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Cyrus Eaton's Childhood Is What Led Him to Become Such an Important and Influential Figure

The Cold War began in 1947; it was not a war in a traditional sense as there were no large scale battles, but rather a power struggle between Soviet Russia and Capitalist America (History Learning Site). After World War II the once allied countries began to realize their differences. Tensions between the two countries began to increase as more conflicting plans and ideas arose. Even before World War II officially ended, there was a race between the two armies to reach Berlin in order to have the prestige of taking the German capital (Aliphat, Barkhouse and Brooks).

One major event that sparked the cold war was the discovery of the soviet spy Igor Gouzenko. In 1945, a Russian cipher clerk working in the Russian embassy in Ottawa by the name of Igor Gouzenko brought a message to the Canadian police. In the message he confessed to being a spy for the Soviet Union, he also provided documents detailing a large network of spies working for Russia; many of which were located in important positions in the Canadian Government and Research Facilities (King). When Canadian Prime Minister Mackenzie King was made aware of the situation, instead of going public with it, he discretely informed USA president Franklin Roosevelt and Britain's Prime Minister Winston Churchill. This was to avoid mass panic from the public citizens. However, a year later an American journalist published this information to the public. Some time after Canadian Prime Minister William King discretely informed Winston Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt of the Russian spies, Winston Churchill gave his famous "Iron Curtain" speech. In this speech he draws a line that divides East and West Europe, that he calls the Iron Curtain. He also publicly condemns the Soviet Union and all of the other countries on the Eastern side of the Iron Curtain (Churchill).

Shortly after World War II ended and Germany was under the control of the allies, the country was divided between the major winning countries of World War II; Russia, USA, UK and France (Aliphat, Barkhouse and Brooks). Berlin, the German capital, and most important city was also divided between the four countries. Immediately conflict arose when Russia wanted to keep Germany pushed down, while the USA argued that since that didn't work after World War I, they should try a different approach and help Germany to get back on it's feet and recover. Russia sustained most of the casualties from the war, and fought very bloody battles, which is in stark contrast to the USA who only had six civilian casualties (Andrews). Russia would have been very bitter after all the fighting, and wanted to give out a punishment, while the USA would have been less hot-headed, and had more of a mind to restore Germany so they could start making money from it. As France and UK both took the side of USA, the Soviets would have felt cornered. They watched as the USA poured their vast amounts of wealth gained from the war into their parts of Germany and Berlin. After a while the U.S.A. also helped to

restore France and UK's parts of Germany. In 1947 the Americans introduced a program called the Marshall Plan, which was a donation of 17 billion dollars to go towards the economic repair of war-torn Europe (Office of the Historian). There was, however, a catch to their offer. The Americans wanted Europe rebuilt in an American style, Russia was outraged by this. When the western allies introduced a new currency into their side of Germany and Berlin, the Deutschmark, without even consulting Russia, that was the last straw. The Soviets were fed up with USA's blatant display of capitalism. When the citizens in the Russian sectors of Germany saw life on the side of the western allies side they were inclined to believe that this was the capitalist way of life, and that their own communist government was depriving them of this. Russia knew that USA's display of wealth was undermining their support from their citizens. Thus, in June 1948, the Berlin Crisis began (Office of the Historian). Russia blocked off all routes in and out of Berlin to all traffic (Aliphat, Barkhouse and Brooks). This action left all the citizens of Berlin who lived in the western ally controlled sectors without food and other important resources. President Stalin of Russia was trying to show America that Russia still mattered, and that it was still powerful. Stalin's blockade was foiled by air drops that were sent in to west Berlin by American, British and French planes. The citizens depended on these airdrops for everything. In total 275 000 flights carried in 1.5 million tons of supplies (Aliphat, Barkhouse and Brooks).

There was further unrest between the two countries, because everyone was scared of the Americans. The USA was the only country to possess the atomic bomb at that time, and they are still the only country to date to use the bomb on people (The Nuclear Threat Initiative). The fact that the Americans had the weapon and the Soviets didn't was very subduing to the Russians, and they felt like they were under pressure. The Soviets, as well as other countries around the world decided they too needed nuclear weapons. This began the nuclear arms race, a time that saw enough weapons built to destroy the world and everything on it hundreds of times over.

