



UJPO News



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**Bury the Guns
Deeper than
the Kids**

By Mike Constable

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.

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Banner graphic by Avrom Yanovsky, 1911-1979

Criticism of Israel Is Not Anti-Semitism

By Rachel Epstein, November 28, 2017

Two things happened at my work place last week. Nazi posters were put up on our building and we were denied a seat on the Ontario Anti-Racism Directorate's Anti-Semitism Committee. An interesting, ironic and somewhat startling set of events that has led to some reflections on my part.

I am the Executive Director of the United Jewish People's Order (UJPO), a secular, Jewish organization, rooted in principles of social justice. UJPO was founded in the 1920s as a (pardon the sexism) "fraternal" organization, meaning an organization that takes care of its members. UJPO came to be in a climate of anti-Semitism, a climate that meant we had to look out for and stick up for each other. In 1935, when the organization wanted to purchase a piece of land outside the city (due, in part, to the anti-Semitism in the Beaches and other parts of Toronto), we had to ask our Ukrainian friends to make the purchase; Jews could not buy land. This past August we co-sponsored an event commemorating the 1933 Christie Pits Riot, when an anti-Semitic group known as the Pit Gang publicly displayed swastikas to provoke Jewish baseball players in Christie Pits.

So why, given our Jewish identity and this history, are we being denied a seat on the Anti-Semitism Committee? We are being told it is a question of numbers, that the committee is full. But given our correspondence and conversations with the Directorate, we don't know for sure, but I suspect there may be something else at play. We are among a large and growing number of Jews who are deeply concerned about the conflation of criticism of Israel and anti-Semitism. We, along with other Jewish groups such as Independent Jewish Voices, have expressed our concern that equating the two has become a brilliant and powerful device to silence important, alternative Jewish voices, and that, in the long term, this could negatively impact the crucial work of this committee. How will anti-Semitic hate crimes be counted? Will the tally include campus and other groups that oppose the Israeli state's actions against Palestinians? How will the committee differentiate between acts that are grounded in hatred of Jews, and those grounded in a critique of Israel? The two are not the same. All Jews do not unquestioningly support the policies and actions of the Israeli state. The assumption that we do ignores the many races, geographies, experiences and political viewpoints that exist amongst Jews.

The state of Israel does not speak for me as a Jew. I come from a long lineage of Jews who are committed to social justice. I grew up in a Jewish home where at our seyders we talked about racism, about homophobia, about Canada's treatment of Indigenous people, and about the rights of Palestinians. We hoped for a next year in a shared Jerusalem, a Jerusalem that has a place for both Jews and Palestinians.

Accusations of anti-Semitism are being used to silence criticism of Israel. This use of the term "anti-Semitism" is not only misleading, it is a painful disrespecting of Jewish history, of the Holocaust, and of the ways that Jews have suffered through time. If the definition of anti-Semitism is allowed to become expanded and distorted in this way, who will recognize it and stand up for us when we encounter the real thing?

Anti-Semitism is real, and is once again on the rise. Last week a 70-year-old Jewish woman in London, England was hospitalized with a concussion after being attacked by an assailant who called her "Zyd," Polish for "Jew." In the United States and Canada we are witnessing an upsurge of neo-Nazi activity, swastikas spray-painted on playgrounds, cemeteries desecrated, and bomb threats targeting Jewish institutions.

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NATIONAL UJPO NEWS

FROM WINNIPEG

On February 28, UJPO-Winnipeg co-sponsored a panel, *My Jerusalem: Responding to the US Embassy Announcement*, at the University of Winnipeg. Speakers included Dr Idris ElBakri (University of Manitoba), Fadi Ennab (Mount Carmel Clinic) and Rabbi David Mivasair (Vancouver).

Our lecture series with Dr. Itay Zutra from the University of Manitoba continues in March. The final Sunday morning discussion will be on the topic of Post-Cold War: Jewish Soviet Culture – Reappraised.

UJPO lost a longtime friend, Marty Dolin, in February. Marty was an American-born social activist who served as a member of the Manitoba Legislature for the NDP between 1985-1988. He was a member of the Canadian Council of Refugees, the Interfaith Immigration Council and the Social Planning Council for the City of Winnipeg. In 1994 he published *Education in a Multicultural Society* and in 2011 retired as head of Welcome Place, Manitoba's largest refugee-settlement agency. He was awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal for his public service in 2012. Predeceased by his wife Mary Beth Dolin in 1985, Marty died in Winnipeg at the age of 78.

Hineni: Leonard Cohen's Jewish Legacy

By Harriet Zaidman

Over the decades, Leonard Cohen's poetry has become embedded in the psychology and the spiritual consciousness of our society. His last album, released in October 2016, was a meditation on the end of life and received wide acclaim. Cohen's death only a few weeks later in November created an upsurge in affection for the poet and songwriter and a reexamination of his extensive body of work, which explored a wide range of issues, from religion to politics, from personal relationships and isolation to sexuality.

Cohen was unabashedly Jewish, despite spending five years living in a Buddhist monastery and spending time studying in a Hindu ashram. The grandson of a rabbi and Talmudic scholar, he was on a never-ending search for greater understanding that eventually took him back to his origins. Cohen was buried in Montreal in a Jewish cemetery, alongside his parents and grandparents.

In January, UJPO Winnipeg invited Bruce Sarbit, a playwright and psychologist to illuminate Cohen's relationship to Judaism. Nearly 50 people from a wide variety of backgrounds attended the forum. Sarbit explored Cohen's lyrics, relating them to the Talmudic texts as well as to Cohen's own experiences and expanding upon their

meaning. Since the forum was about music, Sarbit brought along a musician, Michael Usiskin, who sang three Cohen songs, accompanying himself on the guitar. The audience joined in to sing Hallelujah in Yiddish as a finale – a pleasant end to an informative and illuminating evening. ♦



Bruce Sarbit speaking, and Michael Usiskin strumming and singing
Photos by Henry Shorr

FROM VANCOUVER

By Carl Rosenberg

I was terribly saddened by the passing of Brian Kirby, a beloved member of the UJPO/Winchevsky community in Toronto, and a devoted reader of *Outlook* and active member of the Toronto *Outlook* Collective. I always enjoyed seeing him on my visits to Toronto, and hearing from him regarding both UJPO and *Outlook* matters. My heartfelt condolences to his partner David Abramowitz, President of UJPO-Canada, to his family and close friends, and to the entire UJPO/Winchevsky community.

