

Dayan fine cut 12:08.03

01:00:30

Commentary

Moshe Dayan was the ultimate Israeli general, in a country born in war which has rarely known peace.. In his day, he was the most famous Israeli and an international celebrity. A man who represented the glorious new face of a new and successful country, before experiencing the cruelest of falls.

01:01:19

Commentary:

As a general and as a politician, Dayan played a fundamental and controversial role in Israel's destiny. He established the practice of generals driving the political agenda.

01:02:11

Commentary:

In 1956, Moshe Dayan made one of the most important speeches of his life, at the funeral of a Jewish farmer who had been murdered by Arabs. Dayan declared that, having taken the Arabs land, Israelis must recognise that they would always be forced to fight the Arabs. It was to resonate down the years.

01:03:16

Commentary:

Dayan was a fighter even in his youth. In the 1920's his home village Nahalal, in what is now northern Israel, was a vital part of the Zionist agenda. The settling of the land aiming at the establishment of a Jewish homeland.

01:04:23

commentary:

In those days, Nahalal was in Palestine, a land in which Jews were starting to settle, but in which Arabs had lived for many generations.

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Commentary:

Dayan would never be just a farmer. Arabs, witnessing settlement of land they had inhabited for several hundred years, launched attacks. Dayan was mobilised to fight the Arabs, but he also engaged with his Arab neighbours and learn their language.

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Commentary:

When World War Two broke out, Dayan fought on behalf of the British in neighbouring Syria. There he lost his eye.

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Commentary:

Despite his injury, Dayan was a commando leader known for his reckless daring in Israel's war in 1948 against the Arabs, which followed the declaration of the State by Israel's first prime minister David Ben Gurion. 01:06:49

01:07:43

Commentary:

Israeli victory led to a massive exodus of Palestinian Arabs. More than six hundred thousand fled to neighboring Arab countries, Gaza and the West Bank of Jordan. They were never allowed to return. Hundreds of Palestinian Arab villages and several of their towns were destroyed by the Israeli army.

01:08:09

In the years following the war, Palestinian refugees criss-crossed the new border into what was now Israel, some to visit their old homes, others to steal. Some of the incursions were violent. Prime Minister Ben Gurion promoted Dayan rapidly to the summit of the military hierarchy. He wanted Dayan to shake up the army which he deemed incapable of defending the new state. 01:08:37

01:09:32

Commentary:

Dayan shared Ben Gurion's view that, having seized their land, the

Arabs would always remain an enemy. As their attacks continued, Ben Gurion used a policy of retaliation. Rather than use regular troops, Dayan oversaw a specially formed commando unit, 101, which mounted reprisal raids against Arab villages across the border in Jordan. [NB IN EGYPT ALSO? ALSO TARGETTED POLICE AND SOLDIERS?]

01:10:41

Commentary:

Although the overt aim of unit 101 was retaliation against Arab attacks, the real purpose was to keep the Palestinian Arab refugees out of Israel's new territory.

01:11:44

Commentary:

Dayan and Ben Gurion's military strategy was to goad neighbouring Egypt, the strongest Arab country, to an early war, to demonstrate to the Arabs the power of the Israeli army. In 1956, Israel went to war against Egypt in the Sinai as part of the Suez operation.

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Commentary:

Victory in the Sinai in 1956 made Dayan a military hero. He became the darling of the Israeli public, and was freed from mortal constraints.

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01:15:07

Commentary:

In what became a familiar pattern in Israeli politics, Dayan, a general, was parachuted into the government. He was

appointed minister of agriculture. Dayan was unable to weather bitter party infighting, and quit the government in 1965.

01:15:28

Uneasy with his long absence from military matters, he went to Vietnam to catch up on modern warfare.

01:15:49

In 1967, Nasser's Egypt, Jordan and Syria, threatened to attack Israel with Russian support. Faced with such a potential onslaught, the Israeli public feared annihilation. 01:16:03

01:16:10

The then prime minister Levy Eshkol had no military background. A coterie of the Israeli elite, led by Ben Gurion, were eager to carry out a first strike. They carried out a virtual palace coup, and Dayan went back into government as Minister of Defense.

