



Eulogy for the Late Prime Minister and Defense Yitzhak Rabin by Former Dir-Gen PM's Office Shimon Sheves

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Our Dear Yitzhak, it is almost impossible to speak of you in the past tense. I cannot accept that all of us -- family, friends, and all of your admirers -- are standing here beside your casket. I cannot accept the fact that an abominable, murderous hand, a hand full of poison and hate, put an end to your life's work, and cut short your energy, your strength, your faith. You were an exemplary warrior and military man, you were a statesman, and a leader from the shoulders up. You were the embodiment of the prickly "Sabra" fruit -- rough outside, yet soft, sensitive, and wonderful inside.

You were a man in whom the vision and values, wisdom and understanding and the incredible ability to formulate them into action, came together in a rare and wonderful manner. With the spirit of determination, and an extraordinary talent, with great faith, you and only you were justified in the path that stood before your eyes.

You were a wonderfully loved and adored husband, father, and grandfather. I was with you when you worried so much, if all that you hoped for so much, would pass in peace. We all knew, and felt the great love, the rare connection that you had with Leah, Dalia, Yuval, Noaleh, Yonatan, Mikey, Rachel and everyone. If only you know of the love, the admiration, and the nostalgia that they are expressing towards you. They are a wonderful family, and all of us -- the close friends and the relatives who admired you -- thought of you as greatest of them all, a strong lion who walked at the head of the camp, flying the flag, and with us following behind you.

For me, you were a friend, guide, leader, and great father. We began to work together almost 13 years ago, and since then, our paths have not parted. I had the honor of being by your side in the difficult and great moments.

I followed you with closed eyes, and now I refuse to open them, refuse to believe. I was with you in moments of darkness and mourning, at the death of soldiers and sons; as well as during times of great light and happiness in which we took part in the happiness of people, in developing the country and changing the face of the country and realizing the vision of peace. During all these times, you remained yourself, a man worth becoming associated with, not a man of etiquette, a forthright and determined man, feeling, real, and wise. Oh, how so wise. And because of all of this, I loved you. More than that, I believed in you without reservation. I always knew that if there was a person in whose hands it was possible to put our fate, our future, our well-being and that of our children, it was only you, only Yitzhak Rabin.

You were not dissuaded by intimidation, you were not taken aback by threats. You believed in the People of Israel, in Israelis, and in Israeliness. You believed that a majority of the nation wanted peace and supported the peace process and you. This day, for us, is a difficult day. A day that is difficult not to call by its name -- a day of shock, a day of calamity, a day of feeling like an orphan, with a heavy burden, and terribly empty.

I have lost a leader and a friend. I said that I have lost a country. I mean that Israel, after this abhorrent murder, will not be the same Israel as it was, in any way, like it was during the life of Yitzhak.

We have lost a very dear man. At this moment, the only thing that is left to us is to remember the nice moments of your life. You fell on a night filled with optimism. You fell on a night full of joy and solidarity. You fell on a night in which you brought the support of the nation for your path, the road of peace, to a peak. Security and peace, peace and security were the values most important to you. All of us must take to our hearts and to our minds what became your legacy on that awful night, and rush not towards violence but, towards peace! With this legacy, we will continue your path; the path that you paved for all of us. You are no longer, but your spirit, your faith, your devotion, the devotion to the path, remain with us.

Yitzhak, I leave you with a salute and a hug. I loved you so very much, a man, a great father, a friend and teacher like you -- I will no longer have. In the words of the poet, where are there any more men like this one. There will be peace, Mr. Prime Minister. Farewell, Mr. Prime Minister. Farewell, Yitzhak of us all.