

Mohammed Pahlavi Oral History Interview – JFK#1, 7/14/1964
Administrative Information

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Biographical Note

Mohammed Pahlavi (1919-1980) was the Shah of Iran from 1941 to 1979. This interview focuses on Pahlavi's personal and professional relationship with John F. Kennedy [JFK], his impression of JFK's leadership style, and international relations, particularly with Iran, during the Kennedy administration, among other topics.

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Oral History Interview

Of

Mohammad Pahlavi

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Mohammed Pahlavi– JFK #1
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TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW WITH
HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY, THE SHAH OF IRAN
BY E. A. BAYNE
AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES FIELD STAFF
14 JULY 1964
FOR THE KENNEDY LIBRARY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Mr. R. Pahlavi

Mr. Bayne - Here begins the Kennedy Library Oral History Project interview with His Imperial Majesty, Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, Shahinshah of Iran. His Majesty is being interviewed by Mr. E. A. Bayne, of the American Universities Field Staff at the Shah's summer lodge on the shores of the Caspian Sea at Nowshahr, 14 July 1964.

Mr. B. - Your Majesty, President Kennedy was the fourth of five Presidents of the United States that you have known during your reign. He was also the youngest and the only one to have been assassinated. As a man, what qualities do you think most differentiated him from others?

HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY - I suppose because of his age, education and experience, he was one of those people who see a little further into the future, in many cases naturally predicting rightly the course of events that would inadvertently take place; and who try to adapt themselves and their people to that future. I think that the real difference

between them was that President Kennedy represented this new spirit; this new generation.

Mr. B. - In your initial approach to him, when you were going to Washington to meet him for the first time, did you have a different sense of preparation for dealing with him than you would have had, say with President Eisenhower or President Truman?

HIM - In some cases maybe the answer would be "yes," and then in other cases "no." "Yes," because so far, relationships between my country and yours are based on the established facts: of the interests of your country and mine in the free world; and then of the strategic importance of the area and all its implications. I didn't know what the administration which was called the New Frontier would have as their reaction to these problems. We had heard that they were thinking of many ways to try to solve the problems of the world through a new angle. On the other hand, I was not so apprehensive of the contact because I, myself, also was looking ahead into the future and thinking, as the event of the referendum of two years ago showed, when we undertook our revolution here. This was looking very far ahead. So the answer, as I told you Mr. Bayne, was "yes" and "no."

Mr. B. - In your meeting with him, did the fact that you were of an age count (he was just a few years ^(older) younger than you were)? Did this

make for an easy relationship from the start or was there still a problem of two men not knowing each other very well and having to feel their way?

HIM - I don't know. I don't know. Probably, even without knowing it, maybe the matter of age was a helpful asset, but I don't know if that was really important at all. The trend was in our spirit of the conversations.

Mr. B. - Did you establish any immediate informality with him upon meeting or did it remain formal until later on?

HIM - Well, I think that it was never really formal, or very informal, because it was impossible to be informal after just two meetings, but he was such a nice person that he would do his best to put you at your ease.

Mr. B. - I remember that President Truman had a conversation with you—I guess perhaps in 1949—when some problems you discussed with him of your own administration and ways in which you might approach your government and your own particular position in it. There was, or seemed to be in President Truman's recollection, a certain amount of 'advice giving', which was taken in good part on your part (or he thought so, in any event), and I wondered whether there was this kind of exchange here. The record of your meeting with President Kennedy doesn't reveal this, but then you did have some conver-

sations with him when just the two of you were present. Was there in these conversations any real exchange of views of how fellow rulers in office ran their business?

HIM - No, I don't think so. I think that the time had come for the Americans to realize that as great as you can be, and powerful as you can be, you cannot know better the business of other people. Although a president might follow the suggestions of his foreign secretary, who in his turn would be influenced by the reports that he will get from the embassy abroad, that could thus really influence a President of the United States, at least during my contact with him I think that the President never tried to give us free advice.

Mr. B. - When President Kennedy—then Senator Kennedy—was nominated for the Presidency of the United States, did you have any reaction to this? Did you feel that this would be a good thing for the world and for your own country, if he should win?