Most agree that the climax of the Cold War was the Cuban Missile Crisis. The beginning of the Cuban Missile Crisis was when Nikita Khrushchev, the communist leader of the Soviet Union, decided to covertly place a nuclear missile launch site in Cuba. Khrushchev felt threatened by the United States of America because they had a Nuclear launch site located in Turkey with a number of nukes aimed at key Soviet cities (Office of the Historian). By placing the bombs in Cuba, Khrushchev thought it would even out the USA's psychological advantage. Fidel Castro, the communist leader of Cuba allowed the nukes on Cuban soil because he was also scared of America and knew that Cuba was on their list of countries to invade. Also, the placement of the nukes gave Cuba power, and put them on the playing field of great powers in the Cold War.

Castro wanted the building of the nuclear launch site to be public, but Khrushchev decided to make it a secret operation. His reasoning was that once the site was built, there was nothing the US could have done about it, but if they found out before hand they could close off Cuba to the Russians. A key mistake was made by Khrushchev and Castro when they let the American spy planes fly over Cuba, especially where they could see the launch site being built. When the American photo interpreter identified the

picture taken by the UAV as a nuclear launch site, it gave the Americans an edge because they had a few days to think about what they were going to do without the Russians and Cubans being aware that they knew about the launch site (Aliphath, Barkhouse and Brooks).

After the Americans found out about the building of the site, they surrounded Cuba with their navy and blacklisted Cuba from all travel and trade (Aliphath, Barkhouse and Brooks). Nothing was allowed in or out of Cuba, including some ships and submarines from the Soviet navy that were trying to get into Cuba with supplies and parts to finish the launch site. However, in order to avoid breaking out into a fully blown war, Khrushchev ordered them to turn around at the last second.

On October 27th, a few days into the Cuban Missile Crisis, an American plane accidentally flew into Russian airspace but he got back out without incident (Office of the Historian). The Russians could have fired on the plane and started another world war, but they didn't. However, on the same day an American spy plane that was flying low over Cuba was shot down by the Cuban military. When John F. Kennedy, the president of the USA, found out about this almost all of his many advisors, especially a general named LeMay wanted to strike at Russia. However Kennedy knew that this would result in a full out war with millions of deaths. All of the preparations for war were made; the plan to invade Cuba was code named Raincoat because they were going to rain down bombs on the entire country (Aliphath, Barkhouse and Brooks). The American war-mongers calculated that "only" one third of America's population would be lost in a campaign to entirely decimate the Soviets and Cuba. They were easily willing to take this trade off, but they received a letter from Khrushchev saying that if they removed their missiles from Turkey then the Soviets would remove theirs from Cuba. Despite the wishes of his advisors, Kennedy knew it was a very reasonable trade. In the future, he didn't want to be blamed for starting the a war when Khrushchev made such a fair offer. However at the same time, he couldn't back down and be seen as weak by the American people or else he might lose his place in office. As a solution, Kennedy sent his brother to propose a deal with the Russian ambassador. Kennedy's proposal was that the Americans would agree to secretly remove their missiles, but the Russians had to remove theirs publicly so it looked like they were the ones who backed out. Nikita Khrushchev agreed to this deal and saved the lives of millions of people with it.

All throughout the cold war, there were many people who were terrified of an all out nuclear war. A Polish Physicist named Joseph Rotblat was particularly concerned about this happening. Joseph was born in 1908 in Warsaw, Poland (The Strangest Dream). He was born into a prosperous family, but WWI saw the decline of his fathers business and they became very poor. He had to quit schooling after primary school to go study to be an electrician. Later, he worked as electrician during the day and went to the Free University of Poland to study in the evening (Peace Pledge Union). He studied nuclear fission and made some observations and conducted some experiments. He realized a chain reaction of atomic particles splitting can produce free neutrons, photons, and vast amounts of energy. Even at the time he realized this energy might be able to be harnessed into a bomb, but he chose not to think about that application (Peace Pledge

Union). He was soon invited to go work with James Chadwick, a Nobel Prize winner, at the University of Liverpool. The team studied nuclear reactions, but was interrupted by WWII and the constant bombings from the Germans. They were worried that the Germans would develop a nuclear bomb and Chadwick frequently tested German bomb sites for traces of nuclear material. When the American government invited the two scientists to go to the USA to work on development for a nuclear bomb, the pair accepted. They knew the only way to stop the Germans from using a nuclear bomb was to also possess such a weapon. Later in his life Joseph realized that was a foolish idea, as the idea of mutually assured destruction and deterrents assumes you are dealing with a rational person; Hitler was, of course, not a rational person (The Strangest Dream).

