

## INTERVIEW WITH CROWN PRINCE HASSAN

Interlocutor, male voice (IR): Well again, Your Royal Highness, if you would just tell us about your recollections, you know, how you first met Kreisky and what type of impressions he made upon you and how you reacted to him as a, as a socialist, as an Austrian but also as somebody with Jewish origin.

CPH: Well, I think that the concept of an, of the outstanding post-World War figure in Europe - now I am talking about the great amount of acquaintance and attention - taking the time to be interested in a young man, which I was in terms of relative age, to the point of inviting me to Vienna, taking me on the train from Vienna to Salzburg, taking a personal interest in my thoughts and - what you say? - meeting in 1976 - I can't remember how old I was in 1976 but not that old - I felt was a great tribute. Because here was a man who was interested in talking to people from the region and interested obviously in newly emerging figures in the region. And I have the feeling, which I have said many times, that he was in a sense a mentor in giving me the insights on the world in that we live. And the fact that he was a socialist was all the more enticing for me, because I felt that in the..., in terms of the relationship with the Socialist International and here, of course, Bruno Kreisky, Olof Palme or [Hans-Jürgen Bishnevski] or ..., and Shimon Peres on the Israeli side. I think what was important for me to feel that this was not a clear divide between being a member of a royal Jordan house and a representative of a socialist party in Europe, but here was a certain meeting of ideas. And I think that in terms of my conversations with Bruno Kreisky what impressed me most was that there was no plan. You asked me later about Reagan plans and Jarring missions and initiatives, post-1967 in that ... (?). He generally tried to take impressions from the region and then to present some kind of an improvement to which the region was expected to conform. Or in the case of Kreisky it was an opportunity of me to have a two-way exchange. And he always made one, made me feel important in the sense that I was contributing to a broader design and that broader design effectively was to bring Europeans and Arabs and Israelis closer to each other. As far as Jews are concerned, and I said in my opening remarks today that I felt that his primary concern was the importance of non-discrimination, so when I met representatives of the state of Israel in his home, I was rather touched by the fact that he would make a few

opening and introductory remarks and then leave us to talk. And I felt that this was his perception of his own role, the role of a facilitator and yet a facilitator who imbued the conversation with his ethos of interdependence, (and) which I found all the more real when I visited Vienna and recognised that here was someone who had come out of the torment of ethnic and sectarian division and subdivision in the context of a broader Europe saying to them, „At least, please, benefit from our experiences.“

IR: You have now very comprehensively described Kreisky's approach to the Middle East problem, which made quite a difference to other people who got active in Middle Eastern politics. Now according to your evaluation would you say that his *démarche*, that his intervention in the Middle East made a difference? To what extent did his appearance in the Middle East with the Socialist International as an Austrian chancellor, to what extent did that influence Middle East politics at that time?

CPH: Well, as I said, I mean - and I forgot to mention also Willy Brandt - my impression was that Kreisky is an essential at the tip of an iceberg. So he was not acting as an individual during the whole of this process, but in fact he was acting as an interlocutor who had the bona fide of European governments, which is extremely important. So for a small country like ourselves rather than to pursue a diplomacy by trying to attract the attention of the chancellor of Germany or the prime minister of Sweden or ... through *démarche* about all that was to take a lot of time and effort, here I felt was a mandate from the Socialist International to take an active interest in our part of the world. However, I think to be a realistic. The frustration probably for him as well as for us was at the same time to feel that the initiative will taken by the security council and clearly by the United States (?) that did not necessarily take into consideration the sensitivity of his approach. When I say sensitivity I mean the sensitivity for other, the sensitivity for the interlocutor. And in a sense I believe in an age where all political achievements have to be recognised. I said rather bitterly the other day rather like household pets we have to go to the White House lawn to do our thing on the White House lawn. Kreisky's approach was not that photocratic approach. His approach was rather to invite what I think is still the missing ... (?) in the Middle East peace making and peace building, what is basically a broad-based direct conversation between those directly concerned. He recognised

that peace was not within edicts sobres (French for prosaic decrees), and I think that he recognised the importance of a broader conversation between Jews and Arabs. And in that sense I would like to say that, although he was never - how shall I put it? - to my mind identified with the Jewish approach at all, clearly he recognised the importance of entering into a conversation that recognised the traditions of the other without encumbering that conversation with the irrelevant aspects of those, the irrelevant aspects of those traditions. And in that sense I think that he was trying to arrive at some form of a common truth. And that common truth was that either the state system in this region would survive - as critical as we are and happy about it - on the basis of recognition of pluralism or that state system effectively would be overwhelmed by the kind of problems that Austria is so well placed and ... (? recognise?) and basically the problems of Balkanisation that led to the word Lebanisation or the kind of deeply engrained horror that Kreisky certainly abhorred.