HIM - You see, I had some sympathies for him because of his views and ideas, and also because in 1955 I had seen him in the United States at a reception. At that time he was sitting in a wheel chair—he had had some operation on his back. I must admit that in some quarters they were saying that his new spirit, new ideas that could hurt the established order, might put things upside down without being absolutely sure of the results. But, fortunately, we have seen

that it didn't harm the world at all. It ignited a new spirit and impetus in the free countries of the world, and gave them much more hope. Also, I think it opened the possibility of reaching an understanding with the Communists without surrendering any vital position. That was, I'm sure, the idea of the late President, and I'm sure that he would never have surrendered any ideas of the free world.

Mr. B. - I'm sure not. Did you think, as in this instance if I'm interpreting this correctly, that President Kennedy was somewhat inexperienced when you first saw him in 1955, and that this was a feeling of fear that you had?

HIM - We didn't speak on that occasion, but that was not my fear. I said that I had sympathy with him and with his views but there were people who were afraid of them and naturally in a key position like mine you know that we don't like to experience anything new, because we know the facts of history and there are certain things that you should not experiment with because it has been experienced so many times before.

Mr. B. - As I read the record, you made the first move to establish a personal relationship with President Kennedy after he was elected. Did you feel that once this was established that you could talk to him even though you didn't see him personally? That you

could communicate with him about serious problems affecting your country or of mutual interest, with rather complete understanding and directness to the President, or was the feeling that somehow whatever you dealt with the President was filtered through the Department of State?

HIM - With him I think it was different. I think that he was reading the correspondence and that he was dictating the replies. In other cases maybe, this is not so. It's filtered through "desks" and you cannot contact the man himself, but I think that in his case he was reading the correspondence himself.

Mr. B. - The correspondence that I have seen indicates that you were free to take up your basic problems with him, certainly as they affected the United States, but did you really feel that you were getting any real understanding from him? For example, on the problem of the military build-up of Iran and the purposes of this—I know that you have had an argument with the United States for some time on the basic philosophy of military support for this country: did you feel that President Kennedy understood that you had not only one potential danger to deal with in the Russians, but that you also had other potential dangers?

HIM - I think that he was not briefed rightly on that question. This misunderstanding was there before him, and to some extent after

him, so I cannot really say that he was not understanding. I should say that the people in the administration who had to brief him, in my opinion, were not understanding the problem.

Mr. B. - Even though there was this gap in the relationship and understanding at the official level, when other things that involved the alliance between Iran and the United States, or affected the mutuality of interest between Iran and the United States, were you generally in favor of what President Kennedy did? For example, what was your reaction to what was perhaps the first notable thing that happened in his administration, which was the fiasco of "The Bay of Pigs" in Cuba? Were you concerned? Did it shock you in any way that the United States could be involved in something that wasn't exactly a success?

HIM - It did, certainly. How could a big country like yours enter into an adventure without planning it properly?

Mr. B. - Did this lower your estimate of the potentiality of good that President Kennedy might do, to any marked degree?

HIM - It's hard to say, on one hand yes, and on the other hand, he was the kind of man who immediately said that he would take all the blame on himself.

Mr. B. - This indicated what?

HIM - It indicated that this was not a man who lacked courage, and

if he took all this blame on himself that meant that he knew exactly what he was doing.

Mr. B. - I know what your official reaction was when the United States asked you for support in the United Nations when the Russians established a missile base in Cuba; when the United States stood against it. What was your personal feeling? By the time you had met President Kennedy, did you feel confident that even though there was a risk of war involved in this, that President Kennedy would carry this through without endangering the peace of the world?

HIM - I don't get quite what this means. "Carrying this through without endangering the peace of the world?" He was not endangering the peace of the world, not really. The peace of the world was in danger, and I was sure that this man would not retreat at the last moment from the responsibilities that any responsible leader of the United States should have taken at that time. For us it was a question of life and death. We knew that if anything happened we were the first to be absolutely wiped out because we have no defense, not only against missiles, but even against aircraft. It would not even be a missile but a bomber that could come over our heads and drop its bombs. We would have been completely finished. But you know there are some principles that you must live with, and that you cannot live without. For us it is the same thing. This prin-

ciple involves life and death between the free world and the non-free world, and when we endorsed the policy of the United States we were not sure if the next day would be our last.

Mr. B. - But you had no alternative.

HIM - We had no alternative. No.

Mr. B. - Do you feel this way also about President Kennedy's policy in South Vietnam, for example. This also fits under this same category of "there are certain principles" as you said.

HIM - I don't think this present policy was President Kennedy's. Now, you are really standing on your own feet. In your opinion maybe I am mistaken, but I think your policy in South Vietnam was not a right policy. Look at the results until two months ago.