The project that Joseph went to work on was The Manhattan Project. He worked on the creation of the world's first nuclear bomb contently for a while. However, while he was at a dinner party with some fellow employees Joseph overheard General Groves telling Chadwick that the entire purpose of the project was to subdue the Russians (The Strangest Dream). Joseph felt this was immoral and wrong, as the Russians were their allies, and were sustaining most of the fighting and casualties of the war. Around this time, Joseph also found out that the Germans had given up their pursuit of creating an atomic bomb. Joseph could no longer justify working on the bomb and wanted to leave The Manhattan Project. The American authorities consented to let him go, but were highly skeptical. With much reluctance, they allowed Joseph to take an oath of secrecy and return to Europe. Joseph Rotblat was the one and only scientist to renounce and leave the Manhattan Project before its completion.

Rotblat's worst fears came true in 1945 when two atomic bombs were released over Japan in Hiroshima and Nagasaki (Groves). After the world saw the appalling destruction and devastation of the bombings, it sparked a worldwide nuclear arms race. Every country with the resources to do so was trying to develop a nuclear bomb, primarily to assure that an atomic bomb was not used against them. In 1949 Russia finished their nuclear bomb and joined USA on the list of countries with nuclear bombs. Other countries soon followed suit and thousands of nuclear bombs were developed around the world.

Rotblat dedicated the rest of his life to abolish nuclear weapons and study benign uses for nuclear technology. After WWII he began working at a hospital in London, developing various types nuclear technology for use in the medical field. In 1954 Rotblat went on television to explain the dangers of atomic bombs and how they could wipe out humanity (The Strangest Dream). Shortly after he met a man named Bertrand Russell who was also very against nuclear weapons. The pair decided to organize a conference of the best scientists around the world to discuss the perils of nuclear weapons and the possibility of nuclear disarmament. Russell formed a manifesto outlining the dangers of nuclear weapons and calling world political leaders to avoid resorting to such tactics. Many prestigious scientists signed the manifesto, endorsing it's contents. One of the scientists was Albert Einstein, who shortly after died; the manifesto came to be known as the Russell-Einstein Manifesto (Peace Pledge Union). Joseph was the youngest to

sign the manifesto, and was the one who announced the manifesto to the public in London (The Strangest Dream). There was a very positive feedback from the world towards the announcement, and it was decided that Joseph and Russell's plan to invite scientists from around the world to discuss nuclear disarmament would proceed. All that was left was to find a suitable place for the conference, as well as fund it. Joseph was contacted by a man named Cyrus Eaton, a wealthy business man and philanthropist, who offered to fund the entire meeting as long as it was held in his hometown of Pugwash.

Pugwash is a small coastal town on the shore of Nova Scotia and it is home to the Thinker's Lodge. Thinker's Lodge was a site where the world's greatest minds could come and stay to think and discuss their beliefs, studies, and ideas away from the prying eyes of the rest of the world. The building was once a summer home for Cyrus Eaton before he turned it into the Thinker's Lodge. Its seclusion from media and the global community as well as its neutral position in Canada made it an ideal location to hold the first Pugwash Peace Conference, discussing nuclear disarmament. Cyrus Eaton was a huge supporter of global peace and the abolition of weapons of mass destruction. He stepped up right away to support the gathering of scientists for the Pugwash Peace Conference and made it possible for the first gathering to happen.

Cyrus Eaton was born on December 27th, 1883, near Pugwash, Nova Scotia (A&E Television Networks). He showed great talent from a very young age, and the events of his childhood were what led to him being such an influential and important figure in the history of Pugwash and our world. His mother and the rest of his family instilled into him important lifelong values. His early teacher, Margret King, guided him towards his pursuit of knowledge; and one of his first employers, John D. Rockefeller, helped to set him on track to acquire his vast wealth, which he used to make the world a better place.