IR: And do you recollect any other reactions to Kreisky's steps in the Middle East? I mean the other leaders in the Middle East, how did they see his missions and his policies in the Middle East? I mean, was there a general appreciation or was there ...?

CPH: Well, I think there is the difference between ourselves and the PLO, for example, the early meetings with Yassir Arafat, and Yassir Arafat and the PLO were not yet at the pinnacle of their international recognition. So in a sense he was offering them a platform, he was offering them an entrée in to European strategic conversations and to the spirit of the Vienna, (he corrects himself:) of the Venice declaration and to the spirit of broader Euro-Atlantic exchanges. In our case effectively what he was basically saying to us (was) that he wanted to use our sovereign state as ... - as we were talking earlier -, our residual legitimacy in terms of the fact that these territories were occupied from Jordan in 1967, while at the same time inviting the Palestinians to exercise their political rights as their own persona developed. So I think that there is rather a sadness about our part of the world, that in terms of perception there are some who believe that the most important interlocutor is the most powerful, and I have seen this in talking to Israelis, for example, or to Palestinians. There is usually a lapse, an interval between the relevance of what you have to say about the importance of security measures or forward ... (?) deployment and what the next visitor has to say. If the next visitor

is an European envoy then he is that much less important than the third visitor who is the American. So I think that whereas others regarded Kreisky as a possible first step in an approach march to the centres of power, I, personally, took the satisfaction of recognising my conversations as relevant to the thought process. And in that sense I think that Kreisky as a spirit of and intellect of integrity - after all let's face it, he was criticised by the Israelis who regarded him as in some way stepping outside the pale of Jewishness, whatever that means - he was in a sense ruled by the Arab interlocutors, including Qaddafi, whom he, of course, received in Vienna. And at that point I think frankly his contact with the Arab world began to become a little controversial, both subjectively and objectively, and under the pressure put on us by others who criticised this somewhat unexpected move. But I don't think he ever lost the integrity in the leading incumbent (corr: encumbering) frustration of not having contributed to the integration of our Eastern Mediterranean or Middle Eastern region in the context of a broader contemporary dialogue with Europe.

IR: You had many exchanges with chancellor Kreisky and one of them was about Jerusalem.

CPH: Yes.

IR: And the question here is that after sending Kreisky your study of the juridical status of the city of Jerusalem, Kreisky replied by sending an Austrian legal expert to, to ..., for your study. And the question is to what degree Kreisky's proposals for the status of Jerusalem have been dealt with in the Arab world.

CPH: Well I think that as we look at the terminology of today, this term „final status“ is worth mentioning. I asked the Americans in football terminology, „Do we have quarter-final status and semi-final status and then final status and possibly final final status?“ As far as my study on Jerusalem is concerned or indeed the study on Palestinian self-determination, which I shared with him, I think it's terribly important to bear in mind that there is a justified ecumenical, broadly defined, universal, international concern for the future of Jerusalem. And in the study clearly I put three main arguments: one for the future of the municipal that is the [Baba] solution, going back to the [Fitzgerald] plan of 1945, intercommunal solution. And for Kreisky

I think this was extremely important in the context not only of Vienna but also in the context of Brussels and the context of cities that had been divided at a given moment in time or occupied. And once again I think that this intercommunal solution was rather attractive for him in the context again of his Jewish background and the context of functional reconciliation. I don't know what influence he had, and you will have to ask the Palestinian ... (?) with regard on the concept of the secular state, but I assume that the concept of Israel-Palestine, a secular democratic state, would have been packed on that aspect of it. On the second aspect, on the question of political sovereignty for the Palestinians, I felt as with Mitterand. Mitterand used the expression „Voyez patrie moins état“ (?French for „Regard it rather as a mother country than a state“?). I felt that Kreisky again felt that this progression was a progression that did not put a ceiling, an a priori ceiling on the possibilities or the exercise of what today is known as the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. So and that then, citing again, that we ... (?). On the question of the religious future of the city and a broadly defined ecumenical solution, I really don't get the feeling that we have given this subject that much consideration, and possibly in a sense the deliberate distancing of himself from religious identification was the reason for that, which in a sense I will respect, after all ... (? one country was important ?).

