

INTERVIEW WITH MICHA HARISH

BT: ... wanted to continue about the meeting in ..., between Peres and Sadat in Salzburg - and I just want to see if the tape goes - and how you went with Kreisky the elevators up of the castle. Please Micha.

MH: So, he was introducing to me, me to all kinds of Egyptians who was the family, I think. The daughter of Sadat was there with him. And then he took me to the window, and he said, „This is the big victory of history.“ He said, „Here we are.“ That's why I thought it was Hitler's castle but if it was not, it was where the Nazis were ..., it is something about, „Here is a place where the Nazis were.“ „The government of here, the president of Egypt and the head of the opposition and maybe the future prime minister of Israel and the Jewish prime minister of Austria, all having a meeting!“

BT: You think he considered it that way?

MH: Yes. That's how he said it, and he was very emotional.

BT: He said „the Jewish chancellor of Austria“?

MH: „The Jewish chancellor of Austria.“ And apropos the Hitler and the Nazis that was his contrast, which meant also that in Austria there is a Jewish prime minister.

BT: Kanzler.

MH: Chancellor, yes. That ..., he was always in that context. But it had a meaning for him.

BT: Do you think for him being a Jewish Kanzler in Austria, a country where Hitler was born and brought up, was that also a victory of history?

MH: I think so. I think so.

BT: You think he conceived it that way?

MH: I think so. I think that, after I learned, my impression was that his Jewish heritage was much more important to him than he was ready to admit. It was coming up only in very special occasions, but in the context it was coming up. It meant that it was something that he was dealing with himself.

BT: Now in that time - which means Begin knew, of course, already about Kreisky ...?

MH: Yes.

BT: Do you remember how the reaction ..., I mean, why was afterwards Dayan so much against the meeting, a new meeting with Peres and Sadat?

MH: Because, because ...

BT: Was it jealousy? Or what? And when was that?

MH: Again we will have to reconstruct the exact dates. But the success, the meeting between Shimon Peres and Sadat ...

BT: Was very successful.

MH: ... was regarding ... very successful in the whole Israeli public opinion, the Israeli press. And as a fact, because of the fact that Begin gave his blessing there was almost no, also no criticism. And Moshe Dayan - again I ..., here I have to rely on my intuition - was foreign minister.

BT: He was foreign minister still?

MH: He was foreign minister, who left the labour party, went over to Begin saying that he is doing it only for one thing: that he should lead the peace process.

BT: And you know that he had a relationship with Kreisky and Karl Kahane due to his meetings with [Tuhami]? Yes.

MH: Yes. And here there was a crisis in the meetings. And suddenly it's not him ...

BT: But Peres.

MH: ... but Peres. I think he had a problem. When we had the second meeting in Vienna initiated by Bruno Kreisky, when Willy Brandt came, where we created the paper which is the 'Willy Brandt-Bruno Kreisky paper', but it was really a 'Sadat-Shimon Peres paper'.

BT: About peace in the Middle East?

MH: About peace in the Middle East. And apparently Dayan felt that this might become an element, which it became, because no doubt that the elements were there having opened the process.

BT: Did you talk with Kreisky about it?

MH: About the answer position?

BT: Yes.

MH: No.

BT: Now that was the honeymoon, I suppose, between Peres and Kreisky?

MH: No doubt. And between Israel and Kreisky.

BT: Yes. Also in that time - that was also the time, (if I) remember right, when very shortly afterwards he had invited Arafat for the first time to visit Vienna as a statesman and a little later his connections with Qaddafi. Now this was ...? How was this received by you and the labour party and Peres who had just been on a honeymoon actually with Kreisky in Vienna?

MH: Very badly, very badly. I think this is where the crisis started. Because ...

BT: With the Arafat visit?

MH: With the Arafat visit.

BT: You were not, I mean, you were, but you were prepared that that thing would happen sooner or later?

MH: No, no. And this was one of the claims we had against him. We did not know about it.

BT: Micha, how is that possible?! I remember me being here. I remember you preparing in the party a terrible exhibition against the bloodthirsty Palestinians, who are only terrorists, and that you would show it also in Austria, also in villages, and I am calling Kreisky afterwards and telling him, „Listen, our comrades in Tel Aviv are preparing a bloodthirsty, terrible exhibition about the Palestinians,“ and then you couldn't show it, at least not in Austria, I remember. Which means you knew how he was thinking about the Palestinians!

MH: Now let's separate two things: there was a trend already after the Six-Day War towards the Palestinians in the European social democratic movement.

BT: You knew that he had met Sartawi already.

MH: I met Sartawi through him. I met Sartawi in Vienna.

BT: Yes, yes. But ...

MH: Sartawi was regarded as somebody who stood up for relations with Israel. And ...

BT: But still, in that time he still had the blessing of Arafat.

MH: That is what Kreisky told us. Yet we felt that he has to hide, because ...

BT: No, no. Let us go one step after the other.

MH says at the same time: Particularly in Vienna ... There was a ...

BT: I still want to know how was the party reacting then after that cold shower after the honeymoon between Peres and Kreisky and ...?

MH: But again, I have to give you here the explanation, because you had on the one hand a trend which we knew it was going on in Europe, the social democratic movement towards the Palestinians. And we had our dispute with that, but we tried to live with it in certain kind of adjustments so that the Europeans have their position, but in certain rules of the game that we accepted, where you keep the relations. In a way the Middle East study group was an answer to that. We said in the framework of the Middle East study group it's all right, not in the Socialist International.

BT: Yes. But you opposed vehemently any participation of Sartawi in the framework of the SI in this year.

MH: Exactly because it was the PLO. We said, „No recognition of the PLO, no official recognition.“ As a study group you can study it. But you don't accept that. The invitation of Arafat, officially, took us by complete surprise. And we expected the minimum to be warned that this is going to happen. There was no warning, nothing by the friends, the closest friends of Bruno Kreisky did not get any warning.

BT: Well, Brandt was there.

MH: No. no.

BT: Ah, you mean, you mean in Israel?

MH: Nobody in Israel. We got it ...

BT: Which means even the Mossad did not know about it, you think?

MH: I don't know about the Mossad.

BT: But you did not get any warning?

MH: We didn't get ..., we learned about it suddenly. And this was from our point of view an attitude, (he corrects himself:) an act which lacked the kind of relationship that we felt was ...

BT interrupts: You felt betrayed?

MH: We felt betrayed. We were not prepared in the Israeli public opinion. We were now already in a stage which ..., since '77 we were building up, seventy..., no earlier, since '74, but certainly after '77, after the meetings in Salzburg and so on, we were building up that Kreisky is somebody who is a friend ...

BT interrupts: Whom we can trust?!

MH: ... with whom we have difference of opinion, but through whom we work with the Arabs. And here he does something which for the labour party is a disaster in the public opinion!

BT: Now when that happened, did you call him and ask for an explanation? Or did Peres ask you to go to him to Vienna and ask why he did it? Or how was ..., after you read in the news about that meeting and I suppose you heard about it only in the news or was also [Mata Halbert] writing the day before?

MH: No, no it was in the news.

BT: It was a ...

MH: It was an official announcement.

BT: Now, what was the first reaction?

MH: Why frankly, ... I know we gave out a very harsh statement against it, because we had to answer to the Israeli public opinion, and we came out very strongly against it. What we did then to create a dialogue I don't remember.

BT: Was Peres so furious that he actually wanted to cut the dialogue?

MH: This was ... Can you remember the date? Can you remember the date here?

BT: When Arafat was in Vienna? (A clattering noise is followed by a short question by MH, which is unintelligible.) Yes, just a moment. Now we had exactly one year later after the honeymoon, after the peak of the honeymoon between Kreisky and Peres the surprise visit of Arafat, invitation not visit, invitation of Arafat in Vienna. Was this visit such a shock that Peres wanted to stop all relationships with Kreisky or what was the decision taken here in the labour party after the first shock? And what did the people think about Kreisky?

MH: The reaction was a harsh statement. I can't remember now exactly what the operational things were, not the decision to cut the relations down. That was not the Peres style. Except the statement I am not sure exactly what was ...

BT: The impact?

MH: ... the impact.

BT: But, of course, you opposed it and ...

MH: Yes, because speaking about ..., but because speaking about the year in which the peace agreement was signed with Egypt, '79, I think that was much more dominant than the ...

BT: Yes, but I ..., but I remember it was ..., press-wise, it was a disaster here and ...

MH: Yes. And the question is for how long was it? It created a very cool relationship which never, never came ...

BT: They never recuperated?

MH: First of all, I was not anymore that active (at) that time so I can't really give you ... Here I think Israel Gat became the one who became at that time much more in contact with Bruno Kreisky during this phase.

BT: Why did you stop being the director of the international relations?

MH: No, I was chairman. I was chairman, but I at that time in '79 ...

BT: Because I remember that still you had meetings also later on with Kreisky.

MH: Yes. No, I still kept on, but I don't think that it was not ... I don't remember any concrete thing which was that close at that time. We did not stop the relationship with him and we were still talking about ...

BT: But you were around Peres and you heard, of course, because what is anyway ..., what is interesting for us is to know how did Shimon Peres react. I mean was he ...? Did he feel really so much stepped into the back by Kreisky? But as a politician he knew that such things could happen?!

MH: Shimon Peres later on was practical about it. Generally speaking, Shimon was a very practical man. Okay, he had a bad item there, if he needed to work. But there were other things that were coming on later on. Shimon Peres, generally speaking, felt good in the Socialist International.

BT: Yes, but he had already ..., he had a lot of problems in that time there, because he led the party during that time more and more to the right. He was very much attacked very often there, also later on by Kreisky, especially after '82 when he voted for the invasion into Lebanon - the first 40 kilometres - and it went so far that ..., that ...

MH: '82, '82 I was not anymore in the international department.

BT: No, no, but you know about it. I mean it went so far that Kreisky even wanted to get, wanted to throw out the socialist ...

MH: Now, that will ... (?) total crisis already. That I remember, but I don't know the details. At that time I was already out of the international department. And ...

BT: Aha, but you were, of course, active in the labour party?

MH: Yes.

BT: Now, I would like to know and you became ...? When did you become chairman of the labour party, ah of the central committee?

MH: '99, ah '89.

BT: '89. So what was your function in that time, in the late seventies and beginning of the eighties?

MH: I was a member of the Knesset, and I was dealing more, mostly with the Knesset activities. So I was not in the international, the Socialist International I did not attend anymore, and I don't think I saw Kreisky after that.

BT: Which means, would you say your last meeting with Kreisky was actually this meeting in Salzburg?

MH: No, in Vienna. No, after Vienna I still saw him. I still saw him.

BT: Do you remember when you saw him the last time?

MH: Yes. I flied (corr: flew) with him to Stockholm. How was that?

BT: To a political meeting?

MH: Yes. I came to see him in Vienna, I had talks with him, and from there I flied (corr: flew) to Stockholm. I try to remember when was that.

BT: In the early ..., he was still chancellor?

MH: He was chancellor.

BT: So it must have been in the early eighties maybe. He was chancellor till '84, '83, I think, '84. They ...

MH: I think it must have been somewhere along '81, before I left the international department.

BT: Yes, before the Lebanon invasion?

MH: Before the Lebanon invasion, before I left the international department. I left immediately after the elections in '81.

BT: Aha. Now, Micha, I have one question. He ..., you met Sartawi?

MH: Yes.

BT: Through Kreisky?

MH: Yes.