With *Outlook's* passing, the Peretz Centre for Secular Jewish Culture is perhaps my main Jewish home in Vancouver. Their Fraytik Tsu Nakht secular shabbes dinner on Friday, Dec. 15 featured what has become a Peretz tradition: "Jewish Christmas," consisting of Chinese food and a movie, with a small Hanukkah celebration. The film this time was *The Deli Man*, produced and directed by Erik Greenberg Anjou. It told the story of Jewish delicatessens in the U.S. (much of it also applicable to Canada), and centred on the story of Ziggy Gruber, a third-generation deli proprietor who currently operates Kenny and Ziggy's deli in Houston. The light-hearted film touched on larger issues such as the experiences of North American Jews from immigration to upward mobility to the assimilation that has led to the fragmentation of urban Jewish communities of which delis have been an integral part.

Apart from the Peretz Centre, my Jewish circle in Vancouver consists of Independent Jewish Voices-

Vancouver (a chapter of Independent Jewish Voices Canada). Last fall, our group took part in organizing a powerful event.

The British singer/songwriter Roger Waters, one of the main creative forces in the legendary rock group Pink Floyd, has been a political activist on various issues. In the last decade he has become a strong opponent of the Israeli government's occupation and oppression of the Palestinian people, and a supporter of the movement for BDS (boycott, divestment, sanctions) against Israel to pressure it to respect Palestinian human and national rights.

Last October, when Rogers was in Vancouver on his cross-Canada tour, IJV-Vancouver joined with other Vancouver-based Palestine solidarity groups to organize a public meeting with Waters. On Thursday October 26, Waters appeared at St. Andrew's-Wesley United Church, where he was interviewed by writer and editor Martha Roth of IJV, and the discussion was chaired by Itrath Syed, an Instructor at Langara College and Simon Fraser University. It was a moving discussion in which Rogers covered diverse topics including his working-class background – in particular the formative influence of his left-wing mother – the evolution of his human rights activism and support for Palestinian rights, and the connections between culture and human liberation in their various forms. (For an in-depth portrait, see the profile and interview by Israeli journalist Gideon Levy, "Roger Waters sets the record straight: I hate apartheid, not Israel," *Haaretz*, Aug. 2, 2015.)

On Saturday, Dec. 16, the fifth of the eight nights of Hanukkah, IJV held a Hanukkah party, "Light Up the Dark in Gaza," to raise funds to buy and ship solar lamps to the Palestinians in Gaza.

The event featured food (especially latkes), music, and candle-lighting and speeches by five activists who have worked on diverse issues. They each lit and dedicated a candle to a different aspect of the struggle for liberation. They included Hereditary Chief Phil Lane Jr. of the Ihanktonwan Sioux and Chickasaw Nations; Hilla Kerner, a member of the Vancouver Rape Relief and Women's Shelter and former executive director of the Association of Rape Crisis Centres in Israel; and Gabor Maté, a Vancouver physician and long-time opponent of Israeli oppression of the Palestinians.

Gazans have suffered an Israeli military blockade for over a decade. Israeli-imposed power shortages mean that they have only four hours of electricity a day. Rabbi David Mivasair, the main organizer of the event, noted that "Israel bombed their only electrical generating system in 2014, [and] haven't allowed repairs. People in Gaza have to get all their electricity by buying it from Israel. They have an average of 3-4 hours of electricity a day."

"The way we celebrate [Hanukkah] is by lighting candles, it's like bringing light into the dark. Independent Jewish Voices Vancouver feels [that] to make this very meaningful and relevant in our time, is to help another people struggling against foreign domination and literally living in the dark." ♦

FROM HAMILTON

By Lyn Center

So far this winter, we have had two gatherings to "schmooze and nosh". The first, on December 17, was a delightful Hanukkah lunch at the home of Gloria Geller, where around a dozen of us spent a few hours eating, chatting and enjoying one another's company.

The second gathering was hosted on January 20 by Marcia and David Cohen, and the theme was "family history". Inspired by what David told us about his family's immigration to Canada, each person talked about when, why, and where our families wound up in Canada – in places like Saskatchewan, Alberta, Montreal, Toronto, Hamilton, Windsor, and North Bay. This was an extremely interesting conversation where we learned more about the effects of the pogroms and the Holocaust in Europe and Russia.

At our next gathering on March 11, the topic will be "Music and the Jewish Contribution". We will ask everyone to come up with examples in areas like rock, folk, jazz, classical and Christmas music. ♦

FROM TORONTO

By Rachel Epstein and Julia Barnett

Busy time in Toronto! Some highlights:

Morris Winchevsky School: Under the leadership of Education Director Lia Tarachansky, the Morris Winchevsky school held a fun-filled Purim dance party on Sunday, February 25. Featuring a Purim *shpil* [play], experiential activities, tons of dancing and, of course pizza and *homentashn*, we also lit two candles – one to remember the precarious situation of Jews in Persian Exile and of minorities everywhere who struggle against authoritarian regimes, and the second to commemorate the massacres perpetrated by Jews in the second half of the Book of Esther.

One of the foundations of our school's curriculum is the Jewish tradition of asking questions. Each week the students and teachers collect what they call "Great Questions." Some of these will be read by the students at this year's Third Seyder on Saturday, April 7, the theme of which is "Questions for a New World":

<https://www.winchevskycentre.org/annual-third-seyder-2018>

The shule's B'nai Mitzvah students are beginning work on their research projects and their parents are starting to plan for the big event in June!

Camp Naivelt: Camp Naivelt held its annual Midwinter Mingle on Saturday, February 24 at the usual spot – the Dovercourt Boys & Girls Club. The Mingle is an opportunity for the Naivelt community to catch up with each other during the winter months, as people begin, during the bleakness of Toronto in February, to yearn for sun and summer and Hills 1, 2 and 3.

