

served as a serious deterrent. Until this very day, our enemies are deterred by them. And all of this strength is in the merit of Shimon Peres. Because he was a socialist, he had connections with his socialist comrades in France, and little-by-little, both officially and unofficially, he facilitated our acquisition of nuclear weapons. Peres z"l did all of this modestly and humbly. We are therefore obligated to express immense gratitude to our former President.

One can certainly take issue with his policies and other conducts, which I will not detail. Such criticism is legitimate, and has its place. But it is forbidden to confuse the essential with matters of secondary importance. We therefore express our gratitude to President Peres.

"Who is the man who desires life, who loves days to see goodness? Guard your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceitfully" (Tehillim 34:13-14). I do not know if the former President was particular about every Halachah in the book "Chafetz Chaim", but it is clear to me that he respected every person and guarded his tongue.

We owe this man a great deal, and we bless him: May his soul be bound up with the bonds of the living.



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