

PERSPECTIVES

by Harvey Cohen

Rabin...a Different View

Most everything I've read, seen or heard in the media about Yitzhak Rabin since his assassination, indicates he was not a man easily given to laughter. He was serious about his purpose, about his goal and dream for peace. I don't know that I could add anything in the way of tribute to this hero that hasn't already been said, so I won't say anything. However, I do want to offer a different view of Rabin than the one you usually see, stern, resolute and yes, even defiant. I want to show you the "other" Rabin, the man who could laugh and bring laughter to others. The very notion that there could be peace in the Middle East brought smiles, no, smirks, to many faces and evoked laughter from others. If there is any justice to come in his death, it will be that he had the last laugh on all the peace process nay sayers.



(L-R) President Bill Clinton, Mrs. Yitzhak Rabin, Prime Minister Rabin, ILR Chairman Stanley Chesley and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher enjoy a light moment in Washington at a gathering of leaders of the United Jewish Appeal and UJA counterparts in other countries

I also want to share a poem written by T. Lee Keene of Charlotte and mailed within days of the assassination. It expresses a personal view I'm sure is shared by many others.

He stood above the others,
Always searching for a solution
To the problem at hand.
In his lifetime, he made a difference.
Kind when needed, and stern when required;
Vindication of his death will be the peace in Israel.
Another man may have bent under the
Heavy load...Yitzhak Rabin...now rests alone.

T. Lee Keene
11-5
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Federation Connection

Rich Osborne-President
Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte

The tragic assassination of Prime Minister Rabin shocked and saddened the world. Our community coalesced on the Monday following the assassination to spearhead a noon-time service for peace uptown at Marshall Park and a memorial service that evening at Temple Beth El. Over 600 people attended the memorial service, a tribute to the high regard in which the Prime Minister was held. It also demonstrated the determination of our community to stand solidly with Jews and gentiles everywhere who support peaceful settlement of diplomatic as well as political differences. I wish to thank Adam Bernstein, chair of the Community Relations Committee, Rabbi Bennett, Rabbi Ezring and Alan Feldman, as well as the staff, Cary Bernstein, Vicki Hopkins and Lou Wernick for coordinat-

ing and facilitating these memorial events.

The Board of Federation agreed to cosponsor with the Blumenthal Home a study of the feasibility of planning for elderly housing on Shalom Park. This study reflects the recommendations of a task force chaired by Evelyn Berger and Dr. David Citron. North Carolina is fortunate to have such a superb facility as the Blumenthal Home to serve the regional Jewish community. The Home regularly receives the highest accolades from regulatory authorities and never compromises its commitment to serve the Jewish community. The elderly continue to grow as a proportion of our population, and, at the same time, many of the state and federal programs which have assisted in caring for the elderly are threatened. It is critical that our community work with the Home to

find the best way of providing and improving services for this part of our population. After hearing the report of Evelyn and Dave, the Federation Board has the highest expectations of the new study.

Finally, we have launched the 1996 Annual Campaign. Having just completed the process to allocate the \$1.35 million raised in the 1995 Annual Campaign, I can assure you that our community could put to very good use, that and much more. Please give every consideration to the request of your solicitor. He or she is asking you on behalf of the community to help us respond to local, regional and international needs. How we respond to this call will determine how effectively we can contribute to the continuity of the Jewish people here, elsewhere in the Diaspora and in Israel. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Excerpts From Prime Minister Rabin's Last Speech

"Permit me to say that I am deeply moved. I wish to thank each and every one of you, who have come here today to take a stand against violence and for peace. This government, which I am privileged to head with my friend Shimon Peres, decided to give peace a chance...a peace that will solve most of Israel's problems.

"I was a military man for 27 years. I fought so long as there was no chance for peace. I believe that there is now a chance for peace...a great chance.

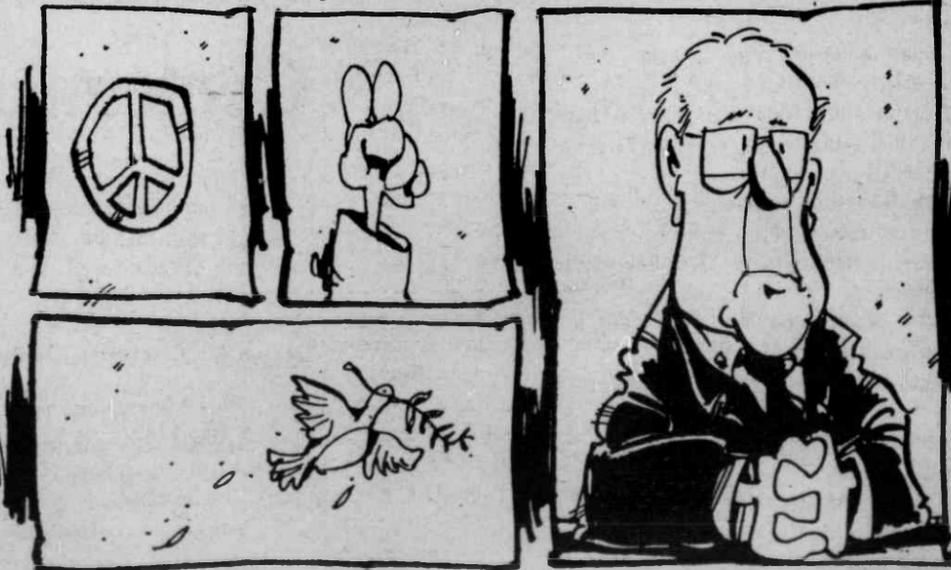
"I have always believed that the majority of the people want peace and are ready to take risks for peace. In coming here today, you

demonstrate, together with many others who did not come, that people truly desire peace and oppose violence. Violence erodes the basis of Israeli democracy. It must be condemned and isolated. This is not the way of the State of Israel. In a democracy there can be differences, but the final decision will be taken in democratic elections, as the 1922 elections which gave us the mandate to do what we are doing, and to continue on this course. This is a course which is fraught with difficulties and pain. For Israel, there is no path that is without pain. But the path of peace is preferable to the path of war. This rally must send a message to the Israeli people, to the

Jewish people around the world, to the many people in the Arab world, and indeed to the entire world, that the Israeli people want peace, support peace. For this I thank you."

Minutes later
Prime
Minister
Rabin was
assassinated!

SYMBOLS OF PEACE THAT SHALL LAST FOREVER...



YITZHAK RABIN 1922-1995

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