Camp Chair Tina Blazer continues to steer the efforts of several working groups designed to address some of the Camp's critical issues: maintenance of public spaces; how to manage the daily work of running camp; governance and policy issues.

Other Programs and Goings-On:

- UJPO-Toronto hosted over sixty people at a workshop on anti-Semitism offered by Sam Bick and David Zinman (right) from the Montreal-based Treyf podcast.



Photos by Sue Goldstein

- In collaboration with Independent Jewish Voices (IJV) we gathered over 200 signatures in seven days on a petition that was read at Queen's Park on February 20 by Teresa Armstrong, NDP MPP (London-Fanshawe). The petition raises concerns about the equation of criticism of Israel with anti-Semitism.
- We are working in partnership with Independent Jewish Voices (IJV) and the survey design company, EKOS, to conduct a survey of 300 Canadian Jews regarding their views on Israel/Palestine.
- Also with IJV, some of us are participating in a weekly reading/discussion group about the history of Zionism, with dynamic and dedicated facilitators Sheryl and Syd Nestel.
- Approximately forty people participated in the Kairos Blanket Exercise to further our knowledge of how colonialism has operated, and continues to operate, in Canada and the historical and present day impact on

Indigenous peoples.

- Our singing group, Zing! Zing! Zing! continues to meet monthly under the enthusiastic leadership of Rachel Sheinin and Hartley Wynberg.
<https://www.facebook.com/events/153835608594879/>
- Preparations are underway for the Third Seyder in April. With an organizing committee largely made up of young people, the Seyder will showcase the questions being asked by our youngest members, the Shule students, as they engage with the social justice issues in their curriculum. We are also incorporating some non-Ashkenazi traditions into the ceremony and using audio-visual materials in new ways.
- Anton Guz, a Masters student in Peace-building and Conflict Transformation, is doing a six-month placement with us, helping out with many facets of our programming. In May he will be offering a special presentation on Ukraine, from where he hails.
- We are looking forward to the International Women's Day Alternative Shabbes event with Kike Roach and Judy Rebeck. They will reflect on the issues raised in *Politically Speaking*, a book they wrote together twenty years ago, and on the current state of feminist and anti-racist struggles.
<https://www.facebook.com/events/1783683181934461/>
- We are also excited about the upcoming April 19th publication of Board member Joyce Wayne's new novel, *Last Night of the World*. On May 2 we will hold a launch event at the Winchevsky Centre, featuring an interview with Joyce by another Toronto UJPO author, Max Wallace.
- Our archivist, Ruth Grossman, with the assistance of Elyssa Marks, continues to work to bring order to our history. Ruth regularly unearths treasures in the form of letters, documents, photographs and other organizational paraphernalia.
- And, finally, we are sad to have lost two very important members of our community: Brian Kirby, beloved partner to our National president, David Abramowitz, on January 3, 2018, and longtime UJPO member Jacquie Chic on February 16, 2018. They will both be sorely missed. ♦

WHAT'S IN ORDER

Toronto

- Welcome to new member, Alex Verman
- Mazl tov to Joyce Wayne on the upcoming (April 19) publication of her new novel, *Last Night of the World*
- Mazl tov to Harriet and Andrew Lyons on their 50th wedding anniversary (Sunday December 17)
- Condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of member Jacquie Chic

- Condolences to Ella and Valentin Gorbatyuk on the passing of Ella's mother and UJPO member, Fanya Shifris

Winnipeg

- Mazl tov to Roz Usiskin (Winnipeg) who has a new healthy great-grandson, Nolan Millar Usiskin, grandson of Aaron and his wife Cassandra Samson, and a grandson to her oldest son Michael and Jean Millar Usiskin. Also her granddaughter Beth Usiskin is getting married May 20 to Robert Freeman. Beth is the daughter of her middle son Arnold and his wife Robyn Rypp. So, the Usiskin clan is "keinenhorah" growing.

Brian Kirby, In Memoriam



The UJPO/Winchevsky community mourns the passing of Brian Wayne Kirby, beloved partner of our National president, David Abramowitz.

Photo by Sarah Williams

From David: Brian had fabulous idiosyncrasies combined with great intelligence and an inquiring mind which made for a person admired and respected by so many. Our love was based on the appreciation and mutual respect of our differences.

My dad, a devoted atheist, loved to debate religion with Brian, who was a sincere Presbyterian. And who would have thought Brian would complain that my mother was serving him too large portions? True! Brian had just had one of his best Christmases ever, surrounded by the joy and camaraderie of family. Hearing himself called Uncle Brian by my grandniece and grandnephew thrilled him immeasurably. ♦

HONOURABLE MENTSHN

Dr. Mark Samuel Etkin

By David Abramowitz

When one wants to establish an active progressive Jewish social action organization the person to call is Dr. Mark Etkin of Winnipeg's UJPO. From his high school days he has been involved with activism. In 1968 Mark helped create, and was a founding board member of the Winnipeg High School Students Union.

After attaining his B.A. in 1973, his M.D. in 1980 and the Psychiatry Residency Program in 1992 (all at the University of Manitoba), his Fellowship in HIV Psychiatry, University of California at San Francisco, occurred in 1992-3.

Mark's 1980s involvement included working as a physician at Klinik Community Health Centre and at

Village Clinic – Winnipeg's HIV Clinic, as well as founding the Manitoba Men's Network (pro-feminist provincial men's organization) and being a volunteer physician at the Morgentaler Winnipeg Clinic. In 1995 he founded and was the first chair of the Canadian Psychiatry Association Section on HIV Psychiatry.



Photo by Sam Blatt

At the beginning of this century (2002-3) Mark encouraged and became a principal organizer of Winnipeg Jews for a Just Peace and in 2005 he participated in the first UJPO Peace Solidarity Tour to Israel/Palestine where he met Montreal's Michael Benazon. This led to Mark and Michael co-founding The Alliance of Concerned Jewish Canadians in 2005-6.

In 2006 Mark was the principal organizer of a Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) Workshop in Winnipeg (with Adam Hanieh of the pro-BDS Canadian group Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid).