BT: Did you ...? How was that meeting? I mean, how was this shiduch (Hebrew for marriage negotiations), this matchmaking?

MH: A very unpleasant one. Kreisky simply created the situation.

BT: And when? When was it?

MH: That was I think in ..., maybe during ... If I remember rightly, he was killed in Lisbon in ..., when I was already out. I did not have it in Lisbon. I was not there.

BT: Before he was killed? No, I mean you speak about the ...

MH: The date. I try to remember when was Lisbon? Eighty...?

BT: Sartawi died I think '83.

MH: '83. And I left the international department '81. This might have been during the Vienna meeting of ...

BT: Sadat and Peres in Vienna?

MH: Sadat and Peres and Willy Brandt meeting(s). There were a lot of events around there. And Kreisky simply created the situation, in which we were left alone in a room, a very short one, in which we spoke for about ten minutes.

BT: Who was alone in the room?

MH: At the beginning there was a group of people, and then suddenly Kreisky left with some people, and I was left with Sartawi alone, non planned.

BT: Yes. But the point was: you knew that this was Sartawi?

MH: Of course, I knew. I know him from ... (?), and he knew who I was.

BT: Aha. Due to the International, Socialist International?

MH: Due to Socialist International and due to Kreisky.

BT: Yes, but ...

MH: We spoke a lot about Sartawi in our meetings.

BT: Do you remember ...?

MH: He told me that he is hiding him, because they try to kill him after the killings of the London ambassador.

BT: Abu Nidal.

MH: Yes, that he is hiding him. We spoke about his attitudes, about Israel, and I know from Sartawi he spoke to Sartawi a lot about me.

BT: Now was, you were forbidden, officially to meet with Palestinian ..., with PLO people?

MH: Yes.

BT: So, but still you met him in the corridors of many Socialist International meetings? Peres knew about that? But you never had a talk with Sartawi before? I mean ...?

MH: No.

BT: Never? You even did not say „Shalom, shalom“, „Alaychama s-salaam“ (Hebrew and Arab greeting, respectively) or „Hello“?

MH: Yes. I said hello to everybody who was going around in the ...

BT: But there was never a talk?

MH: No, no.

BT: Now, when you were in Vienna in ..., during that second meeting with Peres and Sadat?

MH: That must have been '78.

BT: No, just now we speak about two meetings between Sadat and Peres in Austria?

MH: Yes, they have been in a few months difference.

BT: Aha. All right, now the second meeting ...

MH: '77 the Sadat came to Jerusalem. The talks broke down at the end of '77 I think some time. So we speak ..., I think both meetings took place in '78, if I remember (rightly), Salzburg and ...

BT: In July you had a meeting in Vienna.

MH: In Vienna. And Salzburg was a few months ...

BT: And before it was in Salzburg.

MH: End of '77 or beginning of '78.

BT apparently speaks to herself: Still find im Jänner (in January). (BT resumes the conversation:) So, I would like to know, what ... Suddenly you were sitting in Vienna on the Ballhausplatz with a group of people. You knew that Issam Sartawi was in that group of people, because you had known him?!

MH: Now, this meeting of the ... Yes, I knew that he was on the meeting. I have seen him around in many cases, but this is the only time that I was left alone with him. And then we both smiled (?) and started to talk.

BT: And was this talk of any relevance, political relevance?

MH: Not really, not really. It was more a personal. He more or less said (about) what he knew about me from Kreisky. And I told him what I know about him about (corr: from) Kreisky.

BT: But there were no ...? This was not the beginning of any unofficial talk of the labour party with the PLO?

MH: No. Definitely not.

BT: Now in that time the PLO was still a red flag for Peres and the labour party?!

MH: Yes.

BT: Do you remember if ..., why was Kreisky, who did quite a lot of good things for this state in retrospect(ive) - I mean especially almost 300,000 Jews from Russia went via Vienna with ... Already in '56 he started to be active in this field, when he was secretary of state in the foreign ministry. Later on he helped bring together Israelis with Arabs, like the meeting you just spoke about with Peres and Sadat. And later on he was involved in the exchange of prisoners in the Begin ..., when Begin asked him to help. And still this man was so terribly hated by the Israeli media and by most of the establishment in that period, also on the left side and maybe not left-left, but by the mainstream Mifleget Avoda. Why was it impossible for you to influence more and to explain more about Kreisky? Or were you, were you yourself not able anymore to explain Kreisky, when he went to Libya to visit Qaddafi, when Qaddafi came to Vienna, when he gave rather harsh interviews against the situation in Israel and Begin and Shamir being terrorists and the occupation and the army being a band of bandits, et cetera, et cetera? How ..., how did you react? I mean what sort of relationship was that?

MH: No. There is no doubt there was a interrelation - again I can't speak from that kind of personal involvement like I did during that time, because I did not meet him again. So my impression was all made from the statements. One I remember from Morocco (upon) which my reaction was that he was speaking like an anti-Semite. And there is a fact which one had to deal with, that even ... or non-Jewish friends in the socialist movement in Europe, including in Austria, but also in other places, when asking questions about Kreisky's activities during that time, about doing things which they did not do against Israel, he was outstanding in a way doing things which were unacceptable to the labour party. I am speaking now about the period after Arafat's visit to Vienna. All the rest of the ..., even when they tried to create contacts - I am not speaking about the anti-Israeli new left in certain parts, which were pro-Arab in a way that they denied the right of existence of Israel - but the leadership, generally speaking, even if they were critical, they were speaking in a way not to hurt the labour party, to take into consideration the rights. They created the dialogue with us. I mentioned the fact that he invited Arafat without informing us. That is one element of this emotional (for) which people, I said this about ..., even Willy Brandt criticised him a lot. I went to Willy Brandt - you know what? -

I think I went to Kreisky. Now I remember, now I remember, I was sent out to him to protest. There was decisioned (corr: decided) which even I think that I made it (corr: which I think even I made) that we take it out against him. I went to give the protest to Kreisky. And I went from Kreisky to Willy Brandt.

BT: Now tell me about your meeting with Kreisky after this.

MH: I had a blank. I had a blank. Maybe this was the time when I later on fled (corr: flew), because then the dialogue started.

BT: Tell me.

MH: I will have to look up some of the papers which are somewhere in Bet ... (?) about when I reported about that meeting. I wrote it down.

BT: Maybe later.

MH: Yes, I need to reconstruct, because it is very interesting that I have forgotten it.

BT: But I suppose that you asked that you went there and that you told him, „Bruno, how could you do that? How could you? Why didn't you tell us?“

MH: I don't, I don't remember the explanation, quite frankly. I remember that Willy Brandt told me here in the meeting with Arafat, he said, „I did not know about it. Ask ... About that you speak to Bruno.“ That I remember suddenly, and that is what I remember suddenly.

BT: What? That Willy Brandt came to Vienna and he didn't know that he would meet Arafat?

MH: He invited to a meeting which was prepared. Willy Brandt's visit was prepared to Vienna - something on the Socialist International, I think, or something like that, to which he invited Arafat. He created a fait accompli, even to Willy Brandt.

BT: This is what Willy Brandt told you?

MH: This is what Willy Brandt told me, and this is what apparently was the fact, which was very typical to the way Bruno Kreisky acted also in other questions, when he decided to do something, you know, to look at it objectively now.

BT: He played tricks?

MH: No, he created facts. When he thought that something has to be done, also in relations with (the) East(ern) Germany I think he did the same. He was among the first to create, when you are less emotional about it, look at it historically. Now that we sit down with Arafat, okay, so he invited Arafat, he is still a partner now, even in bad times.

BT: Do you have the feeling ...?

MH: Historically, historically, he might have been right, but if you ask in the context that it was done ... The invitation of Arafat, historically, has been put right. The statement in Morocco was something ... I don't remember exactly the statement. I remember my reaction. Apparently something was said about Israel that created that kind of emotion.

BT: Was it this famous interview with the Dutch newspaper [Truv] where he said, „Die Juden sind ein mieses Volk“ (the Jews are a base people)?

MH: I think so.

BT: That was quite a harsh interview.

MH: I think so. This was when I read that about the ...

BT: Would you say that there was a certain moment when Kreisky might have lost patience? Because he was a rather impatient person, it seems. And he wanted to create facts and force people to face his reality, his truth. Do you have the feeling that he became impatient with Peres and the Israeli, the Israeli resistance against the PLO?

MH: Apparently, apparently. And maybe he became really impatient generally because of long years in politics and so on. I think it was not only impatience he had.

BT: It's ...

MH: It was not a good time in his political life, in personal ...

BT: You mean from '78 on. Actually would you say that from the meeting with Arafat on, where he created facts for the whole international world? But that is exactly what he wanted, because his argument was, „You have to take people out of the shades, shadows of terrorism and to make them salonfähig (socially acceptable) so that they would become members of the world family.“ Now was this argument basically accepted by the Mifleget Avoda in these years? I mean Arafat, nevertheless, is a human being and all his terrorists were also human beings - like we had terrorists in Israel before the state was built, and they also became ...

MH: You mean these days?

BT: No, no. I speak basically then in the middle of the, in the late seventies. People ...

MH: Arafat was seen, Arafat was seen by the majority of the people still - and even the labour party - as a terrorist. And even though there were more and more people who said we will have to live with the Palestinians, the general image was that the leadership that we will live with, until the Rabin government came into power, will be another leadership that will emerge from the territories.

BT: But not with these arch-terrorists, yes.

MH starts to speak simultaneously, therefore, the first words are unintelligible: ... and so on, but not those who have been the terrorists against Israel. That was the basic concept. Like those who accepted the Palestinians are going to be their partners.

BT: Listen, maybe also a lot of Palestinians thought we might have to live with the young generation of Israelis, but not with those old terrorists like Begin and Allon and Rabin, Shamir, or whatever.

MH: Well, Barbara, we are talking at a time that maybe still the history will prove that those who thought that we will have to find a leadership which will come from the territories will prove right.

BT: Absolutely, absolutely.

MH: That Arafat finally is not going to be ...

BT: Absolutely.

MH: Maybe he was the key person to make the change.

BT: But he will not see the Holy Land?

MH: Yes.

BT: This is by the way something what I said to Raymonda Tawil many, many years ago, when ..., before I left my post here, that I said - of course, a very blasphemic (corr: blasphemous) sentence - I said, „Sometimes when I look at the whole story of Arafat, I have the feeling that he is like Moses. He tries everything to get the people out of exile, but he will not see the Promised Land.“ And ...

MH interrupts: I for a long time I had the feeling that ...

BT: ... he still sits in Gaza and not in Jerusalem.

MH: I had a long time the feeling that the people who were sixteen in the intifada and were involved in the intifada are going to be the ones that are going to be the real leaders of ...

BT: I see. Now ..., if ..., I would like to go back to your perception about Kreisky. Even when you were in the late seventies more involved with the Knesset, of course, you knew the man very well. You knew many comrades of the socialist movement in Europe. There were visits going on. Was in that time the idea of you, for example, „Austria is Kreisky“ or were there two different elements?

MH: The whole time there was Kreisky and there was the rest of the social democratic movement in Austria.

BT: Aha. Which means you very well separated the two?

MH: Yes.

BT: Which means Kreisky was not so dominant?!

MH: We ... In the relation with us there was a difference. It was Kreisky, some people around him, some became rather prominent, but at the majority they kept contact with the Israeli labour party and said he is not representing our views or decision on Israel.

BT: These were people from the party or people from the workers' union who said that?

