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ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

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One couldn't have asked for a bigger stage than last week's funeral for Shimon Peres z"l, with all the strutting actors performing according to a pre-ordained script.

It was certainly the end of an era. The last of Israel's founding fathers and disciple of David Ben Gurion, Shimon Peres was a larger than life figure who played a pivotal role in the country's many momentous events since 1948. Without a doubt it was his consummate and often surreptitious skills which enabled the fledgling State to build a formidable defense force and associated industry. Ben Gurion had the foresight to realize that only by establishing a first class IDF and acquiring the most modern weapons could Israel survive in a region which was dedicated to its destruction. In Peres he found a young talented linguistically savvy assistant who shared his vision and moreover who was not afraid to take bold steps to achieve ultimate objectives.

Thus, when countries banned the export of desperately needed armaments to the Jewish State it was thanks to a combination of chutzpah and bold strategy that enabled Peres to persuade the French authorities to sell modern weaponry. Not just weapons as it turned out but also to build what was laughingly referred to as Israel's first "textile" factory in Dimona. This marked a decisive turning point because it successfully achieved what Israel's first Prime Minister had always intended, namely the basis for the development of its indigenous arms industry. Israeli innovation and genius were to prove extremely critical in the turbulent years ahead.

In those days, Shimon Peres realized that only a very strong Israel could hope to succeed against the forces ranged against it. This is why he was an early supporter of settling every part of the Jewish homeland. Just as the settlers in pre and mandated Palestine had played a pivotal role in determining Jewish sovereignty so the settlers in post 1948 and 1967 Israel were destined to fulfill a similar goal.

Without a doubt one of the greatest challenges undertaken by Peres was the tackling of runaway inflation in the early 1980's. This economic tsunami threatened to destroy everything he had painfully established and to irrevocably cripple the country. It was his painful medicine administered to an unwilling public that slayed the dragon of economic chaos once and for all and started to put the Israeli economy and currency on the road to financial health.

As Defense Minister, Shimon Peres was a driving force in the daring and dramatic rescue of Jewish hostages from Entebbe, Uganda. However he opposed the bombing of the Iraqi nuclear facility and was proud of the fact that he thwarted a similar plan in Iran.

These and no doubt other less publicized events plus involvement in domestic Labor and international Socialist politics ensured that he was always in the limelight. In the course of his political career and with an ambitious appetite for power it was inevitable that he would make enemies. It was no secret that Golda Meier loathed him and there were others who deeply resented his tendency to go behind backs and negotiate deals. Perhaps this is why he was never elected Prime Minister in any election and was unsuccessful in so many attempts.

His closest friends and colleagues have described him as extremely optimistic and almost a mystic visionary. He had no time for learning from the mistakes of history and had his visions firmly focused on what he thought he could see in the future. These traits give us a clue as to how and why he turned 180 degrees in later years. His visions unfortunately turned into unattainable mirages and for a majority of Israelis into horrible nightmares. The Oslo disaster which he sprung onto an unsuspecting Yitzhak Rabin and the country resurrected the arch terrorist Arafat and his gang of murderous terrorists from exile in Tunisia and brought them back to our very heartland. Supplied with weapons and ensconced in Gaza, Judea and Samaria this warped vision of his to create a new Middle East unleashed an avalanche of mayhem, murder and terror. Feeling vindicated by a hypocritical international community, embraced by progressives and a US Administration which was clueless about reality here and finally

rewarded by a Nobel Peace Prize, there was no reason for Peres to feel anything other than consummate satisfaction.

As his peace partner organized intifadas and chaos and ordinary Israelis became rapidly disillusioned, Peres insisted despite all evidence to the contrary that Arafat was the harbinger of peace and the messianic age was about to dawn. Even after Arafat's demise his successor, Abbas, was hailed as a worthy angel of brotherly love. The new Middle East morphed into an orgy of death, destruction and unmitigated misery while Abbas used every international forum as well as his domestic media to vilify, demonize and spread lies about Israel. None of this reality seemed to faze Shimon Peres and although he expressed disappointment at what was happening his latter day hallucinations refused to allow him to acknowledge the real reasons for this failure to attain the love of most of the Arab world.

International acclaim and honors were showered on him by an international community deliberately oblivious to the failures following in the wake of visions gone sour.

His beloved peace partner whose attendance at the funeral was hailed by the usual gullible suspects as a wondrous gesture did not take long to revert to form. Look at this (courtesy of PMW):

http://www.palwatch.org/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=18855

If more proof is needed of how blind misplaced optimism can distort one's vision look at this from the Gatestown Institute:

<https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/8743/palestinian-murderers-western-enablers>

Nobody can deny the undoubted impact Shimon Peres made on Israeli political life.

It is therefore a tragedy of Shakespearean proportions that his positive achievements should be overshadowed by over optimistic flights of fancy.