Mr. B. - There's a firmness now?

HIM - Yes.

Mr. B. - It was not firm in President Kennedy's time?

HIM - It was not firm.

Mr. B. - Did you feel that the Test Ban Treaty was a great success and something that one should remember the Kennedy Administration having done as a great benefit to the world or do you have a certain reservation about that?

HIM - Well, it was a first step.

Mr. B. - It was a first step.

HIM - A good one too, naturally. Naturally, cynics could say that you had made all the tests that you wanted and the Russians too, so you really did not need any more, but the spirit that was behind this and that could have followed this could have finally led to the banning, maybe, of nuclear arms, with inspection naturally, and also reaching the climax and maximum of the desire of the well intentioned people of the world that there would be a general disarmament.

Mr. B. - There is a continuing theme in what you are saying, if I hear it correctly, in your reaction to the Kennedy Administration. Even though it was short, he was really making some steps towards world peace in support of these principles of peace—a "world of diversity" as I believe he once said—and that this was in a sense progress, even though looking at it from another point of view his career was very short as President, and it is very hard to measure this in a short time. However, there was support for these principles which was clearly understood in the outside world, or at least as far as Iran is concerned.

HIM - Yes, I can say that this is the image that at least we had here in my country.

Mr. B. - Do you have any feelings about his attitudes towards Nationalist and Communist China? The problems of dealing with Commu-

nist China in relation to Nationalist China?

HIM - We did not really elaborate on that, and I don't know if he had any policy, because during his administration there were no initiatives in that direction. It's very hard to say. On the one hand we cannot sympathize with the Communist Chinese when we can sympathize so much with the Nationalist China—the present Nationalist Chinese. The former regime was not clean. They were corrupt and there were too many faults in their system, but on the opposite now, the Nationalist Chinese in Formosa are really a good government and their administration is clean. They are working hard, and progressively. They have achieved a very good land distribution program. They have many exports they could now send to other countries, so there is everything to sympathize with them and to be antagonistic toward the Chinese Communists because they are aggressive. They are war mongers. They really do not care if two, or three billion people of the world would be wiped out in a holocaust of hydrogen thermo-nuclear war, if two hundred million Chinese would remain. However, the question is what about facts? What are you going to do in two or three years time? Maybe we will be the last to recognize the Chinese Communists, but even if there is going to be peace and a continuation of the United Nations, one day the Chinese will be admitted in the

United Nations.

Mr. B. - Do you feel that President Kennedy might have been working toward this?

HIM - Well, I say there were no signs at that time. Maybe it was premature, but I would not be surprised if he had considered this possibility.

Mr. B. - Several times in your conversation with President Kennedy in Washington, he emphasized a point that leaders should identify themselves, not just with the upper elements of society, but with common people. I think in your own reign you have supported this principle long before President Kennedy became president, but did you feel that there was any real deep understanding of what you were doing in Iran on the part of President Kennedy along these lines? That somehow these were just complimentary words?

HIM - No, I don't think so. When we held our referendum* (and you know about the results) I received such an enthusiastic telegram of congratulations from him. He was not forced to send a

* Ed. Note: The referendum mentioned refers to an extraordinary vote in January, 1963, that overwhelmingly endorsed a six-point reform program to be undertaken by the Iranian government, a program which HIM had personally supported over a period of years and had in many ways originated.

telegram like that, so probably he meant every word. In reading his telegram it seemed that he felt that it had happened to himself or to the American people, so I think that he really meant what he was saying.

Mr. B. - These principles that President Kennedy stood for, both in terms of world peace and also in terms of how you approach the social development of a country—to the extent these were communicable—you felt the integrity of his feeling yourself both when you talked to him and, also, in subsequent actions such as this telegram? This was a convincing thing? One might say that as chief of state of Iran, you did comprehend this, and this was his image to you as a person?

HIM - Yes, I have no doubt about that, but I must add that the President of this administration also continues to share the same views.

Mr. B. - What's the magic here? How does this communicate—is it something in the personality of President Kennedy or of President Johnson, for example, that manages to carry over to you? Is it a personal thing, or is it explainable by a series of actions?

HIM - I don't think so. No. I think this is a realization of policies and their results. Now what we hear from your people is

that is only what we have done in Iran could be done in many other countries that our revolution could really serve as an example to many other countries of the world.