MH: Both.

BT: Both?

MH: Both. The workers' union was much stronger, of course. Anton Benya was certainly the most ...

BT: Outspoken.

MH: ... outspoken about him. But members of the parliament and members of the socialist youth movement ...

BT: So for you and for your friends here, you would say that there was a difference? That Kreisky was not ..., that ... or let us say that Austria did not become Kreisky immediately when people thought about that?

MH: No, Austria and the Austrian socialist movement was definitely expressing, demonstrating more friendship to Israel.

BT: Than Kreisky?

MH: Even trying to correct ...

BT: Yes, the imbalance?

MH: ... to show (that) Kreisky from that point of view on the negative aspect, not on the Palestinian issue.

BT: Now, you said, you said before that this famous interview in (Truv) hit you so hard that you thought that it was actually anti-Semitic. Now Kreisky was called here a Jewish traitor, a self-hating Jew, a man who hates his mother and father - Begin called him that way - and many other rather unsympathetic remarks. What was in your opinion the reason that Kreisky, the chancellor of Austria, made such remarks against Israeli institutions, Israeli politicians and that the Israelis also did not hesitate on all strata of the public life to give back (corr: to give it back to him)? What was that? Did suddenly everyone forget that the whole world was watching? Or ...? What was that?

MH: Oh, you are asking questions about the whole structure of Jewish psychology. And I am not sure I know the answer to that, because it goes back into history.

BT: Is it really a Jewish, is it a Jewish problem?

MH: Yes. I think it is. I think it is.

BT: Can you try to explain, a little bit at least?

MH: No, I can't, I can't. I know it's a fact, but the reaction of ... It goes on different levels. But in history we had always remarked people of Jewish origin, how they behaved to their Jewish heritage if they got positions in the non-Jewish leadership. Disraeli as a prime minister of England was (of) Jewish background, then he became a Christian, he became christianised. It is something which is always noted in history.

BT: But Kissinger did not, was not baptised?

MH: Kissinger was not baptised, and they called him in demonstrations „Jew boy“.

BT: Here in Israel?

MH: Here in Israel, during the negotiations of '74. And we had now ..., and at that time it was called by some ..., just a few weeks ago ...

BT: Yes, by Gandhi.

MH: Gandhi called Martin Indyk a Jew boy.

BT: Yes, the ambassador.

MH: So, it's something. And Martin Indyk certainly or Kissinger never did anything against Israel. And Martin Indyk is certainly an observant of Jewish tradition.

BT: A practical Jew even.

MH: He is practising.

BT: Yes, a practising Jew.

MH: Practising. Friday night he is keeping with his family and so on. He is coming from a family which is ..., certainly is not ... But this is there, Jewish politics is bitter, it's extreme.

BT: What do you mean „Jewish politics“? What is Jewish ...?

MH: I mean the Zionist movement.

BT: Ah, you speak about Israeli politics?

MH: About Jewish politics. When I speak about the Zionist movement, I speak about the religious relationship in the Diaspora between ...

BT: Is it cruel?

A female voice says: It is tough.

MH: It is totally something else.

BT interrupts: Why do Jews ..., why are Jews so tough with each other? Because if you think about the meeting with Golda Meir and Kreisky in Vienna, it was a rather, I would say, almost uncivilised reaction Golda Meir had; especially because - as you know Austrian tradition and also Kreisky personally - of course, he had prepared for Golda everything. She just had rejected everything, and then Golda came out in her bitterness, „And he even did not ...“

MH: Give me a glass of water.

BT: „... give me a glass of water.“ Which is, which would be utter impoliteness by an Austrian to offer someone only a glass of water, because the water you get anyway with the coffee together, for example. Only in the Middle East is water so important that you ask only for a glass of water. Yes? So there was from the beginning, it seems, a very ..., a very tough relationship. Was it because he was not a Zionist or because ...? Because he never said that he was not Jewish. He never denied his Jewishness, being born a Jew.

MH: No, but he ... I think it was about Zionism, about anything to do with Israel, because Zionism at least in our concept is about Israel.

BT: Yes, but still you knew that he was very much for Israel. So why should he have been a Zionist? Kissinger also was not a Zionist, but an American.

MH: Because ... With Kreisky we did not have any problem when he was negotiating between us and Egypt. To be now philosophical, looking back at it and not at the time that we were involved in it, when he agreed with us, he was all right. You don't call a Jew in official position when he is with Israel a Jew boy. You call him a Jew boy when he is against Israel. It's not a very positive aspect of this development, but it takes place. And I tell you, I, who was very much admiring him and ... (?)

BT: What did you ...?

MH: I asked myself a question. About Arafat this was a political reaction. You don't do that to ..., in our cooperation and so on. That was not the big emotion. I remember the article as the thing which I don't understand.

BT: Which you did not understand, yes?

MH: This is where he ...

BT: You never met, you never asked him later on?

MH: I never saw him.

BT: And you did not write him and ask him, why did you say that and that?

MH: No.

BT: Did he ever tell you or mention that he felt ..., that he was hurt by the reaction of the Israeli establishment and the media how they reacted towards him?

MH: Not in direct words. But there is one thing which he was saying, „You say ..., how can they say that I deny my Jewishness. When I, when I was a candidate for chancellor, there was a campaign against me and my Jewishness. I think the candidate used the word `ein wahrer ...“

BT: Ein echter Österreicher (an authentic Austrian).

MH: „... `ein echter Österreicher`.“ He, that he told me again and again. And this must have been his reaction. Why, the people who tell about him this in Israel are not right, so I believe he was hurt about it. Because you don't speak again and again ...

BT: Do you think that he wanted to be accepted here in Israel? That he wanted the people to know here how he really felt and what is important for them? And that he became impatient by the fact that they did not understand that they were going into a disaster, if they would not recognise the PLO and talk with Arafat?

MH: This was his feeling, I have no doubt, that he thought that he is preventing a disaster for Israel. I told you about his explanation in those talks that we are going to lose the support of the Jews in the United States and their support is going to disappear and then the United States is not going to support us, and so on. And, therefore, we should ...

BT: It still might happen. Yes.

MH: Yes, but by today, today there are other forces coming into ... in my opinion, and this is not okay (corr: true) anymore. But at the moment the United States and the Jewish element in the United States in the world of the public is more important than it was in the seventies, when he told me that. He thought it was disappearing much faster. We are still speaking about terms of the Soviet Union and American ...

BT: Cold war.

MH:... cold war, and so on. At the moment we have relations with Eastern Europe, Soviet Union. Israel is much less isolated. From that point of view I think his analyses did not prove right. His analyses about the importance of Arafat and the PLO was right; but not, not the disaster side of the analyses. I think there are today forces which he did not foresee on the

fundamentalist Moslem threat, which are maybe the main force behind the peace process today. And that is why the ... (?) is going to survive, which he did not foresee. It is much stronger than those elements which is all in the seventies. But I think it was, he saw the danger of disaster for Israel and that this was driving him. And this was a statement that is why we should have understood how good he is for us. And this is where we were impatient with him.

BT: So actually the relationships between him and the Israeli labour party became since the Arafat meeting very sour, and after the Lebanon invasion, where Peres was voting for the first, I mean, the Avoda voted 40 kilometres okay into Lebanon, it became almost non-existent? Or do you remember were there afterwards ...?

MH: I have no knowledge of my own.

BT: You don't know. Was ..., were in that time later on any things discussed in central committee meetings? Was his name mentioned when he was involved in the prisoner exchange? Because you read, of course, also in the newspaper ...

MH: No, nothing, not in the party.

BT: Not in the party?

MH: Not in the party. Again here I think Israel Gat and Shimon Peres must know much more than I know. I am not aware of that.

BT: Yes. Yes. Which means, basically, you would say your last meeting was when you went to Vienna to tell him about the Arafat ... to put ...?

MH interrupts her: I think so. I think so, I will have to reconstruct that to see that, but I ...

BT: Yes, I would appreciate that.

MH: But I, but I suppose, I suppose that was the one, and maybe then after these talks I flied (corr: flew) with him to the ..., some kind of the meeting of the bureau or something like that in Stockholm. Maybe this was it. If I flied (corr: flew) with him, because on the whole way we talked, that I remember, it ..., I don't think it must have been such a crisis in the talk. Because still, that issue was still a political issue. It was a political crisis. It was not an emotional one which came later on.

BT: You mean the emotional remarks he made about the Jewish people, et cetera, et cetera, that this was much more damaging than the political? Yes, really?

MH: No doubt.

BT: Nevertheless, isn't it interesting that it seems that he was - with all what he did in the good and in the bad -, that still since he died, no one in Israel actually mentions, remembers or talks about him anymore? I mean there were (corr: was) for ten years hardly a day when there were not terrible stories against him, and since he is dead, no one even talks about it, that actually it

was he who started with the vision of living together with the Palestinians and trying to make peace. How do you explain that, that the younger generation who knew partly about Kreisky, like ..., people like Yossi Sarid and Yossi Beilin, and so forth, that he is ...? In German you have a word which you will understand: „Man schweigt ihn tot“ (meaning: totally ignore so that he seems dead). If you don't want to talk about, then you are, you are quiet about this person, sort of ..., like death, you, you ...

MH: Now here there is a completely different ..., it has nothing to do with Kreisky. It has to do with the base of events, of historical events in the Middle East and in Israel. Things are happening so intensively, so fast, things which are the word historical, are a techshuit (? Hebrew for ...?), in these terms, that I think that all the public and the people involved in the public life, in the leadership including the press have necessarily a very short memory about what happened ten years ago, fifteen years ago.

BT: Twenty years ago.

MH: Twenty years ago. I will give you an example, which is very interesting, because today this morning in the radio - and you will have to somehow (to) translate what I am going to tell you in one word -, because of the question of the national coalition the word „hatagila masliach“ (? Hebrew for ...?), the breakdown of the coalition in 1990, of the national coalition that forced Shimon Peres to form a new government, was mentioned. And about half an hour later a series of faxes arrived to the radio (upon) which [Shelich], no, no, it was [Dera Eli] said to [Hanna Chisal] , „I am getting faxes. Please explain what is „tagila masliach“ (? Hebrew for ...?).“

BT: People don't remember, they have a short memory.

MH: 1990, not '77, '78.

(Recording breaks off. End of tape)

(1st tape, reverse side:)

MH: ... a major crisis brought down the government, changed the system of government in Israel or part of that, and people did not even remember what it was, and the mobilisation of 400,000 people against the two major parties, 1990!

BT: But listen. Shimon Peres knows, of course, who Kreisky was and what Kreisky did. And now I understand that maybe he might have problems by saying ..., with the fact that Rabin was involved in ..., with Oslo and not only Kreisky fifteen or twenty years earlier. But still there are certain historical facts. And I wonder, is it, because it's said that the Jews have such a long memory that they even remain, (she corrects herself:) ah remember a dog in the time of King David roaring in the old city, which means they remember everything in their history, but when it comes to fellow Jews like Kreisky, who was not a Zionist, but who was a man who did a lot of good for the Jews, besides all the unpleasant things he might have said against Israel and its politics, but that there is absolutely nothing.

MH: Hanna, you mentioned it, it's a historical fact. And historical facts are going to be turned in history. The day by day life here is so intensive of historical developments ...

BT: Yes, but don't you think - I would like to come to the question -, don't you think that people want to forget him, because he was a pleasant, an unpleasant fellow to go with?