In 2008, with Michael Benazon, Mark co-founded Independent Jewish Voices (Canada) and subsequently Independent Jewish Voices – Winnipeg. He became a member of the IJV Steering Committee and its treasurer.

Mark also managed to squeeze in a 17-day journey as a volunteer with the American Jews for a Just Peace "Health and Human Rights Tour" of Palestine in 2008, which had partnered with the Palestinian Red Crescent and Israel's Physicians for Human Rights. He was a medical volunteer at clinics in Bethlehem and Nablus and attended the Gaza Mental Health Conference (by video link in Ramallah) and helped organize a demonstration at the Gaza Border Crossing, which protested the Israeli siege of Gaza.

In 2009 Mark supported and encouraged development of local resources to initiate Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW) at the University of Manitoba and the University of Winnipeg, and from 2009 worked to organize and support local IAW activities.

The last UJPO Solidarity Tour visited Venezuela in 2011 and Mark participated. In 2012 he was a principal organizer of Winnipeg Community Television (local Winnipeg television society which films and airs local political events on Shaw TV). This group has aired dozens of shows of political interest on Shaw Cable.

From the 1990's and through this century Mark contributed multiple articles to local Jewish and other media (*Canadian Dimension*, *Outlook*, etc.) on subjects related to Jewish Secular-Humanism, Israel/Palestine, and other topics. Increasingly UJPO members in Toronto,

Winnipeg and Vancouver have been and are involved in many joint projects with IJV. Winnipeggers have even heard a rumor that in his spare time Mark cares for patients!♦

GETTING TO KNOW OUR UJPO MEMBERS

Marilyn Tate

Since when have you been a member of UJPO (Toronto)?

I first got acquainted with UJPO (Toronto) when I rented a cabin at Naivelt around 2000 and then I started to bring my twin daughters, Sasha and Dylan, and my son, Adam, to the Morris Winchevsky School soon afterwards, maybe in 2001. I became a member soon thereafter.

What brought you to UJPO?

I had heard of Camp Naivelt for many years from different friends, but I had never been there. My close friend, with kids the same age as mine, and I were looking for somewhere to spend a week or two together with our children in the summer, and, fortuitously, I ran into someone who had a cabin at Naivelt to rent. We continued going with the two families each summer for about seven or eight years, and then I continued going up with just my kids for many more years. At the same time, when I was looking for a suitable place to bring my kids to learn more about their Jewish culture as well as a place to go for secular Jewish holiday celebrations, the MWS worked out well for both myself and my non-Jewish, mostly atheist, partner, Rob Howarth, for whom social justice is his main religion. A perfect match!

In which boards and/or committees are you active?

I've been on the Board of Directors for MWS and UJPO-Toronto for eight years. I've been on the Human Resources committee for many years and more recently I'm on the Finance committee.

What are some of the projects or activities your committee or board has been or is involved in?

Being on the Board of Directors, we're involved in all aspects of the running of and the direction setting for UJPO-Toronto and MWS, from the policies to political positions to the more mundane aspects like building maintenance, as well as strategic planning and finances. In particular, I've been part of many hiring processes, the most important being the recent hiring of the new Executive Director, Rachel, to replace our long-standing much beloved, Maxine. We worked hard on having an inclusive process whereby there were several meetings with the full Board and some with members to determine what key qualities we were looking for and the best way to find



the right person. The hiring committee spent many months going through the process. And we are very pleased with the result of all that work.

What is your life outside UJPO?

For over 27 years, in the job realm, I worked in the area of health promotion and public health, managing a host of health promotion programs in Ontario, such as programs for people affected by HIV/AIDS, Aboriginal Head Start, prenatal nutrition programs, programs for children and infant mental health promotion, among others. I am in my last few days of that job and I hope that I have helped contribute, in a small way, to a healthier Ontario, especially for vulnerable families and communities. Besides work and UJPO, I am on the Board of Directors for Jumblies, an arts organization that "makes art in everyday and extraordinary places" and "places participation and radical inclusion at its core". I am active in a sponsorship group for a Syrian family; I go hiking and bicycling whenever and wherever possible (Bruce Trail, the Rockies, Italy, downtown Toronto, etc.); I travel; I spend time with my family and friends; and many more things than I can possibly list.

Are you able to bring your non-UJPO activities and skills into a close relationship with your UJPO activities?

Yes, I hope so. I believe that my activities are based on my values and beliefs. And that is all in line with my involvement with UJPO.

Are other members of your family involved in or members of UJPO?

My partner, Rob, is a member and has helped facilitate some meetings. And my adult kids are still involved in different ways, attending different events. For instance, my daughter, Sasha, organized the successful Treyf Workshop on Anti-Semitism in January at the Winchevsky Centre, which was attended by close to 60 people, most of whom were under 30.

Have there been any changes in UJPO since you joined, that you would like to mention?

I've already mentioned the change in the Executive Director, which was a major yet smooth transition that I was involved in. In addition, the recent retirement of the Financial coordinator, Barbara Blaser, was another major shift, and I was part of determining how to fill those huge shoes. From the activities perspective, I have seen, recently, a trend towards events that are attracting younger people to UJPO, which is great. We're really getting onto the radar in new ways.

Are there changes you would like to see over the coming years?

I support the work in the political and cultural realms and I'm excited about those continuing and expanding. There have been some exciting book launches at the Centre, books written by UJPO members, which is great.

How do you see yourself contributing to the health of the organization?

I'll continue doing what I do: volunteering in different ways, supporting the organization whenever I can.

Last and not least – recent book and/or movie and/or play you recommend!

I am a big reader of books: fiction, non-fiction and audio books. I've read many exceptional books, so I could write a whole other document on my favourite books. I'll just mention one book that I think everyone in Canada should try to read: *Honouring the Truth; Reconciling for the Future; Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*. It's available on-line: <http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=890> ♦

POETRY & SONG

Charlie Wenjack

Words and music by Willie Dunn (see notes below). Song and notes on Willie Dunn from "Singin' About Us", James Lorimer & Company, 1978.

