

**PERES, A MAN OF SECURITY & PEACE, FATHERED ISRAEL'S
"DELIBERATELY AMBIGUOUS" NUCLEAR PROGRAM; "NEWS IN
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PERES, A MAN OF PEACE, MADE ISRAEL A MILITARY POWERHOUSE

Judah Ari Gross

[Times of Israel](#), Sept. 28, 2016

Before Shimon Peres became the man of peace extolled by world leaders for his dedication to coexistence, he was a man of defense and security, setting up some of Israel's most important military victories and strategic assets. To many, Peres is synonymous with the 1993 Oslo Peace Accords, for which he was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize, and his eponymous Center for Peace, which promotes dialogue and opportunities for both Israelis and Palestinians. Yet few people in Israel have contributed more to the country's military capabilities.

Following the War of Independence, Peres helped build the country's air force into the world-renowned juggernaut that it is today and allegedly gave Israel the

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**ability to manufacture nuclear weapons, which reportedly give the country second-
strike capabilities in the case of an attack. "Shimon Peres designed the character
and values of the Defense Ministry; he led the strengthening and build-up of the
IDF's power and its strategic capabilities," the Defense Ministry said in a
statement. "He developed security relationships with other nations in the world
and took a central role in the creation of the Israel defense industries," the
ministry said in its statement.**

**After a brief stint in the Haganah and the fledgling Israel Defense Force, Peres led
a Defense Ministry delegation to the United States in 1950 and soon after his
return was named deputy director-general of the ministry in 1952. He became
director-general a year later and in that capacity laid the groundwork for turning
Israel's immature, poorly supplied military into the technological powerhouse the
IDF has become.**

**In the early 1950s, Peres started a relationship with the French government that
allegedly resulted in the creation of Israel's nuclear arsenal and in the purchase of
the fighter jets and bombers to replace the IDF's antiquated World War II-era
planes, which would go on to be instrumental in Israel's victory in the 1967 Six Day
War. Entering the position at age 29, Peres remains the youngest director-general
of the Defense Ministry in Israel's history. But his young age and inexperience did
not stop him from setting up Israel's defense ties with France essentially
singlehandedly, according to Guy Ziv, an associate professor at American
University's School of International Service. "What makes this case particularly
compelling is not merely that one individual yielded disproportionate influence
over the relations between the two countries, but also that this individual was not a
senior policy-maker," Ziv wrote in a 2010 article in the Journal of Contemporary
History.**

**During the early 1950s, the Foreign Ministry and other high-level Israeli officials
were essentially banging their heads against the wall trying to convince the United
States to sell artillery, aircraft, guns and tanks to the young Jewish state. Peres,
who had tried desperately and failed to purchase weapons from the United States**

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in 1950, turned instead to France, the "friendliest country today," as he referred to it in a 1954 Defense Ministry meeting. The young Peres had to convince then-defense ministers Pinhas Lavon and David Ben-Gurion that the "French connection," and not the American, was the way to go, according to Ziv.

"It was natural that the people of post-war France, who had themselves tasted the bitterness of Nazi horror, should feel a kinship with the victims of Nazism who had suffered greater losses," Peres wrote in his book "David's Sling." Through Peres's relationship with the French, Israel purchased huge quantities of weapons, including artillery cannons, tanks and radar equipment. But most notably, Israel also acquired the French Dassault Mystère IV and Dassault Ouragan fighter jets in 1955, the Dassault Super Mystère B2 in 1958 and the Dassault Mirage IIIC, one of the most advanced aircrafts of its time, in 1962.

All of these aircrafts were used in the 1967 Six Day War, taking out the air forces of Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Jordan, which helped pave the way to an unexpected Israeli victory. But the star of the 1967 war was the Mirage, known in Israel as the Shahak, which both carried out bombing runs and engaged in aerial dogfights, shooting down the lion's share of enemy aircraft. The Mirage remained in use until 1986, and its design was used to create the Israeli Aerospace Industries' Nesher and Kfir fighter jets, the latter of which was in use until 1996.

