

President Reagan, Reactions to Fahd Plan, October 28 and November 10, 1981

*Q.* Do you think this will be an inducement to get the Saudis into the Middle East peace process now?

*The President.* Yes, I do. I think that, as a matter of fact, the Saudis have shown by their own introduction of a peace proposal that they are willing to discuss peace in the Middle East.

*Q.* With Egypt and Israel?

*The President.* Yes, they submitted a plan. We couldn't agree with all the points, nor could the Israelis, but it was the first time that they had recognized Israel as a nation, and it's a beginning point for negotiations.

*Saudi Eight-Point Peace Plan*

*Q.* Mr. President, I wonder if there's any portion of the Saudi eight-point peace plan that could be incorporated in the American peace initiative or that could be added on to the Camp David accords?

*The President.* Well, one in particular. I know that there's also some dispute about what I'm going to say between the parties concerned, but I believe—and I have stated previously that I believe—that it's implicit in the offering of that plan, recognition of Israel's right to exist as a nation. And this has been one of the sticking points so far, with the Arab world refusing to make that acknowledgement. This was why I have referred to it as a hopeful sign that here was an offer of a plan, whether you agreed with it or not, but indicated the willingness to negotiate, which does imply.

The other point in the plan is that one of the eight points calls for all of the states of the region living together in peace, and I think we all endorse that.

*Q.* Any other parts of it beside those two?

*The President.* Well, let me answer it this way. I think that the most realistic approach is the one that we are taking, which is, the attempt to bring peace in the Middle East must be based on the Camp David accords and 242 Resolution of the United Nations.