

Prime Minister Begin, Reaction to Fahd plan, November 2, 1981

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[Prime Minister Menahem Begin Knesset address at the winter session opening -- live]

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Saudi Arabia also presented as a counterpart to the Camp David accords, which it does not recognize -- without the AWACS and with them, it still does not recognize them -- eight clauses of its own, calling them together with others who are mistaken, or misled, a peace plan. To comprehend that it is nothing but the old Arab plan to try to eliminate the state of Israel -- albeit in stages -- it would be advisable to present before the Knesset, our public and world public, that document as it was written. Firstly, [it demands] Israeli withdrawal from all Arab territories conquered in 1968, including Arab Jerusalem. Secondly, removal of settlements set up by Israel in the territories conquered in 1967. Thirdly, guaranteeing freedom of religious practice to all members of all faiths in the holy sites. Fourthly, emphasizing the rights of the Palestinians and granting compensation to all those who will not wish to return. Fifthly, putting the West Bank and the Gaza region [Ezra], for the duration of an interim period, under UN supervision, for a period not to run longer than a few months. Sixthly, the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, whose capital is Jerusalem. Seven, supporting the rights of the countries of the region to live in peace. Eight, providing guarantees for the implementation of the above points by the United Nations or some members states.

There is another, typical clause, stating the following: The implementation of the arrangement necessitates the early establishment of three conditions, which the Saudis call realistic and reasonable conditions: First, putting an end to unlimited U.S. support for Israel; putting an end to Israel's arrogance; and the recognition of the fact that it is impossible to solve the Middle East conflict without finding a solution to the Palestinian problem.

Now, Mr Speaker, ladies and gentlemen, members of the Knesset: Let us apply the rules of logic to the main articles in the Saudi annihilation plan. First, an Israeli withdrawal to the 4 June 1967 borders. If that plan had been realized, we would have again been at a distance of 8 miles from the coast. The Knesset building itself would also have been within the enemy's firing range. Thus we lived for 19 years, and our fate was incessant bloodshed: Thousands, thousands were wounded or killed. Someone may have forgotten these Jewish victims, but we have not, nor will we. However, there is a difference between the periods. Then the terrorists were not in possession of the long-range arms they now have. Also, in the almost 15 years since the 6-day War, the situation in Eretz Yisra'el has changed. Today the terrorists have missiles with a range of 21.6 km and hundreds of new, Soviet-made, 130-mm cannons of excellent quality whose range is 27-km.

There is no need for a rich imagination to know what our fate would have been had we deserted the Judean and Samarian hills and mountains, and had all those long-range arms been positioned atop them.

Let us pass on from article 1 to article 6, because they are intertwined. Let me read it out again: Setting up an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. What I said with regard to the pullback to the lines of 4 June 1967 naturally applies to article 6 as well. No peace would have come out of it, only unceasing bloodshed. Because this is what the Palestinians have been promising in their charter and in all their conferences since the charter was accepted. It has been reflected in all their decisions.

As for Jerusalem, I will say but one sentence: Nothing will help our enemies and those who help them, not even billions of petrodollars will help them. Jerusalem is one, the eternal capital of Israel which will never again be partitioned, and is under Israeli sovereignty in its entirety for generations on end. The vast majority of the Knesset -- irrespective of factional affiliation -- supports this position.

As for article two: Jewish settlement in Eretz Yisara'el is not only our inalienable right, but it is also an inseparable part of our national security. Any demand to stop it or remove it has been, and will be, rejected.

Mr Speaker: The phrasing of article 7 is typical. There are some, not only in Europe but also in America, who argue that in this clause Saudi Arabia has provided a recognition of Israel's right to live in peace. But if this is so, why is Israel not mentioned in this article? We know the reason: There are some countries that have not yet recognized the very existence of the State of Israel, and call us the Zionist entity. They have, therefore, what is termed mental reservations. So that "the countries of the region" actually means everyone but the Zionist entity.

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So look at this, all those who can read, and know that you are playing with fire. But supposing the Saudis did also have Israel in mind even though to date they remain completely silent regarding this interpretation. It is possible to eliminate in stages even a country that is recognized, and this is the real content of the eight clauses, including the one regarding the establishment of a Palestinian state, which will at once become a Soviet base. What did they decide at the Damascus conference -- strengthening the strategic alliance with the socialist countries and primarily with the Soviet Union. Anyone with a bit of sense these days understands the real meaning of these words. To put it simply: It is slavery to Moscow and serfdom.

Yet I must mention that there is an addendum to the eight Saudi clauses, which reads as follows: An end should be put to Israel's arrogance. Mr Speaker, a desert country with petrodollars -- in which there exists the darkness of the Middle Ages, including mutilation and chopping off of hands and heads, with corruption that reaches up to the skies -- is talking about arrogance while trying to dictate to us, the age-old Jewish people, what its borders should be and simultaneously tries to deprive us of our capital. There is nothing more to say.

Regarding the Saudi annihilation plan, called the peace plan, we have heard some statements that worry us not only from Europe, but also from the United States. Therefore, we announce today with all simplicity -- and I am sure I can again sound these remarks with the approval of the vast majority of the Knesset -- regardless of faction or political views -- that these eight clauses cannot serve as any sort of basis for any sort of discussion. They are rejected, from the first clause down to the eighth, inclusive. There is no element in the world with which we will be prepared to hold a dialogue on a plan for the extermination of Israel. The Camp David accords are the only ones that are binding on us, and we have fulfilled them, and will continue to fulfill them. Besides them there is nothing else.

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