MH: I think, I only think people don't remember the seventies. They hardly remember the eighties. And I surprise you: I think people don't remember '91. You know what happened in '91? 36 missiles from Iraq came to Israel. I think people don't remember it today. They live the practice of history, Hebron today and ...

BT: Could ...?

MH: It's too intensive. Only when the area is going to calm down and there is going to be a settlement which is stable, ...

BT: When people will make historical works about Palestine, yes.

MH: ... then the people are going to look for the perspective of history, and then I think Kreisky will come up very much as part of that. But today ...

BT: Now I would like to ask, I would like to ask you: if Kreisky, let us say, would have been more patient with the Israelis - I speak about politics now - do you think he could have given more to the Israeli labour party than he did? That he could have helped more in making peace in the Middle East between the Israelis and the Arabs?

MH: If he ...

BT: Or did he ever propose any, any projects to you where he wanted to get involved in making it easier for Israel to get, to do ...?

MH: The answer is no to the last question. He did not propose anything from that point of view. I think if it was ..., if he would have been more patient, he would have been able to play a role to create a link between the labour party and ...

BT: A bridge?

MH: A bridge. I think he would have been able to play a role, like he did with Egypt. There he played it in a very patient way, in the right way and he created a bridge. And I suppose he would have been able to do that. And the fact is that the Norwegians did it much later. And the ...

BT: But wasn't also the time, historically speaking, the time ready or was Kreisky too early?

MH: No doubt, the time was also playing a role, but I think that there was a stage immediately after the agreement with Egypt that if he was able to bring the Palestinians for a change ... - and you should remember that the PLO took a stand with Arafat among the rest of the Arab world to boycott Sadat for the peace agreement with Israel. And, historically, there is one fact which one cannot deny: Israel is responding to openings in change of attitudes towards Israel by Arab leaders, no matter what their past is. When Oslo was made public, with all the past of Arafat in terror and so on, 75 percent of the Israelis were in favour of the Oslo agreement. Until the terror reactions started to come, but ...

BT: So mainly, mainly, you think the meeting with Arafat was mainly good for Arafat, which means that Arafat got the international stage, and then, historically speaking, also good for Israel because it changed Arafat. Or was it actually a meeting which was not really necessary?

MH: I don't agree with this. I think the process at one stage or the other would have happened. I don't think that this particular meeting was really a ...

BT: You don't think that it broke a taboo? That he did it because he wanted to break a taboo?

MH: In Europe, in Europe yes, but we were on a trend of opening PLO offices by different states even before that. That was a battle that we lost much earlier.

BT: So it was not, it was not ...

MH: If you ask me today, I think he with more patience ..., he missed an opportunity to create, to create a bridge more than he did, a breakthrough for the PLO, the PLO and a breakthrough earlier.

BT: Now, the relationship between Kreisky and Peres, which you witnessed for a few years, were the two men ..., did they have many things in common? Because Kreisky seemed to have liked him very much for quite a while.

MH: I think that they had a ...

BT: What did they have in common?

MH: First of all, they had a ...

BT: What was the charm of Peres?

MH: Both had a vision of the world and of the peace process, and so on. They had ..., from that point of view the talk was very much on common grounds including a possibility of Palestinian-Israeli ... In private talks it came up. Peres had no problem with that.

BT: Was there also ...?

MH: I went, I went with Shimon Peres. I wanted to tell you that I went. Why do I say that he missed an opportunity? Because I went with Shimon Peres to see Hassan, the King of Morocco very soon after the meeting in Vienna. And I have my notes about statements of the king at that time about the future of the PLO, that we are going to talk to the PLO, and so on. It was futile (? corr: futile), but in a way it was done. It was something that Shimon Peres listened, and then there was a dialogue about it. And the same with Shimon Peres and Kreisky, before he was brought to a fact that he has to stand against the Israeli public opinion. So when they were talking between themselves, they had a lot of a common vision about how things should be dealt with. And that is why I think there was a mistake, that Kreisky had such a relationship with Shimon Peres that he could have brought Shimon Peres to do certain things.

BT: Were they, were they ..., I mean both men liked to read books, both men liked to be well dressed. I mean there are a lot of, funnily enough, a lot of common things on the outside, but yet there is one very basic thing they did not have in common and that is a total different view of realising things. I mean Peres's excuse was always, „I cannot do that, because then I will, the Mifletet Avoda will lose the elections, and the public is not ready,“ while Kreisky was ready almost to rape the public for his point of views, which is a very basic difference of ...

MH: There is a much more basic difference. Kreisky was a winner.

BT: Kreisky was a winner? Yes. Yes.

MH: He won elections and he ...

BT: One after the other, yes.

MH: ... and he won the plebiscite about the ..., no, he lost the plebiscite in order to win the elections, about the nuclear ... (power plant). Kreisky was a political strategist, both and a statesman from that point of view. And Shimon Peres was a statesman, but there was a very big debate about ... (he voice trails off).

BT: Aha. His ...

MH: Kreisky was certainly in terms of political leadership more successful than Shimon Peres. That is a fact.

BT: Could Kreisky have been a politician in Israel?

MH: I believe yes.

BT: Yes?

MH: Yes.

BT: You think he would have been successful in Israel?

MH: Yes.

BT: Really? You think it is a pity that he was never a politician in Israel?

MH: Why that's guesswork. But I think yes, because I think what you need in Israel is what might seem, you need a strategic ability to work with the public opinion. And he had this ability to be very strategic(al), before he became emotional in some things, which was outside, but when he was working in politics ...

BT: With his negative public opinion, but ...?

MH: Yes. He was a strategist. And you need ..., in order to win in Israel you have to be a strategist or to have a luck like Bibi Netanyahu that his opponent is a complete failure.

BT: Yes, yes. Do you think that there will be ever a street in Israel called after him?

MH: Well, I don't know how to contest to this. I can't see it today, no.

BT: Who represented ...?

MH: There is not yet a street in Israel, which would be very strange for, on Willy Brandt's sake. And Willy Brandt, historically speaking, a German who took arms against the Nazi Germany, at least Golda Meir admired him, it was morally. She always said that a German who fought against the Nazis is morally much more than a Jew fighting against the Nazis.

BT: Which is an anti-Semitism, of course. Because why isn't a Jew equal to a goy?

MH: No. She said about every ...

BT: Because Kreisky, Kreisky was also fighting the Nazis and imprisoned by the Nazis.

MH: She said ... No, she said, she said it about the Jew, about the Jew, that was the ultimate, because the Nazis wanted to destroy the Jews. But she said that about the American or the French also or the Germans who fought against the Nazis. And morally in the context of Germany at that time and ...

BT: Yes, but I think what disturbed you all here so was that, of course, Brandt could go to Auschwitz and kneel down there. In Warsaw I think he knelt down. Kreisky was a Jew. He lost all, practically all his family in ..., an enormous amount of members in the Holocaust and he had to go to exile.

MH speaks simultaneously: But that was another point. Barbara, that is not the ...

BT: Which means was it really the point that he was a Jew that made the communication so difficult, so emotional?

MH: No, not in that context. When I spoke about Willy Brandt, Willy Brandt was seen by most of us in the German context of the thirties, when most of the Germans accepted in one way or the other the Nazism, even if they did not support it originally, and a very few who stood up. Among the very few who went and took up arms and uniform against Germany was Willy Brandt.

BT: Okay. Okay.

MH: That was unique. And in that context, if I say that he did not get a street yet in Israel, that is stranger.

BT: Yes. That is a depressing answer. Okay. Thank you.

MH: That is stranger.

BT: Maybe we speak about this feeling of betrayal. My question before was if you could not have moulded Kreisky a little bit more so that he would have become more easy to deal with. And you mentioned before that it would have been possible till the Arafat visit.

MH: I think there was a chemistry, that kind of moulding on both sides between the meeting in Salzburg or maybe even between the meeting in London with Golda Meir through the visit in Israel. It went all right between the two big events with Sadat, one in Salzburg and one in Vienna. I think it created a relationship which was a little bit intimate, it discussed quietly things in the settings which you were not ready to say in the open, a relationship of trust. And I think that is why the invitation of Arafat without early warning was a ..., created a feeling of betrayal. And it created a feeling that he let us down. He let us down, because we were opening to a situation in which we were exposed totally to the public opinion, among others being accused of our relationship with him and without him telling us, saying us, „Okay, I’m going to do that.“

BT: Would you have prepared yourself, if he would have said, Okay I’m doing that. I give a damn about how your reaction is, but I tell you.“ You think this would have really made a difference?

MH: I think so. I think so. It would have created a ...

BT: More trust?

MH: No, it would have created a dispute, but without the feeling of betrayal, of being surprised.

BT: And he reacted, of course, to criticism with a lot of aggression, I suppose?

MH: Oh, yes. And so did we.

BT: And he did not understand your aggression, when you came to Vienna and you told him, „Listen, what did you do against us?“ You did not have the feeling that he understood it?

MH: Again, I have to reconstruct. Very strangely, I don't remember the details of the discussion.

BT: Very interesting.

MH: It is very interesting. I remember all the details of the other discussions. I don't remember it. I have to look into the, to my notes of that time to have a ...

BT: You met also, you met also a few times Karl Kahane?

MH: Yes.

BT: Now Karl Kahane was friendly with Shimon Peres?!

MH: Yes.

BT: I suppose their relationship became, when Peres was defence minister, when the Kfir business started, or was it already earlier?

MH: I don't, I don't know.

BT: You don't know?

MH: I don't, I don't know the background.

BT: But was Karl Kahane in these years, especially till, to the Arafat meeting maybe, was he a sort of middleman between Peres and Kreisky, and you and Kreisky? Or was he helpful? Or was he only donating money, because he liked Shimon Peres?

MH: I don't know the intense of relation between Karl Kahane and Shimon Peres and how he acted between Kreisky and ...

BT: How was your relationship to him? And what was Karl's relationship basically to the Mifleget Avoda?

MH: I met Karl Kahane through Kreisky.

BT: Through?

MH: Through Kreisky, so therefore, my ...

BT: How? Why?

MH: When I was in discussions. I think even Kreisky introduced me to Karl Kahane. I did not know Karl Kahane before.

BT: Was there a reason why he introduced you? Because you ...?

MH: My guess is that he, Karl Kahane was one of the supporters of Kreisky in many ways, but it is a guess in a way. He asked me if I know Karl Kahane. I said no. And that's how he initiated the meeting. But I ...

BT: When was that, you remember? Vaguely?

MH: It must have been during that time of '77, '78, on the preparation of these conferences. And then I used to meet Karl Kahane when I came to Vienna, have long discussions ...

BT: Independently?

MH: Independently. But Kreisky never, he never played a role between me and Kreisky, because that Kreisky ...

BT: But Karl Kahane was known as a ..., as donating money to the labour party?!

MH: Yes.

BT: Did he give a lot?

MH: I don't know.

BT: You don't know?

MH: I don't know. I did not deal with that side of his ...

BT: But his ..., you know also that he stopped giving money to the labour party?

MH: Yes.

BT: When was that? After Lebanon?

MH: I think in the eighties somewhere. After ...

BT: After Lebanon?

MH: After Lebanon. I think after Lebanon. I think Karl Kahane was very close to Lowa Eliav. I think when Lowa Eliav became very much the man, also with Kreisky I think very important, in the ...

BT speaks simultaneously: Yes, yes, of course, of course.

MH: And then I think that Lowa left the party. And I think that already created some kind of ...