IR: Absolutely. There are some more detailed questions on the Middle East. You mentioned this Reagan plan, this defence plan, and you have already commented on that. And there was, there is another one saying that you once alerted Kreisky to your preoccupation with the fact that a coalition between the labour party and the likud might be under way and would end in military aggression against Jordan. And we were wondering a little bit what was the background of these fears? And did Kreisky play any role in defusing the situation?

CPH: I would have to go ...

IR: If you ..., but I mean ...

CPH: I would really have to go back to my notes, but then again once the Iraq-Iran war, now talking in 1980. And it started clearly the possibilities of a regional strategic role for Israel who were discussed within the Israeli body politic and between those Israelis who felt that their

responsibilities effectively should focus on the immediate security concerns of the state of Israel and between those who wished to strike further - for example, let me remind you that the strike against [Yos Eires], nuclear reactor (IR says simultaneously: Nuclear.), was met with American condemnation, but in private with American satisfaction. And I would imagine that a lot at that time was conceived in the context of Israel's actions beyond Israel's immediate environment. If you recall there was the attack in Beirut, the attack in Tunis, this rather spectacular bombing of the nuclear reactor and [Tivi] (? or TV?). So in a sense, if there was beginning to emerge some form of a regional superpower, and clearly one says (a) national government or coalition government, national coalition government normally is mission-oriented. And my concern was at that time that this new mission - far from coming to terms with its neighbours - was regarding the Palestinian dimension as something of yesterday's news and focusing on ... (?) concentrations of tomorrow in terms of the broader commitment aimed at ... (? quantifying with Israeli proxy role?) and once again attracting the interest of the United States to the fact that the United States was not able at a given moment to exercise certain strategic priorities that Israel were prepared to do so on their behalf.

IR: Right, right, right. Now that is quite clear. You know you have kept your contacts with Kreisky even after he left his post as federal chancellor in 1983. You have sent him several studies, amongst other your study on the middle way. And the question would be, „Would you consider that Kreisky's influence, that his radiation into the area continued after he was only - and I quote - an elder statesman and no longer an active politician?

CPH: But I think that when he left office, probably he was not that well briefed as in the early years. And I have the impression effectively that I was really in the context of Socialist International at that stage addressing a club of which I had not the full paid views and which in a sense I had lost the intellectual cashier for. Again I am a little confused about the age, but Brandt had left office, for that matter, a man of intellect and standing, [Hermann Abseder] who was one of the contributor(s) to a broader dialogue in terms of economic interdependence, Palme, of course, again was a major contributor to an understanding of the problems of region. And my feeling was that the moment came - and if I may go back to the Fahd plan and the Reagan plan, where it would have been rather difficult to discuss in the detail required the new

answers between the Reagan and the Fahd plan, simply because the credentials of other spokesmen from the region were already well-factored into Kreisky's thinking, because I said earlier that if we had said of the Reagan plan that the real reason for our concern was the bona fide of our relations with the PLO, Kreisky would then have understood that the motivating force to the ..., considered in the future of the Palestinian people was the PLO. Now in terms of the principles of the Socialist International, a plan that suggested elections to be held in an interim period by the Palestinian people on the one side, the Reagan plan, as against to the Fahd plan which suggested the introduction of an international force and political presence to supervise an interim. I don't know how that supervision could have been done. It is not a question just of the withdrawal of the military authority. It is a question of the withdrawal of the military authority and the establishment of an alternative military and political presence as we have seen in attempts to peace build (corr: to build peace) and hold elections in Ukraine, for example. I think what is important here to bear in mind is that the affiliation with the PLO had come to a point of strengthened mutual trust that such a withdrawal should not in any way diminish the chances of the PLO involvement. And, of course, Kreisky had a continuous, I think, difficulty, and here I am maybe speaking not very nice, but I want to say that my feeling was that the Kissinger veto and the Reagan ... (? super?) veto on conversation with the PLO made it very difficult for Kreisky. So the partisanship came to the PLO rather than the partisanship to the concept of a bottom-up, not a top-down, but a bottom-up building of this Palestinian autonomy and this Palestinian entity.