"Charlie was a twelve year-old kid who ran away from an Indian residential school near Kenora, Ontario, in 1966. He set out on a four-hundred mile walk, trying to get back home to his father and his people. He died in the winter snow."

Walk on, little Charlie, walk on through the snow,
Head on down the railway line...
Tryin to make it home. Well he's made it...forty miles. Six hundred left to go. It's a long old lonesome journey.
Shufflin thru the snow.

He's so lonesome and he's hungry. It's been a time since last he's ate. And as the night grows colder
He wonders of his fate. For his legs are wracked with pain as he staggers through the night. As he sees through his troubled eyes, that his hands are turning white.

Lonely as a single star, in the skies above,
His father in a mining camp, his mother in the ground,
And he's looking for his dad, and he's looking out for love
Just a lost little boy by the railway track
Heading homeward bound.

Is that great Wendigo, come to look upon my face,
And are the stars exploding, down the misty aisles of space
Who's that coming down the track walking up to me

With her arms outstretched and waiting
Waiting just for me.

Willie Dunn is Micmac/Métis from Restigouche, Quebec. He made an award-winning film, "The Ballad of Crowfoot", the famous Blackfoot chief who fought with Louis Riel in the second Métis rebellion. Crowfoot was a key link between Aboriginal peoples on the western plains and colonial forces "by way of the North-West Mounted Police". ♦

Chief
Crowfoot
and family



YIDDISH

Yiddish Tattooing: Embodied Text

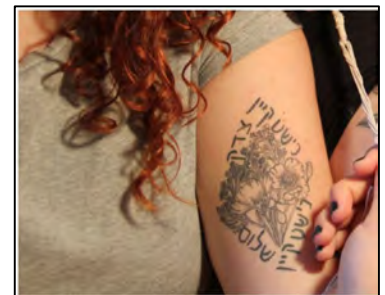
By Diana Clarke, July 6, 2017

This is the second installment in UJPO News of Diane Clarke's project, collecting examples of Yiddish Tattooing, and capturing their meaning from the wearer. Diane's complete introduction to this project can be found in the Fall 2017 edition of UJPO News, and at its source: <https://ingeveb.org/blog/yiddish-tattooing-embodied-text>

Ariana Katz:

I refer to this as my "emergency Trump tattoo" that I got mid-November of 2016. These words have been really important to my brother and me, Dan's translation of a

common movement chant ("No Justice, No Peace" is rendered "*Nisht keyn tzedek, nisht keyn sholem*"). It sits right below my *t'filin* each morning, and the words of Hoshea "I bind you to me with righteousness and justice..." resonate when they connect tattoo to *t'filin*. The plants inside the text are medicinal plants for protection, yarrow, poppy, and red chestnut. To have Yiddish on my body when it is not a language that flows from me feels bold, sometimes embarrassing, and proud. To put these letters on my body claims my Jewish body as mine, and commits it to the work of justice at hand. This tattoo is featured on the cover of the 5778 Radical Jewish Calendar, out in the month of Av. ♦



Art by J Brager, text by Daniel Kahn, tattoo by Eric Guntor of Spirited Tattooing

CANADA

Unifor, CLC rift called threat to labour movement Largest-private sector union quits national labour group

By Jeremy J. Nuttall, Jan. 19, 2018, *TheTyee.ca*

An intensifying battle between the Canadian Labour Congress and the country's largest private sector union could be bad news for the labour movement, says Larry Savage, a professor of labour studies at Ontario's Brock University.

Unifor, which represents about 10 per cent of the CLC's 3.3-million membership, pulled out of the umbrella labour group Wednesday.

It complained the labour congress is failing to enforce rules to prevent U.S.-based unions from interfering in local elections in Canada and cited other grievances.

Savage said the split could weaken the labour movement and reduce its effectiveness in promoting pro-worker policies.

"While the labour movement is pursuing these campaigns for universal pharmacare, for \$15 [minimum wage] and fairness, there's a question about whether these internal divisions at the top are going to stymie some of the momentum that we've seen around labour politics in recent months," he said.

The effects could be wide-ranging, he noted. Many labour councils and provincial labour federations require member unions to be part of the CLC, he said, and Unifor could be ousted from those groups.

By leaving the CLC, Unifor is also now free to raid other unions in an effort to sign up more members and other congress members can raid Unifor, he noted.

Labour Congress president Hassan Yussuff rejected Unifor's allegations that the congress ignored its concerns about U.S.-based labour unions interfering in Canadian union elections.

Yussuff said Unifor must cease any "raiding" activities and urged the union to return to the congress.

A release from Unifor and a letter from president Jerry Dias said much of the dispute stems from the CLC's failure to enforce provisions in its constitution about the process for workers to move from one union to another.

Unifor was allegedly involved in a high-profile effort last year to win over workers represented by Amalgamated Transit Union Local 113 in Toronto. The U.S.-based union placed the local under trusteeship.

The CLC hasn't addressed interference in the process, Dias charged in the letter.

"The evidence is before us – very few members have ever changed unions through the justification process,"

Dias writes. "Affiliates simply do not co-operate and frustrate the process."

The CLC arbitrated the dispute to some bad reviews from unions in Canada, including Unifor.

But Yussuff said he's heard allegations Unifor is trying to raid UNITE HERE Local 75, which represents hospitality workers in Toronto.

"It's a breach of our solidarity, of our constitution," said Yussuff. "To be involved in raiding and to not allow the process to be completed, I think is really not acceptable."

UNITE HERE hasn't brought a complaint to the CLC, he said.

Dias was unavailable for comment on the allegation.

The rift could have implications for Yussuff's tenure as CLC head. The constitution says members of the CLC must be from a union that is part of the organization.

But Yussuff is a member of Unifor and could be pushed out now that his union has left the CLC.

Unifor, created in 2013 when the Canadian Auto Workers and Communications, Energy and Paperworkers merged, supported Yussuff's bid for congress president when he defeated incumbent Ken Georgetti in 2014. ♦

Jeremy J. Nuttall is The Tyee's reader-funded Parliament Hill reporter in Ottawa.

https://thetyee.ca/News/2018/01/19/Unifor-CLC-Rift-Called-Threat-Labour-Movement/?utm_source=weekly&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=220118



By Mike Constable

Can deregulation, privatization and subsidies revive Canada's nuclear industry?