BT: Yes, but I remember Karl and Shimon Peres being very friendly with each other, when Karl thought that he would get a commission to build the Kfir in Wiener Neustadt. That was a project in the middle seventies for the Austrian army, which did not realise at the end. But basically you ..., I mean, Karl ..., do you think that Karl was influential somehow, politically, on Peres or not really?

MH: Not really.

BT: Not really? And their personal relationship also cooled off?

MH: I really don't know.

BT: You don't know?

MH: Okay, I think, Micha, we leave it, because ...

BT: I'm talking with Micha Harish from the Israeli labour party to finish our tape we made already. And this time he will talk about the very dramatic meeting he had with Bruno Kreisky after Kreisky and Brandt met Arafat and what happened then in the labour party in ..., in the very next few weeks after that. Micha, maybe you start. What happened when you heard about the meeting and how did you hear about the meeting?

MH: Well, the first information came from [David Mercure] who was working with me in the international department. And, although he was Danish by origin, one of his main tasks on my behalf in the international department was to keep a link to the SPD in Germany where he developed especially a very, a very close, very friendly, very intimate relationship with Herbert Wehner. And as a result of that he had a very strong contact inside the leadership of the SPD and in the international department for they knew that he is very close to Herbert Wehner, who was a very powerful man.

BT: Wehner?

MH: Herbert Wehner, yes. He was ..., at different times he was chancellor, he was secretary general, and then he became the..., actually his strongest position, later on he became the head of the Bundestag, a fraction of the SPD. And actually he got the report I think from [Hans Gerhard Ingels], half formal. He informed me on the day of the meeting that Willy Brandt is going to meet ...

BT: Arafat in Vienna.

MH: ... Arafat in Vienna. I think he reported to Shimon Peres, and he protested immediately at that time.

BT: Please talk to the micro.

MH: When I got the information, in consultation with Shimon Peres I immediately called Bruno Kreisky, with whom - according to what I told before - I had at that time a very direct contact, including his personal phone numbers at home and the ability to get hold of him any time and he could get hold of me any time, which he did quite often by the way. And, therefore, the surprise was very big that such an event is happening without any early knowledge.

BT: So while they were meeting in Vienna, you got hold of Bruno Kreisky?

MH: I think why we got hold of Bruno Kreisky after the meeting, because physically we got apparently the information when the meeting was taking ...

BT interrupts: ... was taking place.

MH: So I don't know ...

(The recording breaks off for a moment.)

BT: So? Continue please.

MH: I don't remember exactly now the timing of the talk, of the telephone talk. I only can recollect it, because it was reported in different responses that we made that I immediately with consultation with Shimon Peres protested, both, about the fact that the meeting was with Arafat, which was against anything we spoke before. We really agreed with Bruno Kreisky on the framework, on the context that he as chairman of the Middle East fact-finding ...

BT: Mission.

MH: ... mission committee can help with the PLO which ...

BT: In formal talks?

MH: In formal talks as part of the fact-finding mission, which he was reporting to us in the beginning from Golda Meir, which we saw as a legitimate activity of the Socialist International in terms of its activity in world politics, where they met non-democratic leaders and ...

BT: Non-socialist leaders?

MH: Non-socialist and ... in order to play a role, trying to encourage peace, and so on, and that was a legitimate side of feat. We made a distinction between something which was unacceptable to us, to accept the PLO that -according to what we spoke about, and this was agreed even by Bruno Kreisky, like most of the others - doesn't have [corr: fulfil] the criteria on which the Socialist International accepts leaders and organisations in its ideological framework. And that ...

BT: Now, there was even a Socialist International meeting - if I remember right, we discussed it before - where Bruno Kreisky - and you have it here in writing in the report -, where Bruno Kreisky agreed that the PLO has, as it is now, no place in the Socialist International as a ...

MH: ... and as long as it does not change its covenant. That was the Paris meeting a few months before the Vienna meeting with Arafat. And I think it was September '78. We are talking about July '79. And, but I think what created the big frustration was that there was a very systematic cooperation actually between the labour party in Israel and Bruno Kreisky on which the labour party was criticised allowing ...

BT: In Israel?

MH: ... in Israel allowing him to play that role of a statesman in the Middle East. Actually we gave him a position, because the fact of history is that when Israel puts a total veto on somebody he very fast became a member who was not important also to the Arab side. They were looking for people who had been able to have even an indirect dialogue with Israel. That is why the Americans became so important when de Gaulle became suddenly a one-sided person. So he got his legitimacy from the labour party after the Yom Kippur war in London by Golda Meir with chairing a Middle East fact-finding mission of the Socialist International with the agreement of the labour party in Israel. And then to have this kind of meeting, the meeting

itself in contrast to the formal policy, this was my argument, my first argument; the second without informing us, against all ...

BT: Rules of ...

MH: ... basic rules of ...

BT: Comrades in the S...

MH: ... comradeship in the Socialist International with a party (with) which you have until that moment a very good relationship. He played a very successful role and has in your prestige bringing together Shimon Peres with Sadat.

BT: In Vienna?

MH: That was in Vienna, in the Vienna meeting, twice. So that was my second argument, that turning of his, the damage to the labour party in Israel, which was in opposition and very much attacked at that time, being in the hands of the right which ..., and from that point of view in a way playing against what was needed in terms of the peace.

BT: And also ...?

MH interrupts her and continues: And statements that were even (?). Now in the first talk we did not know yet the details of these meetings - that came later. One of the worst was (in) that in the later meetings became the major issue is the fact that Arafat said, „You fought against the Nazis, so we fight against the Israelis.“ And to that comparison neither Willy Brandt nor Bruno Kreisky had anything to say.

BT: They did not revolt?

MH: They did not revolt. So that was the initial talk on the phone. And then the decision was taken by the ..., actually by Shimon Peres on my advice and that got the support of the labour party's bureau, because there was an uproar in Knesset and in the public opinion that I should go as a special envoy to protest both to ...

BT: Kreisky and Brandt.

MH: ... Kreisky and to Willy Brandt and to continue then with Shimon Peres together to the leaders' conference in Stockholm, where we decided to make it a major issue, to make it a major debate and issue. So I went ...

BT interrupts: Just let me ask you: wasn't that ..., wasn't the fear that by breaking this taboo, which Kreisky probably wanted, that from now on nothing would be anymore as it was before with the PLO, also internationally? That Kreisky by accepting Arafat as a head of state in a way together with Brandt in Vienna had totally undermined the Israeli point of view? Because from that moment on Arafat was on the international map.

MH: If you read my report of the Stockholm meeting, it has two parts, in the bureau; one reporting Stockholm, which from the point of view of the mission that we took on ourselves to block that from becoming a president which is approved by the leadership of the Socialist International, to be successful, and that I reported. At the same time I warned, „Listen! I report the success in Stockholm. I want to warn you. The process of the PLO strengthening in Europe did not start with the meeting of Arafat and Willy Brandt. It is going on, even if we blocked it in the Socialist International in Europe.“

BT: It would have continued?

MH: And there is a very interesting paragraph in my report there. And I say it is going on with the encouragement of the American state department, through the ambassadors, which encouraged the Europeans to do that, because maybe they don't have the proper opportunity. They do that through the Europeans, and whether it is not a presidential policy, it is a policy which is going on through the ...

BT: How did you know?

MH: I had a lot of talks with all kinds of people in the leadership of the social democratic movement, (it) was in '78 in government in many places in Europe.

BT: Why do I ask? Because Milton Wolf, a Jew, as you know, and today one of the most important UJA figures in America, flew once on Karl Kahane's private plane with Issam Sartawi from Paris to Vienna, and he lost his job afterwards. So was that ...? I don't know if that was before or after, I suppose it was after the meeting with Arafat, but ..., which means you heard from many comrades already that ...?

MH: From comrades, I heard it from journalists which were there, with whom I talked quite a lot when I was doing that trip.

BT: In Europe.

MH: There was a lot of interest in my meetings with Kreisky and with Willy Brandt and in Stockholm, which was an issue, (about) which wrote quite a lot of journalists. And my argument was - we were in opposition at that time - that the policies of the Israeli government ..., actually we instead of creating a Palestinian tenantry on the basis of the labour party policies, which is very interesting, we said, „We want to issue two things, no terror and the Jewish state majority there for the division, not to rule over a foreign country, but not the covenant, not terror,“ and so on. Instead of ..., we were against an independent Palestinian state. As a result of that we told that the Jordanian option is going to be the ...

BT: Solution.

MH: ... consideration, the solution. And I said - because of the government policies in that time -, what is happening is really that the PLO is getting ...

BT: The backing.

MH: ... the backing of whole of Europe, ...

BT: And also in America.

MH: ... the tacit encouragement of ..., not ... (?), the quiet, non-published ...

BT: Encouragement.

MH: ... encouragement of the state department, through its ambassadors and other people in Europe. This is my report.

BT: Could we go a little bit deeper into this report?

MH: No, as a nation, I ...

BT: I would like to have more ...

MH: I reported a success in Stockholm for a very simple reason.

BT: Could ...? Maybe before we ... Because there was a central committee meeting also before - I think - you left to meet Kreisky?

MH: No, apparently after I left, it's the report, because I was not present, apparently I had already left.

BT: But you have the paper here. Now what I remember or what I would like to know is were ..., was there also in this meeting a warning about certain things or ...? Because we have, we have, you mentioned before Yossi Sarid what he said and some other and also what Peres said, and so forth. Was there, was there already a fierce discussion in the labour party about the own stand vis-à-vis the PLO? Or was that only sort of the exclusive role of Yossi Sarid, who was then still a labour party member?

MH: Well, it ..., I must say the discussion about the Palestinian issue started in the labour party in the sixties, after the Six-Day War. And I had a dispute as the secretary, international secretary of the [Hamishratah tzira], of the youth, with Golda Meir with whom I started to work as head of the international department. In '69 I went with her to London to the Socialist International, where she said, „I am a Palestinian.“

BT: Aha, yes. That's ...

MH: „I have a Palestinian passport. There are no Palestinians.“ And I had an ongoing argument with her about the fact that there is a Palestinians and I was telling her, „You can't say we don't work with the PLO. You can't say there are no Palestinians. We have to leave it, that fact.“ So '69 already the debate, I was involved in it with Golda Meir as head of the ... (mercin?) department. And in the [Hamishratah tzira], in the youth, there was a decision back

in '69 - which I proposed - to accept the fact that we have to work with the Palestinians. So the question of the PLO ...

BT: Was raised already.

MH: ... was a second stage of the debate when basically the labour party accepted that there is a Palestinian entity.

BT: Yes, but before. Let us go back before. Was it mainly the old Yeshuv leaders or let us say the old Diaspora leaders who became the leaders of the state here, who rejected any idea that Palestinians will play any role or that they even exist? And was it more those who were young and maybe also born in Israel who saw it differently? Was it maybe a generation gap there in the understanding of things? Because it was always said also about Rabin because he was born in Israel. Now, I am not so sure if this ...

MH: And then he was certainly a latecomer to ... , a very late comer, but ...

BT: Clear, this we know. But has that something to do with it?

MH: But from the same generation his closest friend [Tuget Aron] ...

BT: ... was ...

MH: ... was one of the early ones.

BT: Yes.

MH: I don't think it's a generation question. No, because Abba Eban was one of the very early ones ...

BT: Who recognised that there is something.

