

- While he was assuming the highest office, **they** always critiqued him.
- They fabricated stories to make him look bad.
- They have hired TV anchorperson, journalists, and column writers to produce stories **to tarnish his image.**

He was solid like a rock.

- He did not budge; he did not yield. He knew the country needed him. He rolled up his sleeves, and he was working like a well-lubricated engine.
- He surrounded himself with the nation's smartest and most capable men and women.
- All are equipped with a do attitude and a genuine desire to turn things around.
- To improve quality of life, to provide superior service, and to enable Lebanon to rebuild itself after a 15-year civil war.

The man I am talking about is our founder late prime minister Rafiq Hariri.

- Here I want to talk about two distinguishing attributes of Prime minister Hariri.

1 Work Ethic.

- He was an earlier riser. His first meeting beings at 6:00 am.
- Between 6-9 am he followed his business affairs.
- Thereafter, he goes to the grand serail to follow Gov. affairs.
- People in his team waiting in line to report or to receive input on perfecting the tasks at hand.

- He had a solid vision and a good sense of direction. He sets high goals and will not yield, until task is done at the highest level of professionalism.
- **I still remember reading the press releases about who needs that big of an airport.** We are a nation of four million people. This airport serves up to 6 million people. This is an overspent over budgeted airport. Too big to handle, over build.
- Boom for the last 15 years the airport is no longer serving our needs, overcrowded with lots of delays.
- Same goes for his healthcare initiative, highways networks, building schools in cities and remote villages in towns throughout the country.

2 Love of Philanthropy:

- He liked to give.
- He received joy by giving.
- He did not give to look good
- To improve public opinion or to get voters.
- He gave it because he was a good soul.

I have heard hundreds of stories of his acts of kindness.

- I will share with you a firsthand story that I got to know few weeks ago.
- *You all know his residence in Qoriatiem.*
- Once there was a terrible flood in Bangladesh. And there was this Bengali lady whose family were in affected by the flood that destroyed towns, lively hoods and forced the evacuation of hundreds of people.

- The Bengali lady was working in Beirut to earn few dollars to send to her family. She heard about the generosity of Rafik Al Hariri and she was in need to help her family.
- Every day on her way to work she stops at the gate, sobbing and asking to see the prime minister, the security personnel chase her away.
- One day, the prime Minister was escorting one of his guests out and he saw the women crying and the guards talking to her he asked about the women.
- They told him for the last month every day this woman comes in crying, asking to see you and we ask her to leave.
- He said bring her in.

The women walked in told him her story and he gave her \$5000. In today's money it is a bit more then 10,000. *That is a lot of money.*

In conclusion he was a big man, a pride to the country.

- To his voters he was the whole thing.
- Unfortunately, the ill-wishers meant to do him harm.
- And they did harm him.
- However, we are all gathered to recall his deeds and to tell the whole world.
- That we love him, we are proud of being his followers and we will serve his legacy, and we will live up to his expectations.
- Thank you all for being here.

Now it is time to ride the bus and visit his mausoleum