Cyrus grew up on a farm along the Pugwash River. His parents had four children before him, one sister and three brothers. Sadly, three of them died from an outbreak of diphtheria. Soon after Cyrus was born, he and his last remaining brother acquired two new healthy sisters. As with any farm house at this time, all the kids had chores that they were assigned. Joseph Eaton, Cyrus's father, believed in introducing responsibility at a very young age (Margret). One of Cyrus's first responsibilities was to milk, feed, and take care of one of the cows. Cyrus's cow was named Bess, and he grew very fond of her. One morning he woke up to find Bess missing; after searching all day with no luck he went to bed with a heavy heart. However, early the next morning, Cyrus went searching far and wide for the cow. He ended up finding Bess near a meadow of flowers with two newborn calves. Cyrus's actions in this event show some of his great character traits, like compassion for others, and determination to never give up. He showed compassion by really caring for the cow and feeling personally responsible for the cow's fate. He showed determination because even though he searched the entire day beforehand, he got up before anyone else to start searching again the next morning. He used these traits all throughout his life to help in becoming such a successful person. His compassion is particularly apparent when one looks at the way he tried to unite the world and break down the barriers of distrust and hatred between the many countries on

Earth. Cyrus felt everyone should cast away their widespread and irrational distaste for people of other cultures and countries (International). Cyrus was close friends with people all around the globe, including people on both sides of the Iron Curtain, something that was unheard of and heavily frowned upon at the time. Cyrus's determination was also apparent all throughout his life. A prime example was when he lost much of his wealth during the Great Depression, but afterwards was able to rebuild his fortune in the years following (Case Western). It takes a lot of hard work and determination to build a fortune from the ground up, and it takes a great degree more to build one twice.

By the time Cyrus was four, he was taking on even more responsibilities than taking care of Bess the cow. One notable event was when he took a bushel of grain to the mill by himself at age four (Margret). His father was busy on the farm, and his older brother John was still in school, so the horse and wagon were hitched up for young Cyrus. He proudly returned with a bag of flour to present to his mother. This event shows how quickly Cyrus was able to learn new things, and also how he was able to be independent, even at a very young age. Later in life Cyrus continued to be quick to learn new things, and adapt to changes in his life. One example of completely new idea that he was able to learn and adapt to, was the idea that there may not actually be a god. Many people find it extremely difficult to adapt something that they previously wholeheartedly believed in, and learn something new; but not Cyrus. As he went through school, studying biology and chemistry, he eventually came across the works of Charles Darwin. He actually received these volumes as a prize for scoring the highest mark in science. As he studied these novels, he adapted his religious beliefs away from orthodox Christianity and into a less concrete and more open belief in god and religion (Margret).

In September 1889 Cyrus's older brother, John, came down with diphtheria. He died within a few days. Cyrus was only five, and was deeply hurt by this event. When his father told him John died, Cyrus ran into the woods where he remained for hours, thinking and trying to cope with his brother's death (Margret). While this loss deeply affected him, it also didn't cripple him like it would to many other people. Cyrus was able to recover from his brother's death and take on all the new responsibilities that came with being the oldest child of the family.

Cyrus showed his capability of dealing with new responsibilities by helping his father. In the 1880s there was a succession of harsh, long winters that caused Joseph Eaton to give up farming (Margret). He, and his family, moved to Pugwash Junction and opened a lumber and general goods store. Though Cyrus was only 6 years old, he was tasked with tending to the store when his father was busy. Cyrus was able to weigh out goods and count change easily. These young responsibilities and early exposure to business no doubt attributed to Cyrus's adeptness with business later in life.

With all Cyrus's responsibilities and obligations, one might think he had no time for play. However, Cyrus frequently enjoyed activities like fishing, hiking, skating and canoeing. Cyrus's active lifestyle that he developed as a child continued throughout his life. Toro

Magazine features a picture of 75 year old Cyrus leading his family on a ski through the woods (Toro Magazine). As a youngster, Cyrus won prizes for his skill with riding a horse, and he continued to practice horse riding until a very old age (Margret). Staying fit and in shape is proven to help mental health and performance, and Cyrus's physical fitness would have helped him with his studies and education.

Cyrus's early education was one of the most important influences on his life. From a small child his mother would read to him from the Bible. Cyrus's early schoolteacher, Margret King was also a key figure in Cyrus's education. Cyrus considered himself lucky to have been taught by Mrs. King and later told people how great of a teacher she was and how important she was to him. As an adult he built and donated a state-of-the-art school to Pugwash Junction in the name of Margret King (Williams). At this age Cyrus also was the Sunday school librarian at the local church; this was important because he had access to the large amount of reading material stored in the church library. Through Mrs. King and his mother he developed a deep love and passion for reading. Wilson MacDonald, a man who visited Cyrus at the Thinker's Lodge and later wrote a small book on his experience, quoted Cyrus as saying "I read a poem every day of my life" (MacDonald). Cyrus took every opportunity to read in his youth as well; while peddling newspapers for his father's general store, he read the papers cover to cover, every day (Margret). As a direct result of this, Cyrus became fluent in world affairs and current events at a very young age. Cyrus's concern for people all around the world was developed at this time, as he discovered what was happening globally.