IR: Interesting. Last question on the Middle East: since Kreisky died in 1990, he was, of course, also to some extent forgotten, and when the Oslo process was brought about, there was not much mentioned that he was perhaps one of the forerunners of this process and other peace processes in the Middle East. And the question would be, „Would you ...? To what extent Kreisky's visions and activities could be combined with the Oslo process? And even (at) the present day, I mean, is there still, or more completely, are there still traces of Kreisky's activities in today's approach to the peace process?“

CPH: Well, I think that if Kreisky had been able to start the Vienna process along the lines of the Oslo process certainly he would not have missed such an opportunity. On the other hand I

think that the secretive nature of the Oslo process was probably one of its strengths and possibly one of its shortcomings; its strength in the sense that it put a new politic of reality on the map and meant a new initiative, which for us, of course, we had to support. And I said we went to the Palestinian-Jordanian joint delegation to Madrid. The Palestinians chose this Oslo track, and in fact we had kept the signature of our peace treaty in ... (?) and the negotiations of its final phases until this step had been taken. But the fact that the Oslo process was not discussed in a more public forum meant in a sense that the Arab countries that could have been supportive of this process in its entirety, had a definition of roles been discussed with the Arab countries a priori, for example, the question of Jordanian laws and the question of not leaving a legal lacuna to hand over, to hand over sovereignty to a sovereign state. In the absence of a sovereign state we are continuously taking a position of some embarrassment in this rather grey interim period. So I think that the frustration of Kreisky initiating such a process would have been clear. I think that he would have devoted his energies at least in his prime to ensuring the saleability of this approach. As far as the Oslo approach, however, is concerned, it was very much a short-sighted, a limited group of participants expecting lip-service support or more for a process that had not been fully understood in terms of the Arab world and possibly because the achievement there was that it had promoted the Palestinian particular at the PNA which made it doubly embarrassing for us to get fully engaged. The embarrassment was made more acute, if you don't get engaged you have to suffer the consequences and pick up on some of the loose ends.

IR: ... the pieces. Your Royal Highness, a last question, if you allow, that is on a different subject, namely the North-South dialogue. And in '81 already you did outline in a letter to Kreisky the importance of the North-South dialogue. In this letter the Arab thought forum was also mentioned. And how would you today or from this former perspective see Kreisky's role as one of the promoters of what was formerly the North-South dialogue - which has now changed a little bit - but his contemporary, his role at his time as one of the proponents of a North-South dialogue?

CPH: Well, I would put it this way: I mean the other day I met president Clinton and he was going to the OECD meeting in Denver and actually I was going to an American enterprise

meeting and we were meeting just up the road. And I said to him, „Look you always get briefed by the shepherds of the OECD, but I do wish that on some occasion the sheep would have a chance.“ (They laugh.) And I felt that Kreisky was important, because he was extremely sensitive to a two-way dialogue. He did not - like many emissaries to this region - come here for a few hours to tell us what we think. And I think in that sense that he believed in a symbiosis of responsible positions or international issues. He was supportive of the concept of the independent commission of the national issues, the military issues - for that reason. And I think that the importance of the absolutes' culture of security cooperation, economic cooperation to him, well, contributed to the stuff, the substance of an international dialogue, which, of course, had its geographic poles in terms of rich and poor, in terms of North and South. This was the idiom of the day. But I don't think that he thought in those geographic terms of nations ... (?or parts?). On the contrary I think that he was extremely supportive of the concept of South-South cooperation which later was picked up by ... (? name of a person?) the protector of the South commissioner, and so forth. But I think that (being) one of the creators of post-war universalism we hoped effectively that we could come to a point of agreement at terra media, if we will, on these abstract themes.

IR: Well, thank you very much. This was very interesting.

Female voice: Thank you.

CPH: And I will see, maybe I can go back to my horribly scattered notes, and if I find anything relevant I will give it to you.

Female voice: Yes, please. We will send the transcript, and if you want to add something to it ...

CPH: Yes, that would be a very good idea.