 15 million people were killed. The second Congo genocide began in 1998 and came to be called the "African World War."

The silence must be broken about the DRC. Never Again must really mean Never Again For Anyone. ♦

For more information:

Genocide in Silence:

<http://www.counterpunch.org/2012/11/30/genocide-in-silence>

DRC: The Invisible War:

<http://www.commondreams.org/views/2008/01/24/drc-invisible-war>

Friends of the Congo: <http://www.friendsofthecongo.org>

Conscious Being, a website by Keith Harmon Snow, who has done extensive research and coverage of the DRC and central

Africa: <http://www.consciousbeingalliance.com>

UNITED JEWISH PEOPLE'S ORDER

The United Jewish People's Order develops and perpetuates a progressive secular approach to social and cultural matters, our Jewish heritage, the Yiddish language and holiday and festival celebrations; we sponsor secular Jewish education, musical and cultural groups, concerts, lectures, public forums, and take part in social action and related community activities. Opinions expressed in signed articles are the authors' and not necessarily those of UJPO.

585 Cranbrooke Ave,
Toronto, ON, M6A 2X9

Phone: 416-789-5502

Fax: 416-789-5981

Email: ujpo@ujpo.ca

Website: www.ujpo.org

This newsletter is available online at
<http://www.ujpo.org/UJPOnewsletter>

Affiliations:

Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations (CSJO);

Canadian Peace Alliance (CPA);

International Institute for Secular Humanistic
Judaism (IISHJ)

Edited By UJPO National Board Members

Volunteer produced

Fair Use/Dealing Notice: This issue contains some copyrighted material, the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available in our efforts to advance understanding of journalism, politics, human rights, democracy, social justice and other issues of concern to the public. We believe this constitutes a fair dealing and fair use of any such copyrighted material as provided for in Part III Section 29 of the Canadian Copyright Law and Section 107 of the U.S. Copyright Law. In accordance with the sections titled Acts Undertaken Without Motive of Gain (Canada) and Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107 (U.S.), the material in this publication is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material from this issue for purposes of your own that go beyond fair dealing and fair use, you must obtain prior permission from the copyright owner.