By Ole Hendrickson, *rabble.ca*, February 1, 2018

Corporate dominance of public institutions and the public purse was on full display during a licence hearing for the federal government's nuclear research and waste facilities at Chalk River, Ontario, on January 23-25. The hearing was largely a love-in between the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) – the federal regulator – and the Canadian Nuclear Laboratories (CNL), owned by a consortium of U.S., U.K. and Canadian companies.

Non-industry intervenors, who were in the majority at the hearing, were highly critical of CNSC's intent to award CNL a watered-down 10-year licence for the Chalk River site. But CNSC President Michael Binder kept them on a short leash, occasionally lashing out and asking why they had bothered to attend.

CNSC wants to replace the current 285-page Chalk River Laboratories licence handbook (which contains detailed criteria for safe site operations) with a much shorter 61-page handbook that merely lists nuclear industry-prepared standards, CNSC guidance documents, and internal CNL documents not available to the public.

Canadian Environmental Law Association lawyer Joseph Castrilli warned that watering down the licence and its accompanying handbook would make them unenforceable. CNSC defended its deregulation initiative using terms such as “standardization,” “licence improvements” and “removal of repetition.”

Long-time Renfrew County resident Jean Brereton was prevented from showing a 36-metre-long scroll of licence and handbook deletions during her presentation. She remarked, “President Binder acted like a defence lawyer trying to destroy the credibility of a hostile witness.”

The Chalk River site is on unceded Algonquin territory. The Algonquins of Ontario, in their intervention, said that they were never consulted about, or compensated for, the loss of their land. They strongly objected to CNSC’s contention that it has no “duty to consult” on the new 10-year licence for CNL. Deputy Grand Council Chief Glen Hare of the Anishinabek Nation forcefully opposed the licensing of nuclear waste transport through Anishinabek Territory and storage of nuclear waste near water bodies such as the Ottawa River. Several Indigenous intervenors offered prayers in the Algonquin language.

Privatizing nuclear energy management

The U.S., U.K. and Canada created the Chalk River facility during the Second World War to learn how to make plutonium for atomic bombs. For decades Chalk River was a publicly run facility of the Crown corporation Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (AECL). Just before the fall 2015 federal election, the Harper government shrank AECL to 40 staff, handing CNL and its approximately 2,800 employees over to a multinational consortium, led by U.S.-based company CH2M.

Although the consortium calls itself the “Canadian National Energy Alliance,” four of its five members are foreign-owned. One intervenor noted that lead consortium member CH2M had criminally conspired to defraud the U.S. government at the Hanford Nuclear Site, and the Canadian member, SNC-Lavalin, was debarred by the World Bank for 10 years in April 2013 following an investigation into bribery schemes in Bangladesh. In September 2018, SNC-Lavalin will face federal corruption and fraud charges related to its activities in Libya. The intervenor asked if companies might be ineligible for contracts under the federal Integrity Regime.

Under contract to AECL, the consortium operates all of the federal government’s nuclear sites. However, the lands, buildings and \$8 billion worth of environmental liabilities at these sites are still “owned” by AECL, and the federal government remains responsible for them.

In June 2017 the Auditor General reported that the government paid out \$969 million to AECL in the 2016-17 fiscal year. In turn, AECL gave “approximately \$866 million for contractual expenses” to the consortium. The Auditor General identified four areas of “weakness” in AECL’s corporate governance, including that its corporate plan “did not demonstrate how the Corporation would measure the overall objectives of restructuring, which were to enhance efficiency and effectiveness, and to contain and reduce costs and risks for Canadians over time.”

In 2016-17, \$530 million of AECL’s federal budget appropriation was earmarked for addressing environmental liabilities. These liabilities include shut-down reactors, leaking nuclear waste storage facilities, and over 100 radioactive buildings, most dating back to the Cold War era. CNL’s controversial plan to reduce these liabilities is to permanently dispose of them in a giant mound one kilometre from the Ottawa River. CNL is also shipping radioactive waste from the Whiteshell Laboratories in Pinawa, Manitoba to Chalk River for disposal.

Concerns about proposals for Chalk River

Before the hearing CNSC told hearing participants that it would not accept any submissions related to CNL’s proposed giant waste mound. CNSC also said that CNL’s plan to construct and test experimental “small modular reactors” would be “out of scope” of the licence consideration. Intervenors spoke against these two proposals anyway, arguing that the mound was intended to free up space for new reactors, and that both proposals should be rejected owing to unacceptable risks to health, safety and the environment.

Intervenors also criticized the proposed 10-year licence term. The longest previous licence for Chalk River had a five-year term. CNL defended a 10-year licence as being good for business. CNL and AECL annually update a 10-year plan that is tabled in Cabinet by the Minister of Natural Resources as a basis for AECL’s budget appropriations.

A June 2017 report by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Natural Resources, *The Nuclear Sector at a Crossroads*, noted that the federal government committed in 2014-15 to a 10-year, \$1.2-billion investment in “revitalization” of the Chalk River site. The Committee, chaired by Liberal MP James Maloney, called for continuing nuclear subsidies and recommended that the federal government “support the development of small

modular reactors.” In October 2017 the Trudeau government agreed with all of the recommendations in the report.

In his appended minority opinion, the lone NDP Committee member, MP Richard Cannings noted the absence of information in the report “about the balance between investment in new nuclear technologies and clean, renewable technologies such as solar.” He added, “the current government promised to clean up government, make it more transparent and open, and to bring ‘sunny ways’ to our country. Unfortunately, recent controversy with the leadership of the CNSC is casting a cloud that is contrary to the government’s commitments. The Minister must stop avoiding his responsibilities and address the issues affecting public trust in Canada’s nuclear regulator.”