Cyrus's drive to learn did not stop with reading books, he also did extremely well in school, scoring very high marks in all of the classes he took. Cyrus had an amazing memory and it was said that he knew the names of every bird and tree in North America (Mel James). The Eaton parents knew how important education was and stressed the importance of it to all their kids. In 1901 Cyrus went to McMaster University to study Theology with hopes of becoming a minister. Cyrus strived to improve his education all through his life; when he was older, he invited many high-class thinkers to his summer home to discuss their work and discoveries, eventually turning the summer home into the Thinker's Lodge (Parks Canada). Cyrus made top marks in his university, and was determined to pay for his own education. While visiting his uncle Charles Eaton in Cleveland, Ohio he met, and was hired by John D. Rockefeller for a summer job. John Rockefeller was a large influence on Cyrus's career path. Before John, Cyrus was on route to becoming a top-notch minister, but John convinced him that you could help more people with money than with preaching. John led Cyrus on the path to capitalism and business. With John Rockefeller's help at first, Cyrus began to develop his business. Cyrus made a fortune from developing utilities in Canada and Midwestern America. He still placed value in education and sponsored various schools and institutions (Thinker's Lodge).

During the Great Depression in the 1930s, much of Cyrus's wealth was lost. However, Cyrus was able to rebuild his empire by investing in railways, steel manufacturing, and mining. Cyrus was able to recover from a great loss and get back on his feet again, just like he did many years before, when his brother died. Cyrus became one of the richest

men in North America, but he was not idle with his money. Just like John Rockefeller had told him, he was able to help many people with his wealth. When his hometown of Pugwash fell upon difficult times, and was nearly dead, he sought to revive the small town. He built a lodge called Pineo Lodge, now called the Thinker's Lodge, as well as building a brand new school. The school was named after his first teacher Margret King, and was built with the latest technologies and equipment available. The school was years ahead of its time, and allowed the residents of Pugwash the opportunity to study with the same tools as a much larger, city based school (Williams).

Cyrus also used his money for good in other ways. By 1957, Cyrus had hosted multiple meetings and conferences between high class thinkers. He had been following the events of the world and had developed a concern for weapons of mass destruction, especially the atomic and hydrogen bomb. It was natural for him to extend an offer to Joseph Rotblat to host a conference discussing world peace. Joseph and his colleagues accepted; scientists from all corners of the globe came to Pugwash for the conference. It was very special because it showed people from both sides of the cold war working together. The meeting was under a lot of stipulation from both the American and Russian secret service. The meeting made a statement and an example for the world. After the conference was over, almost all the scientists signed a paper that requested global nuclear disarmament.

Every year following 1957, a conference was held in its name. The Pugwash conferences are held all around the world and are still held today. By enabling the first Pugwash Peace conference, Cyrus changed the world. The International Pugwash Group had a key role in ending the Vietnam War, as well as helping to establish various treaties and weapon conventions (The Strangest Dream).

In his old age, Cyrus still wasn't satisfied with the state of the world. He continued to voice his opinions and concerns without any notion of the repercussions of his actions. He was nothing if not honest; often times, brutally so. Eventually the International Pugwash group separated from Cyrus because of his controversial position. There were people who accused him of being a communist supporter and wished him to be arrested (Gleisser). However he persistently said that he was very pro-capitalist all throughout his life. He just didn't agree with the hate and discrimination between countries. Despite all his accomplishments, when he was old he felt like his efforts were in vain. He often said that matters were even worse because of the wide availability of weapons of mass destruction, combined with the instability of the countries in the Middle East. Cyrus died in 1979, and was buried in Deep Cove, Nova Scotia.

Cyrus Eaton was a very important figure to the history of the world, and he changed the state of the world for the better. His legacy is continued by the International Pugwash group, and Cyrus's work still effects us today. If not for the events of his childhood, and the guide of his childhood mentors, he would not have become the momentous figure he was as an adult.

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