But while those aircraft played hugely important roles in the military's victory in 1967, Peres's relationship with the French government also fundamentally changed Israel's security strategy and position, with the creation of Israel's Negev Nuclear Research Center in Dimona.

In late 1956, representatives from the United Kingdom, France and Israel, including Peres, met for three days in secret at a villa in Sèvres, France, to address Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser's nationalization of the Suez canal. At the meeting, it was decided that Israel would spark a conflict with Egypt

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**and the UK and France would send in forces ostensibly to break up the war-torn
fact to occupy the area and ensuring shipping through the naval passage. The
then-secret agreement became known as the Protocol of Sèvres. It launched on
October 29, 1956, when Israeli forces invaded the Sinai Peninsula. The operation
lasted nine days.**

**Israeli, British and French troops succeeded initially in taking over the area, but
considerable outcries against the campaign from the United States and the British
and French public forced a withdrawal and turned the secret plan into a public
embarrassment for the UK and France — though Israel escaped relatively
unscathed. Though it was not a formal part of the Protocol of Sèvres, during the
three-day conference planning the ill-fated war, the French agreed to help Israel
develop a nuclear reactor, according to a 1997 Foreign Affairs article by Avi
Shlaim, a British-Israeli historian.**

**"It was here that I finalized with these two leaders" — France's then-prime
minister Guy Mollet and then-defense minister Maurice Bourgès-Maunoury — "an
agreement for the building of a nuclear reactor at Dimona, in southern Israel,"
Peres wrote in his 1995 book "Battling for Peace." That nuclear reactor in Dimona,
along with a supply of uranium, allegedly went on to create Israel's atomic
weapons.**

**On Wednesday, following Peres's death, Israel's Atomic Energy Commission
praised the former president, prime minister and defense minister for his role in
its creation. "Peres provided a fundamental contribution to the creation of the
Negev Nuclear Research Center and to the creation of Israel's nuclear policies.
This was a significant element in securing the national resilience of the State of
Israel. Peres's legacy will lead the IAEC in its actions even in the future," the
commission said in a statement.**

Israel still maintains an official policy of so-called "nuclear ambiguity," neither

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**confirming or denying the possession of atomic weapons. However, in 1998, Peres/
told reporters in Jordan that Israel had "built a nuclear option, not in order to have
a Hiroshima but an Oslo." Israel's alleged nuclear capabilities, though
controversial, are seen as crucial to the country's survival by many security
analysts. "Israel needs its nuclear weapons. This bold statement is not even
remotely controversial," Purdue University professor Louis René Beres wrote in
2014. If deprived of its nuclear weapons, whether still-ambiguous or newly
disclosed, Israel would irremediably lose its residual capacity to deter major
enemy aggressions," he wrote...**

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THE "MIND OVER MIND" BATTLE IN THE NUCLEAR THEATER

Louis René Beres

[Israel Defense](#), Sept. 25, 2016

More than likely, the first post-Hiroshima/Nagasaki use of nuclear weapons will be undertaken by North Korea or Pakistan. Should this actually turn out to be the case, the cumulative consequences would impact not only the responsible aggressor state and its multiple victims, but also still-developing strategic nuclear policies in certain other countries. The most obvious and concerning case of such a prospective secondary impact would be Israel.

For now, Israel's nuclear strategy remains "deliberately ambiguous," or in the "basement." Whether well-founded or foolishly conceived, this intentional opacity has endured as national policy because Jerusalem has not yet had to worry about confronting any enemy nuclear forces. This potentially fragile posture would almost certainly need to change, however, if Iran were sometime perceived to have become a near-nuclear adversary.

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Significantly, while seldom discussed "out loud," Israel could also feel compelled to shift away from nuclear ambiguity once an actual nuclear attack had taken place elsewhere on earth. In other words, there would need to be no direct connection between such an attack and Israel for the Jewish State to acknowledge certain derivative obligations to alter or modify its own nuclear strategy.

