



*Israel Religious Action Center
of the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism*

News about IRAC

Rabbi David Forman, 65, Laid to Rest

By Raphael Ahren, *Haaretz*, May 7th, 2010

Rabbi David Forman was laid to rest yesterday at a kibbutz outside Jerusalem, accompanied by hundreds of mourners. Friends, colleagues and family members this week remembered the prominent Jerusalem-based Reform rabbi as much for his dedication as a family man as for being the political activist, communal leader, educator and writer that he was.

"The hardest thing for me right now is to imagine not having him around the Shabbat table or the holiday table and being really the center of discussion, his charm and the excitement and drama and humor and fun and learning," said Rabbi Michael Schwartz, Forman's son-in-law and director of development at Rabbis for Human Rights. Forman, who lived in Jerusalem's Kiryat Hayovel neighborhood, died Monday in Dallas while awaiting a liver transplant. He was 10 days short of being 66.

Pointing out that Forman - the founder of Rabbis for Human Rights and director of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations' Israel branch - was also a gifted dramatist who appeared in local plays, Rabbi Paul R. Feinberg, a close friend since the 1960s, said Forman "was perhaps one of the best known spokesmen for what's decent, what's right and just in human beings. But his family was number one - it might sound trite, but his family was a major resource for him, and he for them." Indeed, Forman said on his death bed that he wanted "most of all to be remembered for my role as a father and a husband - for being a family man," a close family member told Anglo File.

Forman was ordained as a Reform rabbi in 1972 at the Cincinnati campus of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion and immigrated to Israel the same year.

He founded Rabbis for Human Rights 26 years later and stayed involved in its day-to-day operations until his final days. While the

organization is mostly known for protesting the maltreatment of Palestinians, colleagues pointed out Forman always was adamant that his activism was about fighting human rights abuses wherever they occur and whomever they affect.

"Even though he wanted to hold Israel to the standards promised in the Declaration of Independence and really was a deep believer in democracy and human rights, he was not a person who only saw the negative in Israel," recalled Rabbi Yehiel Grenimann, who directs the organization's Department for the Occupied Territories. "He was an officer in the army, and often he would tell stories at meetings about facing dilemmas of how to deal with terrorists who were hiding behind civilians. He had a lot of sensitivity to the complex reality we live with here in Israel."

Forman is survived by his wife Judy, his four daughters Tamar, Liat, Shira and Orly, and seven grandchildren.

To read the original article in *Haaretz*, [click here](#)

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