Given the Trudeau government’s support for continued nuclear subsidies, and the CNSC’s dismissive attitude towards public intervenors, CNL will get its stripped-down licence, probably for a 10-year term. It remains to be seen whether the Liberals will pay a price for putting the wishes of the powerful nuclear lobby and multinational corporations ahead of public interests. The risks are significant, given the large sums of public funding involved and the potential consequences of a nuclear accident. ♦

Ole Hendrickson is a retired forest ecologist and a founding member of the Ottawa River Institute, a non-profit charitable organization based in the Ottawa Valley. A version of this article was first posted on Sierra Club Canada’s blog.

<http://rabble.ca/columnists/2018/02/can-deregulation-privatization-and-subsidies-revive-canadas-nuclear-industry>

USA

Israeli Jews will never accept Palestinians as equals – Klutznick, chair of Americans for Peace Now

US Politics, Philip Weiss, January 12, 2018 [abridged]

Jim Klutznick, the chairman of the liberal Zionist group Americans for Peace Now (and a political player in Chicago and an early Obama supporter), yesterday dismissed the idea of a one-state outcome in Israel and Palestine because Israelis will never accept Palestinians as equals.

Klutznick responded to Palestinian pollster Khalil Shikaki, who said during a Peace Now podcast, that the “major driver” for Palestinian youth today is “democracy and equal rights,” not what has driven Palestinian politics for the last 50 years, the desire for sovereignty. Shikaki said these young Palestinians see a Palestinian state as a), a delusion, and b), just another “corrupt inefficient

authoritarian state,” so they dream of equal rights with Jews in one state.

Klutznick dismissed the idea:

You brought up the word democracy. And I just wanted to make this observation... you will not get civil rights under one state. And the only answer here is an independent and sovereign state for the Palestinian people where democracy will have a chance to flourish within the context of Palestinian democracy... Israel never allowing there to be civil rights for everybody and an equal vote.

Shikaki said that he agrees, but this is not an answer for young Palestinians:

I actually share your view on this... 18- to 22- year olds ...basically say, You will fail to produce a two state solution. Why...prevent me from dreaming about a one state solution, in which we all live in peace with equal rights... it will be a tough battle...it will not be easy and that Israeli Jews will not want to give up on their own state, but if we can’t get a sovereign independent democratic state, we have no alternative but to take this approach.

What you just said and what I also believe in, is... if we can’t deliver on that, then our ability to convince the youth of our argument is very very weak.

Klutznick said the only hope is to reengage the U.S., though not under Donald Trump:

I agree with what you said...the United States has temporarily as we hope here lost its status as an honest broker... the hope for both the Palestinian and the Israeli people is that the United States regain that status... I think the hope has to be that the United States will come to its senses and the people of the United States will return... an administration that will regain that role as the independent broker, and an honest broker..., and I think that’s got to be everybody’s hope.

Shikaki responded, “I share that hope, and good luck with that.”

If Klutznick really sees the two sides that way – one society will never support civil rights and equal rights – maybe Americans for Peace Now is working for the wrong side! Klutznick would never work with American partners who held such views. The young Jews of IfNotNow are sure to ask the same questions. They celebrate Ahed Tamimi’s slapping an Israeli soldier who was occupying her property – even as Ori Nir of Peace Now has come out against her.

As for Klutznick’s hopes, on January 3, he and Peace Now CEO Debra DeLee challenged leading Jewish groups to come out vocally against the “belligerent occupation.”

Reacting to several recent moves by Israel's government that sabotage a future Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement, Americans for Peace Now (APN) today called on fellow American Jewish organizations to join APN in vocal opposition to annexation and to unilaterally pre-judging issues that Israelis and Palestinians should negotiate to achieve a final-status peace deal.

But look at the most liberal group they reached out to and – the latest statements from the Union for Reform Judaism are entirely supportive of Trump on the Jerusalem decision!

We strongly commend President Trump and Ambassador Haley...

In other words, the U.S. Jewish establishment ignores Peace Now's appeals, and by the way, the U.S. is not an honest broker, never has been, and the U.S. Jewish establishment loves it that way, and Peace Now stays on the board of the rightwing Conference of Presidents, another of the groups Klutznick wrote to, instead of voting with its feet. And Peace Now has nothing but contempt for BDS (boycott, divestment and sanctions), which all of those Palestinian youth support. ♦

Philip Weiss is Founder and Co-Editor of Mondoweiss.net.
<http://mondoweiss.net/2018/01/palestinians-klutznick-americans/>

MIDDLE EAST

Adalah: Second in a series on Israeli NGOs

(Material gathered from various Internet sites, including Adalah's at Adalah.org)

Ed. Note: NGOs are an important aspect of civil society in Israel. In general we think of NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) as collections of volunteers and/or paid staff, whose mission is to safeguard rights, both communal and individual, and to be vigil against arbitrary or random acts by government or other powerful institutions. If the number of NGOs relative to the population is an indication of a thriving democracy, with much citizen input, then Israel is definitely such a country. On the other hand, the numbers might also indicate that the citizenry feels a need to have many organizations being watchful and combating/countering powerful interests. Whichever it may reflect in Israel, the numbers of NGOs and their diverse missions definitely reflect an involved citizenry, both Jewish and not Jewish.

Arabs comprise approximately twenty percent of the Israeli population – 1.5 million people. Adalah (“Justice” in Arabic) – The Legal Centre for Arab Minority Rights in Israel – promotes human rights in Israel in general and the rights of the Palestinian citizens of Israel, in particular. The three tours to Israel-Palestine sponsored by UJPO all visited Adalah, in Haifa.



Wadi an-Na'am, an unregistered Bedouin encampment in Israel
(Photo by Aniqah Raihan)

Adalah includes in its mission defending the human rights of all individuals under the jurisdiction of the State of Israel, which therefore also includes Palestinian residents in the oPt (occupied Palestinian territories). It is the only Palestinian organization that works before Israeli courts to protect the human rights of Palestinians in Israel and in the oPt. (The current case of Emah Tamimih and her mother is being held before a *military* court, not the Israeli civil justice court system.)

Since its establishment, Adalah has brought about 250 cases before the courts that have had an impact on future cases and/or legislation, having brought to litigation cases before the Israeli Supreme Court and the lower courts. These have spanned diverse fields, including land and planning rights, civil and political rights, and economic and social rights. Numerous cases have resulted in landmark, precedent-setting decisions. Adalah has had an important impact on the lives of Palestinians both within Israel proper and in the oPt.