Mr. B. - Again, I am attempting to establish the impact of President Kennedy's personality upon you. He said—he said this twice I believe during your interviews—that while in the United States he, President Kennedy, were suddenly to disappear from the scene, the United States would carry on, but in the Iranian case, if you disappeared, or retired, that Iran would not be the same. Indeed, I believe he said somewhere else that there would be great instability in the Middle East if you were to remove yourself from the scene. Now, this is a very complimentary statement, one might say, but still a very serious one when said between two chiefs of state. Was this a convincing statement to you? Did you believe that President Kennedy believed this?

HIM - Oh yes, I have no doubt about that. Unfortunately, this is a fact, that if anything happened to me now in these present circumstances, it would not only react upon this country, but also maybe on the Middle East. So it might be that on this he was being correctly briefed by his people.

Mr. B. - Could I get back to the one basic problem that you did have with the United States during this particular period; the lack

of some mutual understanding of Iran's military defense objectives. It seems clear from the correspondence here, particularly, that your views on which you laid out on two occasions in a letter were not accepted by the United States. President Kennedy wrote back that he could not accept this view, for example: your concern about the formation of an Arab federation last year and its military potentiality. He wrote back and said no, he did not believe this was a threat. What was your reaction to this—would you like to talk about that?

HIM - My reaction to this, I think, was that he had failed to learn something from history. You might be very rich and powerful, but that does not mean that you know everything; and you can make terrible mistakes. Even though you are realizing what I was saying was closer to the facts than what you hoped to be the case, your basic principle, I think, was to try to avoid a war between the Arabs and Israel. What do we hear now from President Nasser? He says that a war with Israel is inevitable. So who was right?

Mr. B. - It still hasn't happened.

HIM - No, but these are the facts. You have based all your policy on that—and also look at the visitors. Mr. Khrushchev was in Egypt.

Mr. B. - That visit didn't entirely prove satisfactory to Nasser.

There was some disagreement on ideology, I believe, before he left, but still the meaning of the visit in a strategic sense was meaningful.

HIM - Yes. And he did not refute—he stood there or sat there unprotesting while Khrushchev was insulting the West and while he was speaking of the union of the proletariat—Nasser really did not answer to that.

Mr. B. - This lack of understanding (of Iranian military responsibilities) on the part of President Kennedy: do you think he was captive of views which had been held in the previous administration which he could not change? Do you think that there was a practical consideration for him in that to have increased military aid to Iran, which was involved here, would have been an unpopular gesture with our Congress? It might therefore be something in which he maintained this position for domestic reasons rather than for foreign reasons. How do you—you called him a sagacious and wise statesman at one point and I'm sure you meant this—relative to this particular problem, how do you think his thinking might have gone in justifying his position?

HIM - I think again that there was an administration which was responsible for those views, because those views were there before him and after him. So I cannot blame a man who must rely

on his people and his staff to say "yes" immediately to anybody who approaches him and asks him about this or that, or asks him about increasing military aid. He must refer to his people and when they come with a response like this he must rely on them rather than to rely on someone who is not responsible to him.

Mr. B. - Do you feel it in time, if he had been spared longer, that he might come around to a clearer view of the Iranian defense situation and been willing to endorse it?

HIM - Well, I don't know because look how your policy has changed with India. It might have.

Mr. B. - Mentioning India, at one point you made a proposal to President Kennedy, I think, last summer or about a year ago...

HIM - Two years ago.

Mr. B. - ...urging him that as far as the Kashmir issue was concerned, the United States should take a rather strong line towards both parties. You suggested that the United States withhold all economic and military aid from both parties, but at the same time give an assurance that it would come to the aid of any victim of aggression on the part of either party. Now as far as I can see in the correspondence, Your Majesty, there is only a rather bland response to this proposal. He thanks you, I believe.

HIM - No. He said that is was quite an interesting proposal, but

that it was too late. If only I had made this proposal three months earlier and that he had time to study it, I think that it would have been the best solution.

Mr. B. - Your own discussions with General Ayub and the Indians then followed this exchange, didn't they?

HIM - I had discussions with the Pakistani President, but it was too late at that time because maybe five days or ten days after this exchange of letters the Chinese had attacked India.

Mr. B. - But you didn't feel that the President had just not paid any attention to your suggestion? Even if he had not followed it?

HIM - Yes, because if I remember correctly he said that it was an interesting suggestion. I haven't gone back into the files to quote correctly but I think it had really impressed his imagination because, if again I remember correctly, I think Averill Harriman, then in India, said something about that—that you might stop every kind of help to both countries if they couldn't find a solution.