01:17:25

Commentary:

Israel did attack first. A surprise Israeli air strike wiped out the Egyptian and Syrian air forces within hours. With the skies free, Israel inflicted a devastating defeat on the Arab armies. When Jordan ignored Israel's warning, and joined Egypt and Syria by shelling Jerusalem, the Israeli army concured Jerusalem's old city and Jordan's West Bank. 01:17:47

01:19:24 commentary

With victory came territory. By concuring the West Bank, Gaza and Golan Heights from her Arab enemies, in just 6 days Israel almost tripled its size. SYMBOLIC VALUE - BIBLICAL

01:21:56

Commentary:

*As Israelis celebrated victory, Palestinian Arabs started to endure the humiliation of military occupation. Israel was occupying the territory in which many of them had sought refuge in 1948. From 1967 to 1973, as minister of defence, Dayan insisted that he would be the one to oversee the lives of **more than a million** Arabs in Gaza and the West Bank. His*

first move was a practical and humanitarian act on the new border between the West Bank and Jordan.

01:25:08

Commentary:

In 1967, almost immediately after the occupation began, Dayan decided to allow thousands of Palestinians to come daily from the occupied territories to work in Israel.

01:31:48 commentary

Dayan routinely broke the law on antiquities while amassing his collection. He utilized military resources and contacts around the country. After his death, his second wife sold the ensemble to the state for what in today's money would be ten million dollars. But the Israeli public would forgive Dayan almost any sin provided he gave them security. 01:32:17

01:32:24

As the occupation dragged on, terror attacks by Palestinians threatened to break the illusion that all was well. Dayan was always there to diffuse public anger.

01:33:21

Commentary:

Dayan tried to keep the illusion of co-existence and the prosperity it brought to Israel, going. All the while he took strict measures against any Palestinians who resisted occupation.

01:34:41

Commentary:

Dayan always talked about co-existence, but deportations, curfews and the destruction of houses, became the ugly

bedrock of the occupation. Haider Abd El Shafi was deported twice during Dayan's reign in the territories.

01:38:18 commentary

But little good came from Israel's south. Israel held on to the Suez Canal in Sinai, seized from Egypt in 1967. Dayan suggested a limited withdrawal from the Canal, but dropped the idea immediately when it was opposed. He then repeatedly rejected Egyptian demands for the return of their land.

01:38:53 commentary

Syria joined Egypt in demanding the return of its territory in the Golan Heights. Dayan failed to understand the seriousness of the military threat Egypt and Syria posed.

01:40:15

Commentary:

On the 6th October 1973, Yom Kipur, Egypt and Syria launched a massive attack. Israel was caught completely by surprise. Egypt succeeded in crossing the Suez Canal and destroyed almost all of the Israeli bunkers, a huge psychological blow. The fighting in the north against Syria was equally tough. Amidst chaos on the battle field, Israel suffered thousands of casualties in the first few days. The myth of the invincibility of the Israeli army was shattered. 01:40:51

01:42:38

Commentary:

Fortunately, Israel wasn't obliged to press the nuclear button. Following the initial panic, Israel recovered its balance and regained control of the Suez canal, even gaining territory in the Sinai and Golan heights. But Dayan's image as a military commander was irretrievably damaged.

01:43:02

Israel witnessed the humiliating sight of its soldiers taken prisoners of war in Arab hands. At home there were seemingly endless funerals. 01:43:17

01:44:38

Commentary:

The Israeli public, shocked and angry at the Yom Kippur disaster, demanded answers. A government commission blamed the military but cleared the government and Dayan of responsibility.

01:46:01

Commentary:

An incensed public forced the government to resign, for the first time in Israel's history. After 25 years of Labor party rule, the right wing Likud came to power in 1977. Dayan had already gone into political exile.

01:47:20 commentary

After 4 years sitting at home, Dayan was offered the chance to join the right wing prime minister, Menachem Begin, who wanted generals in his cabinet.

01:48:11

DATE CAPTION:

19th November 1977

Commentary:

In November 1977, following a round of diplomacy by Dayan, president Sadat of Egypt made a dramatic and bold overture for peace. Breaking away from the Arab coalition, he unilaterally came to talk to Israel. Israelis were shocked and delighted.

01:50:12

Commentary:

Israel's finally secured peace with Egypt one year after Sadaat's visit. But there was only one problem, the Palestinian issue was sidelined. The only reference to them was a letter from Sadat and Begin to Carter promising to start negotiations on autonomy for the West Bank and Gaza. When prime minister Begin refused to deal with the Palestinians, Dayan resigned. Dayan's admirers view his resignation in 1980? as evidence of his foresight regarding the Palestinian issue. But is this really the case?

01:51:31

commentary:

Out of government, Dayan didn't give up trying to understand the Arab perspective although by now he was powerless to influence policy. In 1980, ill with cancer, he asked to meet a Palestinian commander languishing in an Israeli jail who had led a PLO attack on Jewish settlers in Hebron, killing six and wounding twenty.

COMMENTARY

Dayan died on 16th October 1981.