MH: ... who recognised that there is something in there. No, no, I don't think so, and I suppose if Moshe Sharett would have been alive after '67 he would have been among the first calling to his fast to come on, on this issue. No, I don't think that you can find that kind, because among the youth for a long time there was also a big dispute about this.

BT: Yes. Now, let us go to your meetings. You went to Vienna the day after the meeting with Arafat?

MH: I will have to look ...

BT: all right.

MH: ... about the exact days, but around it.

BT: But more or less?

MH: More or less. It could have been ...

BT: Now, when ...

MH: If I have not been here at the meeting on the 12th ...

BT: When I look at the speech ...

MH: ... and on the 8th.

BT continues: ... Peres gave in the Knesset on the 9th of July, he says here that you were calling Kreisky

MH talks simultaneously: ... the ... of him, yes, but ...

BT continues: ... to give you, to give the protest of the labour party. Probably you also told him during that meeting that you are coming.

MH: Probably ..., yes, probably on the 9th I was already on the way or on the 8th, because I was not present at the bureau meeting. I can check that in details, I have the dates here.

BT: But very shortly afterwards you were there?

MH: But very shortly afterwards.

BT: How was this meeting?

MH: It was a surprisingly cool, very ..., it was a dense meeting, but a very cool systematic meeting. I came, I did not come here to shout, I really came saying to Arafat, not to Arafat, saying to Bruno Kreisky, „Listen, we have had this relationship, you know, something that from our point of view is unacceptable. Both from the content point of view. The fact that you did not inform us ...“ I came back to all these points. And Kreisky very carefully avoided the direct debate with these points.

BT: Did Kreisky let you talk?

MH: Yes, yes. He let me talk, but he avoided the questions what I said. We even fled (corr: flew) together after, we were sitting together in the ...

BT: Yes, we come to that.

MH: So we talked quite a lot.

BT: But first in Vienna.

MH: He let me talk. And instead of going into answering my arguments, he started to speak about the meeting and what he believed he achieved in the meeting in terms of moving Arafat away from ...

BT: Terror.

MH: ... positions, from terror and so on.

BT: Was he convinced about it? Or did he see it as a first step?

MH: Well, you know as well as me, it is not better than the ... (?). Kreisky was much more complex, and the combination of the intellectual and of the emotional, of the intuitive was very strong with him. He decided to do something. I am not sure he sat down and really calculated everything. He decided that he is going to do a move - one of the things which later on with Willy Brandt came out. Willy Brandt at least claimed - and I tend to believe it - that he did not know exactly into what he is getting. He ..., the invitation of Arafat was done to a visit which ... Willy Brandt did not come for the meeting with Arafat to Vienna. I found out what is the 77, it is the world North-West, ah ...

BT: North-South dialogue.

MH: ... North-South dialogue. He was German. He came for that to Vienna.

BT: And he was convinced during that meeting by Kreisky to participate at the meeting with Arafat?

MH: Yes, it ..., I am not quite clear according to what Willy Brandt told me whether he got to know it when he came to Vienna or whether the meeting was prepared and Kreisky told him, „Listen Arafat is going to be here.“ You know the way, the relation between the two goes back to a very long relationship and, therefore, there is a lot of the informal and of the kind of understatement.

BT: But did ...

MH: But Willy Brandt definitely about some of the things, this - I am saying here about some things he asked me not to report and I am not going to report it - is that now.

BT: Did Kreisky feel well in his skin, when you met him? After all what happened, I mean, when you think back ...

MH: In the meeting with me he, I think, he felt better than in Stockholm, because it was still an argument which he was trying, and I know he clearly understood that we are disturbed by that, but he came with arguments that we will understand later on that he did something that ...

BT: When you will understand history.

MH: When we will understand history. So it was still between him and me. And I definitely decided, when I came there, that I don't want to break the relationship with him.

BT: This was clear also from Shimon Peres in Tel Aviv?

MH: This was also clear, it was clear also in the debate which was done here. Because there was a debate whether the relation is important or not. And some of the people said, like Abba Eban ... Israel Gat was very strongly defending Bruno Kreisky, not in that particularly, there was no argument about the meeting,...

BT: But basically.

MH: ... but basically. We spoke about the accept to Eban and Dylan (?) and so on. And basically the decision was ...

BT: The Russian Jews.

MH: ... they did not accept it. Yes, the decision was that we don't break our relationship in the Socialist International. There was one point, which I made (it) very clear to Kreisky, when I came to him and Willy Brandt, if somehow the PLO is made an associate member of the Socialist International, the labour party is out. That is the situation, in which there is no doubt that the decision is going to be made that we cannot participate if he is there at that stage of history.

BT: Was Kreisky impressed by that?

MH: I think so, because later on one of the things which I am reporting is that he said, „This is not, there is not going to be an invitation.“

BT: Could you go more into the detail?

MH: Yes, I will go more in detail. But one of the points here (is) why was Stockholm more difficult to him ...

BT: The Socialist International meeting?

MH: Yes. One of the things I am reporting here is that it is a friendly organisation, we have a lot of friends, but with so many of these friends we have arguments and one of the main arguments is about the PLO. And I am describing the argument. And they say we should influence them by having a dialogue with them in order to change the covenant, to get away from terror. And if you don't do that, then how are we going to influence them? And our argument was that what is happening in Vienna was a proof that you are giving a legitimacy without them changing the covenant, without giving up terror, and you don't even argue with them publicly when they say this kind of things.

BT: When they accuse the Israelis or compare them with the Nazis?

MH: Compare them with the Nazis. So what do you do? You give the legitimacy, without changing their course. Then I am reporting one thing: he (?) said, „Even those who are in favour of having a dialogue with the PLO came out against the meeting in Vienna.“

BT: During the SI meeting?

MH: The majority - and I stress it; I say it is not a situation in which there was a small majority in favour of the meeting and a big minority with us against him; there was a big majority even of those who supported the dialogue who said, „You should not have done this meeting.“

BT: How did Kreisky react to this result? Because I am sure that he tried everything to convince everyone in a speech there that he was wise in doing so.

MH: Again, I think he was seeing the situation and avoided the direct question like he always did in this kind of situations. He said, „There is no intention to invite to the (Socialist) International and I did not invite Arafat.“ He is stressing that in Stockholm, he said it to me in Vienna, „I did not invite him in my capacity as a Socialist International, head of the Middle East study group. I invited him as chairman of the SPÖ.“ And I said a remark in my discussion to the bureau, „I don't know what he said to his party.“ (BT laughs.) And Willy Brandt said, and Willy Brandt said, „I did not meet him as chairman of the Socialist International. I met him as chairman of the 77.“ So when Stockholm came, Willy Brandt did not come there, he did not. He was not healthy. I went to see him in Strasbourg and I came to Stockholm afterwards. He did not come. He said, „I did not initiate (it), on that you should talk to Kreisky.“

BT: Easy way out! But why did he participate? He could have left the room when Arafat, for example, compared the Israelis with the Nazis; especially Willy Brandt.

MH: He could not explain it. He apologised. He said, „I am sorry that I hurt you. I did not change my policies. And I will prove it to you in the future in the Socialist International that - I am reporting, I am speaking now from the report - I am going that you will feel that I will change the course towards Israel.“ Even speaks - I have talked with him - Genscher at that time he is trying to push towards more policies and he says, „We, the Social Democrats, won't allow that debate on the controversial.“ So he is total ...

BT: Do you think that as a result of this meeting, where he felt uncomfortable with his Jewish friends in Israel, maybe also in other countries about ..., that this was one of the reasons why he, why he might become even, why he might have become even more outspoken, let us say, pro-Israeli on subjects where he should have been, he should have been maybe a little bit more critical?

MH: No, I don't think so, because there was an ongoing dialogue afterwards. We did not break, and you have the letters of Shimon Peres asking Bruno Kreisky to do something for the hotel, meeting the Soviet prime minister, and giving him compliments for what he did. That came after these meetings. We did not break the ties. We somehow controlled the crisis. I think ...

BT: Because here in Israel the uproar was, it was enormous, emotional. And whose decision was it actually not to break? I mean, was Peres very emotional about it? Or were there, was he the one who said „Better not to break it totally“? Or I mean ...?

MH: It was, the first discussion was between him and me on this issue and I was always against breaking. I have one memory which is very, very strong and was always something which was in the back of my mind when I was working internationally: the Soviet Union leaving the Security Council and allowing the United States in Korea to go with the UN, because they were not present. So I ..., with Golda Meir there were times when she was much tougher in this. Shimon Peres was more flexible. Golda Meir was going on brinkmanship in many cases on this kind of thing. I was fighting with her about not leaving ...

BT: Staying cool.

MH: ... staying cool, fighting for opposition, seeing it as an information, but never leaving.

BT: Yes, but not breaking.

MH: Never leaving - if the decisions are against us, if it is not against us -, seeing it, fighting, going on, having influence, trying to get authority. I was always against the ideas of leaving the UN or this kind of ...

BT: And was Peres a partner for that?

MH: Peres was a partner for that, Peres was a partner for that. And you see it in his positions. He is manipulating the bureau a little bit, this time in a good way, saying our positions, stressing our positions and saying we should explain it and we should ... And from that point of view I must say that our success in Stockholm was a very helpful, because we came back saying, „Okay, we had a relative success, I won the bureau.“

BT: Maybe we can go now into the details of your report, which is a real historical paper.

MH: Yes. Well, I start with saying that ...

BT: Who was present at this bureau meeting? Maybe we can, we can start here from the beginning, that would be interesting. (MH rustles his papers.) Yes, maybe you can just read the names!

MH: Abba Eban, [Josepha Mobi], then Shoshana

BT: [Abel, Almaslema].

MH: ... [Nava Aradi], [Gideon Ben-Israel], Histadrut, [Asher Ben-Natan], Michael Bar-Zohar, Chaim Bar-Lev, [Moshe Brahm], Motta Gur, Israel Galili, [Alila Notana], [Aron Are], [Lester Hervi], [David Hernig], Chaim Herzog, (Gad Yacobi), [Moshe Karnel], one of the former ministers, he eleked siruch chamesh (? Hebrew for ...?), at that time the Histadrut ...

BT: Chief.

MH: Oran Amir, Shimon Peres, [Israel Kasar], [David Kalderon], [Shaga Kanti] very important people, [Joshua Rabinovich] was later on minister of finance, [Daniel Rosolio], Chaim Ramon, Moshe Shachal.

BT: Chaim Ramon, already then! He must have been a boy!

MH: As head of the [Hamishratah tzira].

BT: Ah yes, youth movement.

MH: [Yosef Tgoa] who was our ambassador in ...

BT: America, no, or United Nations?

MH: [Lowa Meir], [Yusi Brahm], [Avraham Sider], Moshe Sharif, the leaders of the [litashvut] of the moshav and kibbutz movements, [Yosef Nago], [Yamid], ... (?) , Yaacov Zur, [Eliav Speiser], [Menachem Mariav], [Eliav Rami], [Aron Gurion], [Yitzhak Ben-Aron], [Sheba Kovera], Aron Becker, one of the former Histadrut, [Aron Ben-Geder], [Alfred Gold], [Siuda Weizmann], [Treni], [Shega Nitzel], [Yigal Heni], [Adia Murai], [Tamar Eshel], [Amon Sadar], [Menachem Cohen], Micha Harish, Yossi Sarid, Israel Pelek, Seev Katz.

BT: Interesting, yes. Seev Katz is the father of Yossi Katz?

MH: No. He was one of the leaders of the kibbutz move at the time of the ... (?) Agudat Yoshavim. He used to be secretary of Agudat.