To be sure, any such predictive analytic leap cannot readily be drawn from relevant historical examples. After all, such expectedly pertinent examples simply do not exist. Moreover, to be suitably scientific, any assessments of probability regarding an actual resort to nuclear weapons would have to be based upon the ascertainable frequency of past nuclear events. Fortunately, for human welfare, if not for the science of strategic prediction, there have been no nuclear wars.

What about Hiroshima and Nagasaki? Incontestably, the American atomic bombings of Japan in August 1945 were not proper examples of a nuclear war, but rather of a unique or one-time use of nuclear weapons designed to end an ongoing and worldwide conventional war. Further, there were no other nuclear weapons states in August 1945 (Washington was not even sure that its own Little Boy and Fat Man would work), so any corollary U.S. strategic calculations could bear no resemblance to what might actually confront Israel today.

For purposes of Israeli strategic thinking, Hiroshima and Nagasaki were utterly sui generis; hence, forever dissimilar to any present or future national security circumstances. Nonetheless, we needn't make any plausible or persuasive probability assessments about North Korea, Pakistan and Israel in order to reach the following conclusion: Once North Korea and/or Pakistan fires nuclear weapons against another state or states, a principal nuclear "taboo" will have been broken, and all existing nuclear powers - especially Israel - will then begin to take more seriously the actual operational use of their own nuclear weapons. The precise manner and extent to which Israel would be impacted in such circumstances would depend, among several more-or-less intersecting factors, on prevailing

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geopolitical alignments and cleavages, both regional and worldwide. For example, North Korea has already had tangible ties to both Syria and Iran, and all concerned parties could be forced to take into distinctly calculable account the presumed expectations of an already resurgent Cold War.

The "spillover" impact on Israel of any actual nuclear weapons use by North Korea or Pakistan would also depend upon the particular combatants involved, expected rationality or irrationality of these same combatants, yields and range of the nuclear weapons fired, and the prompt aggregate calculation of civilian and military harms actually suffered in the affected areas. If North Korea had fired its nuclear weapons against American targets, military or civilian, Israel could correctly anticipate an overwhelmingly destructive U.S. response. If, in another apt scenario, a government in Islamabad (possibly a post-coup Islamist regime) fired "only" its tactical or theater nuclear weapons, and "only" against exclusively military targets, the Indian response might then be substantially less overwhelming.

It also ought to be noted here, for further predictive clarification, that Pakistan recently shifted certain specific portions of its nuclear targeting doctrine to expressly lower yield, shorter range weapons, presumably to enhance the underlying credibility of its nuclear deterrence posture vis-à-vis India.

All of this would pose stunningly complex calculations for Israeli strategists. Indeed, these planners would have to account capably not only for singular nuclear weapons operations by North Korea or Pakistan, but also for any multiple interactions or synergies that might be involved. It is even conceivable, to offer still another meaningful example, that any North Korean resort to nuclear attack would be followed, more-or-less promptly, by a separate Pakistani use of nuclear weapons. This prospect could represent a chaotic or near-chaotic development, in which Israel would then be faced with a palpably unprecedented analytic challenge...

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WEEKLY QUOTES

"The Yom Kippur War showed our neighbors that they cannot defeat us with weapons...It paved the path to peace with Egypt and later with Jordan...Our hands will continue to reach out to peace to those of our neighbors who want peace...Until then, we will be prepared to defend ourselves with our own forces...Families have grown, have rejoiced at celebrations and marked festivals, but one pain remains engraved in our hearts, the agonizing pain of loss, the pain of longing, the longing that has not dulled from that Yom Kippur of the past until that of today...The loss has not subsided. Once again Yom Kippur comes and another time we gather on this mountain and try to remember" — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, at an official ceremony marking the anniversary of the Yom Kippur War. The event took place at the Mount Herzl military cemetery in Jerusalem, and commemorated 43 years since the beginning of the war. ([Times of Israel](#), Oct. 13, 2016)

