

ENOUGH OF BLOOD AND TEARS

1993

Yitzhak Rabin

Divided by territorial disputes and religious and cultural differences, Israelis and Palestinians have battled each other for many years. However, in 1993, the relations between the two nations thawed. Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin and Palestinian leader Yassir Arafat met in Washington, D.C., to sign a declaration of their intent to end hostilities and begin a peace process. The following selection is the speech Rabin delivered on this occasion. Two years after this meeting, Rabin was assassinated by a Jewish extremist who believed that the prime minister had yielded too much to the Arabs.

THINK THROUGH HISTORY: Analyzing Motives

What is Rabin's primary motive for negotiating peace with the Arabs?

President of the United States, your excellencies, ladies and gentlemen: This signing of the Israeli-Palestinian declaration of principle here today—it's not so easy—neither for myself as a soldier in Israel's war nor for the people of Israel, nor to the Jewish people in the diaspora,¹ who are watching us now with great hope mixed with apprehension. It is certainly not easy for the families of the victims of the war's violence, terror, whose pain will never heal, for the many thousands who defended our lives in their own and have even sacrificed their lives for our own. For them this ceremony has come too late.

Today on the eve of an opportunity, opportunity for peace and perhaps end of violence and war, we remember each and every one of them with everlasting love. We have come from Jerusalem, the ancient and eternal capital of the Jewish people. We have come from an anguished and grieving land. We have come from a people, a home, a family that has not known a single year, not a single month, in which mothers have not wept for their sons. We have come to try and put an end to the hostilities so that our children, our children's children, will no longer experience the painful cost of war: violence and terror. We have come to secure their lives and to ease the soul and the painful memories of the past—to hope and pray for peace.

Let me say to you, the Palestinians, we are destined to live together on the same soil in the same land. We, the soldiers who have returned from battles stained with blood; we who have seen our relatives and friends killed before our eyes; we who have attended their funerals and cannot look in the eyes of their parents; we who have come from a land where parents bury their children; we who have

1. **diaspora:** the settlement of Jews outside of Palestine

fought against you, the Palestinians—we say to you today, in a loud and clear voice: enough blood and tears. Enough.

We have no desire for revenge. We harbor no hatred towards you. We, like you, are people—people who want to build a home. To plant a tree. To love—live side by side with you. In dignity. In empathy. As human beings. As free men. We are today giving peace a chance—and saying to you and saying again to you: enough. Let us pray that a day will come when we all will say farewell to the arms. We wish to open a new chapter in the sad book of our lives together—a chapter of mutual recognition, of good neighborliness, of mutual respect, of understanding. We hope to embark on a new era in the history of the Middle East. Today here in Washington at the White House, we will begin a new reckoning in the relations between peoples, between parents tired of war, between children who will not know war.

President of the United States, ladies and gentlemen, our inner strength, our high moral values, have been the right for thousands of years, from the book of the books. In one of which, we read: To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to love and a time to hate, a time of war and a time of peace. Ladies and gentlemen, the time for peace has come.

In two days the Jewish people will celebrate the beginning of a new year. I believe, I hope, I pray that the new year will bring a message of redemption for all peoples—a good year for you, for all of you; a good year for Israelis and Palestinians; a good year for all the peoples of the Middle East; a good year for our American friends who so want peace and are helping to achieve it.

For Presidents and members of previous Administrations, especially for you, President Clinton, and your staff, for all citizens of the world, may peace come for all citizens of the world, may peace come to all your homes. In the Jewish tradition it is customary to conclude our prayers with the word Amen. With your permission, men of peace, I shall conclude with the words taken from the prayer recited by Jews daily, and whoever of you who volunteer, I would ask the entire audience to join me in saying Amen. [Speaking in Hebrew]. May He who brings peace to His universe bring peace to us and to all Israel. Amen.

Source: “Enough of Blood and Tears,” by Yitzhak Rabin, in *Vital Speeches*, October 1, 1993, p. 740.

We, the soldiers who have returned from battles stained with blood; we who have seen our relatives and friends killed before our eyes; we who have attended their funerals and cannot look in the eyes of their parents; we who have come from a land where parents bury their children; we who have fought against you, the Palestinians -- we say to you today, in a loud and a clear voice: enough of blood and tears. Enough. We have no desire for revenge. We harbor no hatred towards you.