BT interrupts him: Now, there were a lot of people from the workers' union here.

MH: Yes, there were ...

BT starts speaking simultaneously: And, of course, they had a very strong relationship with the Austrian workers' union. But ...

MH: Who was regarded as a pro-Israeli part of the SP.

BT: Yes, exactly. So this is, this is interesting to mention maybe again. Now ...

MH: It was due to a convenient time (?), I think, you know the ...

BT: Of course. Now, you come back from Stockholm and the meeting with Kreisky and Rabin before Stockholm.

MH: I remember in Stockholm I was with Shimon Peres.

BT: So maybe we can ...

MH: Kreisky and Willy Brandt, I was on my own. So I am starting my report saying the comrades: We ..., just because (in) the meeting in Stockholm we can sum up as a meeting in which we have achieved the aims that we have put to ourselves, after the events in Vienna two weeks ago, I want to start with a warning to ourselves - and I mean not only to the labour party, not especially for the labour party, to us as citizens of the state of Israel. The report which I am going to give you is about talks in Stockholm, but also from talks that I had in Strasbourg where I went to see Willy Brandt in the opening of the European Parliament, and meetings with the European Parliament from the social democratic, from the different social democratic parties, and a lot of meetings there during the ... (?). I must say that I came back with a very bad feeling about what is happening in Europe from the point of view of the state of Israel. I will say a few words before that, because we can't put all the blame of everything that is happening in Europe at the moment on the energy crisis.

BT: On what?

MH: On the energy crisis. I speak about '79.

BT: Yes, yes I remember.

MH: ... in Europe. The official part of the state of Israel, meaning the government, has a very important role in those developments, if in deeds and if in what is - how do you call mechdal (? Hebrew for ...?)? - what is not doing. And I am not quite sure that we are aware enough of these developments which are taking place, you know. What we did with the Syrians talk for? (corr: What for did we talk with the Syrians?) First of all, this first thing which we wanted to prevent operationally was a deterioration in the question of the PLO, where the immediate danger was - according to the news that we got from Vienna - that the next stage is the invitation of the PLO as observer to the Socialist International. At this stage there is no proposal in the Socialist International to invite the PLO ..."

BT: With an observer status?

MH: When I say, there is no proposal like this, then I mean, there is no proposal from Willy Brandt nor from Bruno Kreisky and not of any other person who attended Stockholm. This may explain that Bruno Kreisky invited us to the Socialist International. Second point: the leaders' conference which is an institution and non-institution; it is not part of the statutes of the Socialist International, it doesn't take any formal resolutions, but in the debate there was a general condemnation of terror, if it is (corr: whether it be) in Europe or in Israel, and there was no talk about the general idea of terror, but about the terror of the PLO. And in ..., this was done, this condemnation in context of the meeting in Vienna. This is part of the attack on both of them.

BT: On Kreisky and Brandt?

MH: Yes. The third point. There was a general condemnation, a general dissent from the Palestinian covenant. To my surprise, to many the covenant was a surprise, ...

BT: Unknown?

MH: ... was an unknown, (to) many of those who participated in the meeting in Stockholm. And my understanding is that the propaganda work of the PLO to create a fog about the Palestinian covenant is successful. And that if any, if not every few months one makes an effort on that they succeed in order to ...

BT: To fool everyone.

MH: ... to fool everyone. That. What was, what was left in dispute? And we should recognise that there is a dispute. And that we have a very serious difference of opinion in the Socialist International even with friends, even with very dedicated friends of the state of Israel. There is a ..., there is an argument by the majority of the participants of the Socialist International in this conference - and among them very good friends of Israel - that in order to achieve the aims with which they identify, condemnation of terror and change of the Palestinian covenant, one has to get to the situation that the Arab states and the Palestinians accept this position. And for that one has to talk to the PLO and to tell them that we cannot accept terror and the Palestinian covenant. Our counterargument - I reported - was that the danger is that what is coming out of all this friendship is that the PLO is getting its political recognition, it strengthens its political position in Europe and in other places, without the doves with the goodwill achieving any of the aims which they have set to themselves. And one of the examples to that was the Vienna meeting, where Arafat and the PLO got strengthened to their position without being forced to give any kind of public ...

BT interrupts: Statement.

MH: ... statement against terror or ...

BT: Annihilation of Israel.

MH: ... or changing the, the ...

BT: Covenant.

MH: ... covenant. And we said this very clearly that we have to decide about our position in Israel and we have to decide between private things which we are told by friends like Willy Brandt and Arafat, (he corrects himself:) and Kreisky, about that also with Arafat, all the public statements of the PLO. We are deciding our position about the PLO according to what we see from the public statements of the PLO. Here I may say one of my arguments was that when the change came with Sadat - and we recognised the change was when he was speaking in Arabic about peace in Israel at home, not in English, in Europe, in private. And we said we are having our intelligence services monitoring what they are saying to their own people, and this is what is really for us. And if you see the signs here that changes are coming, then we know that these changes are coming, because they are coming in Arabic. What is whispered in Vienna or in other places in English, it's not published at home. We cannot take that as change of position. This was the ...

BT: Which means what is really serious is what the Arabs say in Arabic to their own people?! Did the Europeans ...?

MH: And we saw the change in Egypt.

BT: Did the comrades in the Socialist International, for example, accept that point of view? How did they react to that? Because in reality that would give them a feeling ... or would give them a ... or should have given them a feeling of being a rather unimportant organisation, which is even used by many parts maybe for their own tools.

MH: Well, there was this argument about that among themselves. Here again I am telling you, I take only the report which I was giving, that even those who thought that one has to speak to the Palestinians one way or another came out against the meeting in Vienna.

BT: But not, of course, Kreisky?

MH: Not Kreisky. They especially were very critical about (the) openness of the meeting, especially because of the fact that we have agreed to the informal. This was the informal kind of meetings which was done under the framework of the Middle East study group. We agreed to it. So they came out, and they said this is wrong, because it gave a political status to the PLO without getting any response, early response. The second thing was in the way the whole thing was managed. I say here that what I said already, that there was a situation that it was not a majority which identified with the meeting in Vienna and the minority which identified with us, but even those whose position is that one needs a dialogue with the PLO came out against the Vienna meeting and the majority was against it. And what I say is that if somebody wanted to have a green light to continue this kind of meetings with the support - at least the tacit support - of the leadership he didn't get it. And then I come back to that I want to warn ourselves from one point. I say after we took out all our zaam (Hebrew for fury) - it's more the fury - ...

BT: Yes, fury, absolutely, yes.

MH: ... all our fury on Bruno Kreisky, because he is Jewish and because (of) what he is doing, I have the feeling that we believe that we have solved the problem. But in Europe there is a development beyond the socialist parties which is going into the deepest of our friends among the Socialists, but also among the Conservatives and the Social Democrats, and that is the need to speak to the PLO and the solution in the way of a Palestinian state, independent Palestinian state in Judaea, Samaria and the Negadna (Negev?). It is a dominant process in Europe, which is spreading with American ... nuravut (? Hebrew?), with American ...

BT: Quiet support.

MH: Not quiet support, it's involvement, American involvement. It is hard to say whether this is an official position of the state department or it's part of the state department or even parts of the presidency. But there is no doubt that the meeting in Vienna has been in preparation for about a year. And it came also in part of the American massive presence in Vienna during the Carter-Breshniev meeting. I don't remember where it was. I am speaking about that.

BT: Let us see when it was.

MH: '74. When is (corr: was) Carter elected? '77 it's Carter.

BT: Already because ..., because of the Camp David.

MH: Yes, exactly. '78 was Camp David, '79 peace agreement, he came to the Middle East. We are talking something about this time that he is there. Okay, we can check that. What I say is ...

BT interrupts him: Well, and there were, if you remember the ...

MH says simultaneously and, therefore, only partly intelligibly: We were ... (asleep?).

BT: ... I remember I brought him [Leon Shani]. And [Leon] was sent also then to Kreisky later on because of the Iranian crisis, where Kreisky should have helped. So there were connections directly between Kreisky and the White House, also through [Leon Shani].

MH: And it is not only Kreisky, because what I say here is that quite a number of the people we have met and talked to ...

BT: In the Socialist International?

MH: ... in the Socialist International and in the parliament in Strasbourg say that American important ...

BT: Figures, yes.

MH: ... elements, ambassadors and embassies encourage them to meet the PLO. And this is the fact we have to take into consideration, we have to know its size and we have to understand where it sources. And then I speak about the government here, the government we were in (?), but there is a dispute in the Jews in Europe. They are not satisfied. There is a mobilisation among the Jews in Europe ...

(Recording breaks off. End of tape)

BT: after the SI-Treffen, the SI meeting in ...

MH: Stockholm.

BT: ... Stockholm, yes.

MH: The reporting is there was a debate on the Middle East which continued for about four hours, and it was opened by Kreisky and Shimon Peres. Kreisky spoke about the Vienna meeting, and Shimon Peres spoke afterwards, and it was summed up by Bruno Kreisky and Shimon Peres. Fourteen people took part in the discussion, [Yobni Ouil], Mitterand and many of the highest, most influential people in the ..., in Europe. There were quite a lot of very warm statements towards Israel, and I want to mention especially the statements of [Yobni Ouil] and François Mitterand. And there was a very pleasant surprise that the Sengalese representative who represented the president of Senegal also made a very warm statement towards Israel. (He makes a very long pause.) What was the ...?

BT: [Yerucha Meshel] was the ...

MH: Secretary general.

BT: ... the secretary of the Histadrut, of the la..., of the workers' union. .

MH: He is (corr: was) asking what was the authority of Kreisky and Brandt, the chairman of the Socialist International, to invite Arafat to such a meeting. And I said that the constitutional authority is in dispute. One of the things that happened in the press conference in Stockholm was that Bruno Kreisky was asked in what ...

BT: Capacity.

MH: ... authority he invited Arafat to the meeting, and he answered that he did not invite him to Socialist International. That was the result of the debate here. He did not have the ... It was Kreisky to (corr: against) everybody. He did not have the support for that. If there was a majority and it would have been a majority in favour ..., he would have said ...

BT: Come and ... yes.

MH: But he said I didn't invite in the name of the International. And that was the official answer of Bruno Kreisky. He said that he invited him as the chairman of the Austrian Socialist Party. What he said in the party I don't know. (BT laughs mockingly.) I want to say that in my opinion Willy Brandt came to Vienna not to meet Arafat. He came to Vienna because there was a meeting of the North-South (dialogue) that he is chairing, and my impression is that the date of the invitation of Arafat to Vienna was coordinated to the date of Willy Brandt's presence there. In this I want to say that there was an attempt to manipulate ...

BT: Willy Brandt?

MH: ... Willy Brandt. But to the question of the authority, this point is in dispute. Now I can tell you something which I was not able to say here, you see, in continuation. I did not want at that stage, when Willy Brandt was still chairman of the International and he asked me not to say what he is telling me in private, I did not tell that actually he told me very clearly these things. And then I reported the meeting with Willy Brandt - which I think is important, to see his view about the Kreisky aspect -, about my talk with Willy Brandt. I want to report that Willy Brandt because of his health could not fly. Therefore, he did not get to Stockholm. He was in the European Parliament, and I went, I travelled there to meet him. I presented him the same protest that I gave before to Bruno Kreisky. I explained to him the damage that his meeting with Arafat created giving Arafat a position without forcing Arafat to pay anything in return. I stressed the damage that was created in his participation in the meeting because of his position, his ...