"We started off, we had no ISIS, and now, seven and a half years later, they're in, they think, 32 countries. And she's going to get rid of them?...They are hoping and praying that Hillary Clinton becomes president of the United States, because they'll take over not only that part of the world, they'll take over this country, they'll take over this part of the world. Believe me."— Republican Presidential nominee Donald Trump. Trump offered a warning for voters considering backing Clinton: If she wins, he said, the terror group I.S. would take over the US. A day after proclaiming himself unshackled from GOP officials, Trump spent the majority of a campaign rally going full throttle against Clinton. Earlier this year, Trump asserted that Clinton and President Obama were the cofounders of I.S. — a claim from which he refused to back down and later clarified was intended as sarcasm. ([Yahoo](#), Oct. 12, 2016)

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"Obama's radically reoriented foreign policy is in ruins. His vision was to move away from a world where stability and "the success of liberty" (JFK, inaugural address) were anchored by American power and move toward a world ruled by universal norms, mutual obligation, international law and multilateral institutions. No more cowboy adventures, no more unilateralism, no more Guantanamo. We would ascend to the higher moral plane of diplomacy. Clean hands, clear conscience, "smart power." This blessed vision has just died a terrible death in Aleppo. Its unraveling was predicted and predictable, though it took fully two terms to unfold... "What is Aleppo?" famously asked Gary Johnson. Answer: the burial ground of the Obama fantasy of benign disengagement." — Charles Krauthammer. ([Washington Post](#), Oct. 6, 2016)

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SHORT TAKES

YOM KIPPUR SOLEMNITY MARRED BY VIOLENCE AND RIOTS (Jerusalem) — As Jews prayed on Yom Kippur, Arabs rioted. The alert status was high, as 3,500 policemen reinforced security in and around Jerusalem after a terror attack on Sunday. On Tuesday, Arabs attacked Israeli police with rocks and Molotov cocktails in Silwan, East Jerusalem. Palestinian sources reported one Arab man, Ali Atef Shuyukhi, was killed in the confrontation. Arabs also attacked Israeli Security forces in East Jerusalem and Issawiya, throwing Molotov cocktails and fireworks. ([Breaking Israel News](#), Oct. 13, 2016)

TWO MURDERED, SIX WOUNDED IN JERUSALEM TERROR ATTACK (Jerusalem) — A Palestinian who was due to begin a prison term in Israel next week went on a shooting spree on Sunday, killing a pedestrian and a police officer in Jerusalem before being shot dead by police. The assailant, who Hamas said was a member of its organization, was shot dead in an exchange of fire with police. Medical officials said six people were wounded in the attack, and that two of them, a woman and a

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**police officer, died in hospital. Police identified the assailant as a 36-year-old
Palestinian from East Jerusalem. A spokeswoman for the Israel Prisons Service said
the attacker had been ordered by a court to start a four-month jail sentence next
week after being convicted of assaulting a police officer. ([Breitbart](#), Oct. 9, 2016)**

**SHIN BET FOILS HAMAS SUICIDE BUS BOMBING IN JERUSALEM (Jerusalem) — An
East Jerusalem man was indicted Tuesday for planning to carry out a suicide
bombing on a bus in the capital, officials said. On September 9, the Shin Bet
security service arrested alleged Hamas operative Muhammad Fuaz Ibrahim Julani,
a resident of the Shuafat refugee camp, a few days before he planned to carry out
his attack. Over the past few months, Julani, 22, had been planning to carry out a
terror attack on behalf of Hamas, the Shin Bet said. ([Times of Israel](#), Oct. 11, 2016)**

