

REMEMBERING RABBI INDICH

Nancy and I, came on the Cincinnati scene late in Rabbi Indich's career and so our special moments carry a different perspective. How special was Rabbi Indich? I'd like to suggest that it was global and personal. How was it global? Having lived in other communities I can testify that Rabbi Indich represented a very special breed or generation of Orthodox Rabbis. In Rabbi Berel Wein's History of the Jews, he describes the most important Rabbis as those having lived in tumultuous times, when the Jewish community was at peril. Those periods represented the fulcrum in history. For Rabbi Indich and his colleagues, those events were the Holocaust, the birth and growth of Israel, and the associated challenges facing the Jewish community. Success required a particular sensitivity and compassion and empathy toward others, the personal grounding and expression of consistency, and being a role model for others. And from the stories you have heard and will hear, it is very clear that Rabbi Indich personified these remarkable qualities.

I have two stories to share. One can be viewed as light hearted and the other with deeper meaning. When my daughter Sarah was about a year old, 1986 and on, I would bring her with me to Sunday Shacharit. She was very well behaved. I think, the most important part of Sarah's Shacharit was when we would offer and drive Rabbi Indich home. Rabbi Indich would then offer Sarah to come into his home where Risa would offer a Sarah a cookie. One Sunday, Rabbi Indich received an offer from another individual and he inadvertently accepted. Well, when Sarah and I approached Rabbi Indich to take him home and he declined, Sarah started to cry and wail. Rabbi Indich immediately recognized the error and assured Sarah, that she could always take him home. She stopped and later received her cookie!

Usually it is through some memorable moment that we remember people. If we're lucky we can remember through our senses, i.e., the aroma of a particular food. I have a distinct visual memory that our family recalls every Chanukah. In 1988, I worked with a sculptor to create a Chanukiah. It would have the theme of freedom in which each light was represented by a Statue of Liberty. Missing was the shamash. I was at a loss. After sharing this idea with Rabbi Indich he was curious to see the unfinished product. So, I brought it to his home. He thought it was great and I discovered his love and apparent hobby for Chanukahs. He opened up his desk drawer and offered a Mogen David candle support. This was to become the shamash. Every Chanukah as we complete the mitzvah of lighting the candles, we have the privilege to reflect on the light that Rabbi Indich brought into our home.

Raphael and Nancy Warren