BT: Moral position.

MH: ... position in the world, his background, his known positions, his position as head of the International, as chairman of the International. And I told him, „We are making a distinction between your presence in the meeting and Bruno Kreisky's meeting with Arafat, who already in another ... (meeting, occasion) had, has met already Arafat which you didn't.“

BT: Yes. He had met Arafat in Egypt once, I remember, when he was on the fact-finding mission.

MH: Arafat?

BT: Kreisky and Arafat.

MH: Kreisky, yes, yes. He met and he reported to Golda Meir.

BT: And he reported it to Golda, yes.

MH: They, this was it. So I told him this is different. I told (to) the bureau that I told that distinction also to Bruno Kreisky. I said, „If you met him alone without Willy Brandt as head of the Socialist International in the framework of the ..., the whole thing would have been in a framework. You could have reported it, nobody would have said about you that the ...“ The response of Bruno Kreisky - I quote him - was that „My name is so bad in Israel anyway that I cannot create any damage anymore.“ (They laugh.) And I say that the truth is that in this irony and this laugh there is something of the truth. The damage for the labour party in Willy Brandt's meeting was much bigger than in the Kreisky meeting. From Kreisky already people got used to accept different kinds of things. Willy Brandt never did it before. And the fact that he manipulated Willy Brandt into the meeting ...

BT: Was very witty.

MH speaks in too low a voice to understand the last word: ... was very witty (?).

BT: Yes.

MH: And I say the damage was bigger coming from Willy Brandt and Willy Brandt is very much aware of that fact now. Then I protested that they did not condemn the terror in the press conference ...

BT: Yes. After Vienna, I mean, after the Vienna meeting?

MH: ... after the Vienna meeting, while they condemned the settlements. They didn't say a word about the terror. And they didn't say a word about Arafat's comparison of Israel with the Nazis.

BT: With the Nazis?

MH: They did not protest ... - (in answer to BT's question:) the Nazis - they didn't protest the Palestinian covenant, and that we also protested. This was our main protest. Here I warned Brandt, let us say, I reported that I warned Brandt that an invitation to the Socialist International is something that the labour party won't be able to ...

BT: An invitation of the PLO to participate?

MH: ..., exact, of the PLO to participate in the Socialist International would be something that the labour party won't be able to accept ...

BT interrupts: Swallow, yes.

MH: ... and the labour party would be forced to stop its activity in the Socialist International, if something like this happens. Now, watch the wording. I said stop its activity, not stop its membership, which would have happened, we would have been forced by public opinion, inside the party it would have been impossible to, to ..., if they invited him. That's why the framework was a very clever one in my opinion.

BT: Was this wording discussed before with Peres?

MH: This was my agreement that we don't go to ...

BT: Break.

MH: ... that we don't break. This was a ... (advice?) I had a ...

BT: Doesn't matter what they do, but ...

MH: I had a ... (?)

BT: Yes, all right. Which means that you ..., that Peres agreed even if they would invite Arafat officially you would stop your activities there, but you would not leave the Socialist International?

MH: Yes, in the public of, the Israeli public opinion it would have been the same.

BT: Yes, okay.

MH: It was something which we were not able to control ...

BT: Yes, but ... But between us which means you, you ..., yes, okay.

MH: Yes. Two days later after Willy Brandt's ..., after this meeting with Willy Brandt, Bruno Kreisky informed me that there is no intention to invite ... (?)

BT: To invite Arafat to Stockholm?

MH: To Stockholm, not, to invite Arafat to the International, not to Stockholm, to the bureau which is why I reported earlier there. Also in the talks we had in Sweden we got promises almost from everybody, though we could not meet everybody, but almost from everybody that he wanted this ...

BT: No attempt to be made.

MH: ... to be made. And I warned this could come back later, but this is the situation. From Willy Brandt's ...

BT: Remarks?

MH: ... remarks I want to bring three things. He apologised for the damage that was created by the meeting with Arafat. He stressed that there is no change in his attitude and friendship to ...

BT: Towards Israel.

MH: ... towards Israel. He is sorry that there were these i-avanot (Hebrew for misunderstandings), misunderstandings. And I took a note when I talked with him, so the wording is his about the meeting in ..., about the creation of this meeting ...

BT: In Vienna.

MH: ... and about the misunderstanding that he mentioned. And he asked not to give them publicity, ... (among them) was the lack of early coordination with us about going to this kind of meeting. He speaks about himself. There were other things that were said there that he asked me ...

BT: Not to ...

MH: ... specifically not to speak, report publicly, that he said they will stand in ..., they will be tested in the near future towards the bureau of the Socialist International. And I think that if this happens we could see them in a ..., in the public.

BT: After all you visited Kreisky in Vienna, but you did not report actually about this meeting in Vienna. You report only ..., and you don't report about your flight with him to Stockholm, because you flew together with him.

MH: No, I, I ... First of all, it might have been in another ...

BT: In another file maybe.

MH: ... file. But the main reason is that the talk was my protest to which he reported the meeting.

BT: Yes, but what I would like to know, Micha, ...

MH: We did not get to a direct ...

BT: ... was there any dialogue possible in the ...? I mean, did he try to convince you? Did he try to protest?

MH: No. That's why, I did not have too much to report. He decided ...

BT: He was convinced ...

MH: He decided not to get into a clash with me. That is why I say he did not answer my protest. He listened to my protest. You asked if he allowed me to speak. He allowed me to speak to the end. I gave my whole statement on behalf of the labour party.

BT: No echo?

MH: The echo was he explained what happened in the meeting.

BT: And why he believes it was worthwhile?

MH: Yes. He did not try to fight it. And he went on not to try to fight it in Stockholm, which I think was very clever from his point of view. He listened, he heard, he waited to see what is happening in Stockholm.

BT: Peres was in Stockholm?

MH: Peres was in Stockholm.

BT: How was the meeting between Peres and Kreisky in Stockholm? Was it, I mean, was it ...? They were ..., they had such a close relationship after the Sadat meeting.

MH: I don't know.

BT: Could you remember if there was a personal bitterness between the two? Any clash between Peres and Kreisky?

MH: No, not in Stockholm. I tell you I think the bitterness came much later. I don't identify the bitterness with that, let me think, and the more I think of it...

BT: Because Peres speaks about it, you see?! For Peres the meeting with Arafat was the crossroad.

MH: Yes, and yet he kept on his relations with him. The breaking point in my opinion - maybe I am saying what was my breaking point. My breaking point was an interview which he gave from Morocco or Las Palmas - or where was it where he ...? My feeling was that this was it, I don't remember the details from it ...

BT: About „Die Juden sind ein mieses Volk“ (the Jews are a base people)?

MH: Yes.

BT: Or the Jews are not a ...?

MH: Which sounded like an anti-Semite, which was very strange.

BT: The big [Truv] interview where he ...

MH: Yes. In my opinion the breaking point with Israel was that. It was about the Lebanese war, bad enough, they were fighting like hell here at some stage to change the positions, and he did not make any distinction. All his effort, which especially with Egypt became very important to keep a balanced ... (position), having a very positive message to Israel, disappeared. And it was a terrible interview. I remember that so I ...

BT interrupts: So do you think that actually this ...?

MH: In my opinion the breaking point came then, not here.

BT: For most of the comrades in the labour party, you think?

MH: I think so. Because I remember still after that we have met in all the bureau meeting(s), we discussed that in Spain later on. We had a tough debate there, but definitely with a friendly personal relationship. I don't remember a break which came at that stage. Not with Shimon Peres. He ..., if he ...

BT: You didn't write him a letter after this interview to tell him how shocked you were? Or ...?

MH: No.

BT: And you never told him?

MH: I never met him afterwards. And I don't know if he met any Israelis afterwards.

BT: Did you give up on him after this interview?

MH: Yes. My feeling was that something really went wrong.

BT: It's a sad story, because, politically, he was so right, but when it comes to the human aspect of the relationships or understanding his fellow Jews he was - it seems - not ..., not very sensitive.

MH: Politically, he was right. I have to say two things. In our earlier talks one part of his analyses was totally mistaken. His argument at that time was that Israel, (he corrects himself:) that time is working against Israel and in favour of the Arabs for two major reasons: one is the Jewish influence in the United States is going to disappear and the Americans are going to turn much more towards the Arabs. And when we lose that support and the Soviet Union being as it is ...

BT: It would threaten you.

MH: ... our existence will be threatened. The Soviet Union disappeared. We have relations with Russia and Eastern Europe. We are more popular than the Arabs. Eastern Europe and Russia are anti-Arab, basically. That they play with Iran, it's ..., for the Arabs is bad, they have to play against us. And Israel's position in the United States is much stronger than it was when we were talking at that time during Carter. I don't think we ever had a presidency (or: president that is) so friendly as Clinton. That is one side on which he was mistaken. Israel became much stronger vis-à-vis the Arabs. And time was working on behalf of Israel. Now the paradox of the situation is that he became politically right, because Israel, a strong Israel was able to do towards the PLO under the leadership of Yitzhak Rabin something which a weak Israel was almost unable to do. So the conclusion: the second thing on which he by intuition was right - and later on he changed his views, but the original intuition of Kreisky was right - that was Yitzhak Rabin. Yitzhak Rabin was elected in '77 as prime minister. Kreisky applauded it. He told me the fact that somebody born in Israel ...

BT: A sabra, yes.

MH: ... a sabra, this, he is somehow ..., he had a very deep relation to the Israeli military and to the ... He said somebody like this, he is going to make the change. Now the Rabin of '77 did not do it. But Yitzhak Rabin was the man who did it. So his intuition on Yitzhak Rabin and on the general political development was right. Somewhere ..., and this is where I was disappointed, because I described to you the four days which I spent with him here. I think, this is where I got closest to him.

BT: When he met his brother?

MH: His brother and going around. At least the Israeli did something to him. And he spoke a lot about his Jewish element. And I really thought that the intellectual with, no doubt, a vision about Europe far ahead of anybody else in his time in many ways and that emotion that came

up, that combination is going to leave an important, for a long time, a love for Israel. And when it happened with Sadat, I thought this is happening. And it certainly was a very important point in the deadlock in the talks with Egypt, which I think he would have been able to play if he kept his balanced position. That article and some statements - it was not the only one for you to ... (?), we find some more of these - created for me a disappointment, because that (element which) I thought that his emotional link to Israel is strong enough to withstand points of crises. I don't think he criticised any fascist or dictatorship in such a word that he said of Israel.

BT: Yes, but because ..., because he felt so much for this country. And this is ..., I think, in this respect he was truly a totally emotional person, because he could not hold back his anger. And you are only angry about someone whom you love; you are not angry about someone whom you don't care about. Because I remember my, our long talks and quarrels with him about Israel and we ..., why did he speak with me about Israel and wanted to hear only about Israel? Because ..., because he cared so much! Now, of course, this I think, this is the phenomena, that this, let us say, un..., misunderstood love affair or this totally misunderstood relationship - and both sides misunderstood each other - turned into a very emotional and then very sour argument and into a bad divorce I would almost say.

MH: But to be understanding to that you have to be a student of, you know, the Austrian, the pride.

BT: And he did not like psychoanalysis like most of the Jews.

MH: Because ..., and this is not the Israeli character to be that kind of understanding.

BT: Yes. All right, but I think we have this most important paper about your meetings after the Arafat speech and I really wish to thank you.