**UNESCO PASSES RESOLUTION DENYING JEWISH TIES TO JERUSALEM HOLY SITES
(Paris) — The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
(UNESCO) passed a resolution denying Jewish connections to the Temple Mount
and Western Wall. 24 UNESCO member states voted in favor of the resolution, 26
abstained, and six countries voted against. The proposal, put forth by the
Palestinians, along with Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar and
Sudan, condemns Israel on several issues related to Jerusalem and its holy sites.
The resolution acknowledges that the city of Jerusalem is holy to Judaism, Islam,
and Christianity but says the Temple Mount holy site is sacred only to Muslims and
fails to mention its significance to Jews. ([I24](#), Oct. 13, 2016)**

**U.S. LAUNCHES AIRSTRIKES IN YEMEN IN RESPONSE TO SHIP ATTACK (Sana'a) —
The U.S. military launched cruise missile strikes on Thursday to knock out three
coastal radar sites in areas of Yemen controlled by Iran-aligned Houthi forces,
retaliating after failed missile attacks this week on a U.S. Navy destroyer. The
strikes, authorized by President Obama, represent Washington's first direct
military action against Houthi-controlled targets in Yemen. U.S. officials said U.S.
Navy destroyer USS Nitze launched the Tomahawk cruise missiles. The missile
attacks on the USS Mason — the latest of which took place on Wednesday —
appeared to be the Houthis' response to a suspected Saudi-led strike on mourners**

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gathered in Yemen's Houthi-held capital Sanaa. ([CBC](#), Oct. 13, 2016)-review-round/**

BOB DYLAN AWARDED NOBEL PRIZE FOR LITERATURE (Stockholm) — Bob Dylan was named the winner of the 2016 Nobel Prize in literature Thursday, in a stunning announcement that for the first time bestowed the prestigious award to someone primarily seen as a musician. The Swedish Academy cited the American musician for "having created new poetic expressions within the great American song tradition." Dylan, 75, had been mentioned in Nobel speculation for years, but few experts expected the academy to extend the prestigious award to a genre such as pop music. Robert Allen Zimmerman was born on May 24, 1941, to a Jewish family in small-town Minnesota. Both sets of his grandparents were immigrants from Eastern Europe. ([Times of Israel](#), Oct. 13, 2016)

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[A Yom Kippur Guide for the Perplexed, 2016: Yoram Ettinger, *Algemeiner*, Oct. 10, 2016](#)—1. Yom Kippur is a day of hope and optimism, in addition to a solemn day of soul-searching. The Day of Atonement provides a unique awareness of one's own character and track record, as well as the opportunity to upgrade relationships with relatives, friends, associates and the community at-large.

[A Peek Inside the IDF 8200's Combat Intelligence Unit: *Israel Defense*, Oct. 12, 2016](#) —They have been around for five years, operating without a name or insignia. They are the combat soldiers of the elite intelligence unit 8200. Although 8200 is better known for its glasses-wearing computer geniuses, this section of the unit helps to gather field intelligence for the elite combat units in the IDF - including Sayeret Matkal and Shayetet 13.

[Meet the IDF's 'Beduin Battalion': Seth J. Frantzman, *Jerusalem Post*, Oct. 13,](#)

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2016—The jeep stops on a chalk-like dusty road, at an embankment that overlooks a dry riverbed. In front of us, to the northwest and spanning the gully, are two rows of metal fences. To their left, on a small hillock, is a concrete watchtower, a "pillbox," as it's called, harking back to World War II British Army nomenclature. A U-shaped concrete wall protects its base so that men entering and leaving are not exposed to gunfire.

[Trump's Moment of Truth](#): Editorial, *Wall Street Journal*, Oct. 12, 2016 —Donald Trump has declared himself unshackled from the Republican Party and says he will now campaign as he's wanted to all along. This raises the question of whose never-before-seen campaign he's been running for 16 months, but so be it. The self-declared strategy has the virtue of putting the onus of victory or defeat squarely where it belongs: Mr. Trump and those who led him to the GOP nomination.