Mr. B. - This would have been a terrible weapon I'm sure, in the case of India and Pakistan both. Did you agree with the President when he said to you that the West could, with adjustment, survive the loss of Middle Eastern oil?

HIM - No. You could for a few years, but for how long? I just wonder for how long.

Mr. B. - The pressure on the ability of the West to find substitutes would not be sufficiently great?

HIM - Yes, but at a great cost.

Mr. B. - You mean this mostly in terms of the European requirement or of the Western outposts in Asia as well?

HIM - Especially European, because in 1975 or sooner Europe will consume three hundred and forty million tons of oil alone and that is about your (United States) production. You have your internal market too. For how long could the American reserves sustain such a rate of production? We know that if Venezuela continues to produce at the present rate, their oil reserve will be finished in 20 years.

Mr. B. - There's still the Libyan and Algerian supply.

HIM - These are new areas, and the political circumstances are uncertain.

Mr. B. - In your interview with the President you brought up the subject of budgetary support for Iran. This was largely for the military budget of the country. The President was pretty frank in stating that the United States had come to the end of this kind of assistance. Did you feel that this was in any way specifically directed against Iran or that this was a general rule and Iran would just have to abide by a policy laid down by the

United States government?

HIM - I think it was a general rule although that same year some other countries still received some budgetary support.

Mr. B. - Would you wrap this up as being a part of the American or Mr. Kennedy's endorsement at any rate of the limited American understanding of the military objectives of Iran?

HIM - Maybe. Maybe. Maybe.

Mr. B. - As being a part of the same degree of comprehension of urgency?

HIM - Yes.

Mr. B. - There are some other things that effect the international world where I think President Kennedy represented something significant. We've already talked about the emphasis upon youth. Iran has a United States Peace Corps operation, as well as its own Literacy Corps, which in a sense is somewhat similar except being more national in application. I assume that Iran, in accepting the Peace Corps mission, approves of it. Do you think it was right for the President to do this on a national basis or do you think President Kennedy might have pressed for an international Peace Corps at the very beginning?

HIM - I don't know if he could have achieved an International Peace Corps without arousing some suspicion or some friction.

between the Communists and non-Communist members. But the American Peace Corps was truly representing the American spirit and not only do I see no harm in that, but I think that this was a very good gesture really representing the back of the mind of the American people. For as long as we remember, you have been trying to be helpful to others unselfishly. Before the first World War, after the first World War and during the second war and afterwards. What American citizens have contributed or given to the rest of the population of the world is incredible, and the Peace Corps represents the spirit of the American people to be helpful, to try to combat misery, poverty, illiteracy, and those things. I must say that the Peace Corps represents really your spirit and it should remain as an American outfit.

Mr. B. - Do you think that (I would suspect that you would agree) the President had a great concern with economic and social development? He made a great many speeches about it not only, as a matter of fact, for foreign countries but for some of the undeveloped parts of the United States, believing, as I think he did, that this was one way of averting Communist subversion. He had a great interest in Iran, I think he made clear, on the economic side. However, do you feel he really comprehended the complications of economic and social developments in a country like Iran?

HIM - Probably not. We cannot expect him to have known all the details. But in a general sense probably "yes." Naturally, there is a great difference here that could be seen very easily, but at the same time be most difficult to understand. That depends on how you approach the problem. If you were told what we have achieved here—I mean our revolution—if you were told in the beginning that this was opposed by all the wealthy people, for instance all the landowners, all the clergy or the reactionaries and the Communists and so called nationalists and all those who were not in power, (but who were jealous just because they were not in power) you might not have even started it. When we started all this, I said at the time that we have no time to lose. In order to strike the people's imagination for Russia's oldest reforms, they put it in one box and presented it to the people for the first time. In our history also, this struck the people's imagination, and you have heard or seen the results when our people went to the polls. I can assure you, they freely went to the polls; five million six hundred and fifty thousand voted yes against four thousand one hundred and fifteen.

Mr. B. - You think that President Kennedy—as you say he wired you when these results of the referendum were known—really comprehended what you were trying to do and the difficulties with

it, as you talked with him?

HIM - When we talked I had not yet crossed the bridge completely, although it had been settled in my mind, and he knew that I meant to carry out the reforms. I don't want to say that our situation was like the Latin American countries, but I think that he had some knowledge of the underdeveloped countries that needed to readjust themselves with the 20th century. He had seen most of our countries so he probably knew what I was talking about.