Two examples of cases brought before the Israeli court, with which readers outside of Israel might be familiar because of the campaigns that were mounted world-wide are:

- 1. Accountability for the October 2000 (Land Day) killings:** (Refer to the ‘Or’ Commission of Inquiry.) Adalah represented the families of the thirteen young unarmed Palestinian citizens of Israel shot dead by police during protest demonstrations in October 2000. Although the Commission recommended criminal investigations into the killings, and issued a number of disciplinary actions against police commanders, in 2008 the Attorney General decided not to issue any indictments. Adalah even now continues to seek justice for the victims and their families.
- 2. The Praver Plan for forced displacement:** (*Ed: The Praver Plan was described in a 2013 issue of UJPO News.*) In 2012-13, the Israeli government brought forth the Praver Plan, whose aim was/is to forcibly displace tens of thousands of Bedouin citizens of Israel from their land in the unrecognized villages in the Naqab (Negev). Adalah waged a major public advocacy and legal campaign against the government's proposal. As a result the plan was shelved in 2013 and currently remains frozen.

These are but two of the hundreds of important legal actions Adalah has brought to court. ♦

INTERNATIONAL

Trade talk secrecy ruffles feathers

Ottawa was proud of its agreement on a revised TPP deal, but it was still done behind closed doors.

By Jeremy J. Nuttall, Jan. 26, 2018, TheTyee.ca

Trade critics are concerned about secrecy, and chicken farmers are on the defensive after the revised Trans-Pacific Partnership was announced this week by the federal Liberal government.

Laura Tribe of OpenMedia, an Internet freedom advocacy organization, said while she's happy parts of the original agreement related to intellectual property have been suspended, the deal was not negotiated with enough transparency.

"We've heard from the government they plan on transparency in trade, and I don't know how a sudden announcement without clarity that they were even back at the negotiating table does that," Tribe said.

"We are being assured that Canada's best interests are being put forward, but we have no idea what that looks like or how they are interpreting our best interests."

The deal was made behind closed doors in Tokyo.

The original Trans-Pacific Partnership was signed by 12 Pacific Rim nations in 2016 but was short-lived after the election of U.S. President Donald Trump, who pulled his country out of the deal once he took office and before the agreement came into force.

The remaining 11 countries started working on a new agreement. In November, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau took heat for missing a meeting to discuss it in Vietnam.

But as Canada headed back to the negotiating table this week to preserve the troubled North American Free Trade Agreement, Ottawa revealed it had reached a deal on the now renamed Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership.

Tribe said the departure of the Americans from the deal made it easy to shelve the contentious parts of the agreement that focused on intellectual property.

"It's one of those things where you have to give credit where credit is due," Tribe said. "We don't think they've figured it out or got it perfect yet."

She said Washington was using "pressure and bullying" tactics to advance an intellectual property agenda

similar to that used in the U.S., such as adding 20 years to copyright terms.

Tribe said her organization is still concerned about how the deal was negotiated because of how secretly it was done. She said she wonders how seriously the concerns of Canadians are being taken by the Liberal government.

The automotive sector has already been vocal about its opposition to the revised deal. Jerry Dias of Unifor, which represents thousands of Canadian auto workers, called the agreement "B.S." and "the worst trade deal ever." He also took aim at the secretive nature of the deal.

Lisa Bishop-Spencer, manager of communications for the Chicken Farmers of Canada, said her organization wasn't consulted for this round of negotiations on the agreement and isn't happy with the outcome.

Currently Canada allows 7.5 per cent of domestic chicken production to be imported. When the TPP was negotiated the U.S. wanted Canada to boost its allowable chicken imports by 2.1 per cent, but despite the U.S. pulling out, that increase is still in the revised agreement.

"All of the sudden we find ourselves having to give 2.1 per cent of our production to people who hadn't even asked for it," Bishop-Spencer said of the remaining countries in the revised deal.

Chicken doesn't travel well, she said, so most of the imported poultry would be used in soups or processed foods.

Bishop-Spencer said the organization is planning to discuss the issue with the federal government.

"These numbers should have been adjusted to reflect for the withdrawal of the U.S.," she said. "And they weren't."

She said chicken farmers are hurt by producers outside of Canada getting product into the country by exploiting loopholes, costing an estimated \$139 million a year to farmers.

The losses due to the loopholes combined with the 2.1 per cent increase under the new deal means the organization will be digging its heels in and won't make further concessions during the NAFTA negotiations, she said. ♦

https://thetyee.ca/National/2018/01/26/Trade-Talk-Secrecy-Ruffles-Feathers/?utm_source=weekly&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=290118

Continued from page 1:

The Nazi posters that went up on our building last week were both anti-Semitic and racist. As an Ashkenazi, white-skinned, middle class person, I have mostly felt protected from the impact of anti-Semitism. However, when Nazi posters were pasted on the outside of our building while we were inside attending an event (on the

anniversary of Kristallnacht), it was a kick in the stomach. I felt vulnerable as a Jew.

Now is a time for solidarity and unity: For solidarity with and between those who are the targets of Islamophobia, anti-Black and others forms of racism, homophobia, transphobia, *and* anti-Semitism, and unity within and between identities, organizations and cultures. Now is not the time for Jews who are critical of Israel to be thrown out of the Jewish fold, to be marginalized from Jewish communities because of what we think about Israel. My views on Israel and my support for Palestinian rights make me no less Jewish and no less vulnerable to anti-Semitism. In these volatile and scary times, I hope we can find the heart and the courage to stand up for one another and to resist distortions of what anti-Semitism is and looks like. ♦

Rachel Epstein is Executive Director of the United Jewish People's Order. An edited version of this article appeared in news@nowtoronto.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.

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585 Cranbrooke Ave,
Toronto, ON, M6A 2X9
Phone: 416-789-5502
Fax: 416-789-5981

Email: ujpo@ujpo.org

Website: www.ujpo.org

This newsletter is available online at
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