Mr. B. - Let me switch this back to the personal side of this. In the sense that we, no matter what men we meet in the world, learn a little something from almost everybody, would you say you learned a little something from President Kennedy? He undoubtedly will have learned a little something from you, even that which could have been of a personal nature. Was there a style that President Kennedy represented in running his country? Was his youthfulness something that was important to you and which reinforced your own notions perhaps. Was this the way in which a successful leader operated or was there still a gap between you? Did he have a personal effect on you affecting how you might have operated?

HIM - Although your system is different from ours, the power of the President of the United States during his four years term in office is great, so he cannot rule the country with his personality

only. The administration is there with a different approach to a problem, although I think that in his approach to problems he was a little like myself—direct. When we must lose no time, we will lose no time. It was encouraging for me to see that even in America, he would sometimes have to adopt the same method to tackle the problems. For instance, I remember when I was there he had to deal with that steel problem and his stand was a direct stand against big, powerful interests. It was being against something that I have done so many times here, but it was interesting to see that you must do the same thing in the United States.

Mr. B. - In a sense, it gave you a reinforcement of your own views? This is an interesting aspect of how people working together in an international sense, but holding the varying degrees of power, can exchange notions of how to operate.

It's always speculative, particularly when a man has been gone from us so short a time; but going back to my first question of how would you rate or place President Kennedy among the five presidents of the United States you've known, do you think from an international point of view that President Kennedy, because of what he stood for particularly in some of his speeches which he made; for example, his Inaugural Address, which I think received world-wide notice—
not only publicity but notice as well,—that he ranks in your mind as

sp.

one of the great modern Presidents of the United States? Or is the time too short to make this kind of an evaluation? How would you think of him in historical terms?

HIM - Well, as I told you, Mr. Bayne, I have every reason to look with the greatest sympathy on the late President as a person. He was a man who represented these new ideas, a young courageous man who maybe sometime had to face big problems at home, but look at the results. When he died, the Russian head of state was here visiting us, and I could really sense deep feeling of sorrow in him that was not an act. Why should he act for me here? A few days later we had a Russian singer, a famous Russian singer, and one of her songs was called Ave-Maria in the memory of the late President Kennedy. If you'll remember the international press and even the Communist press, they all expressed a really deep sense of sorrow at his death. That means that the man had created an image of pursuing peace, although I'm sure he would never have surrendered the principles of the free world. He had given the image that he was pursuing a policy to achieve peace, and probably coexistence, in the world. So in that sense, of the five Presidents that I have known, I think that he was the one who had struck most the imagination of the entire population of the world.

Mr. B. - This was a matter both of esteem and of integrity which

you keep coming back to. He was able to communicate a sense of integrity in his belief in the principles that he stood for, that the western world stood for. And possibly a youthful energy that went with it?

HIM - Yes, maybe that, or a few episodes that helped that especially. In Cuba in the missile crisis, because he had shown the world and the Communists that although he was ready to enter into war at the same time he was trying to avoid it if possible. I think that most of the respect especially of the Communist camp is due to the fact he was not what you Americans call "yellow." He was ready to take the responsibility of war, but if it could be avoided he was there to discuss.

Mr. B. - That's a very high tribute, I think. It implies, if I am hearing you correctly here, that this kind of quality is to some extent a new quality in world statesmanship.

HIM - Yes. I wouldn't say that Eisenhower was not the same in his way. He would have done the same thing.

Mr. B. - The combination then of youth and this same basic support of principle? This is an interesting definition, I think, of his ability. In terms of history, what special characteristics do you think his administration represented?

HIM - Maybe we could say that even from a distance of ten thousand

miles, in a completely different environment, the inexorable march of time in civilization, the demands of the people of the world are such that we could see the necessity for reforms from the same angle and with the same eyes. I'm referring back once more to the really more-than-warm telegram of congratulations that your President sent me on the results of our referendum, sustaining and endorsing the program of reforms, or what we call our revolution. I think that this might be called historical.

Mr. B. - It was a recognition that there were universal principles that are as common to a developed nation as they were to a developing nation?

HIM - I think so.

Mr. B. - This is an historic break-through in a sense.

HIM - I think so.

Mr. B. - Here ends the interview for the Kennedy Library Oral History Project with His Imperial Majesty, Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, interviewed by E. A. Bayne of the American Universities Field Staff at Nowshahr, Iran, at the Shah's summer vacation lodge on the Caspian Sea.