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Address of Cyrus Eaton

American Industrialist

at

Central School of Planning and Statistics

Warsaw, Poland

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To be the recipient of an honorary degree from this distinguished institution moves me deeply.

Throughout my life, I have been a warm admirer of the Polish people. I have studied your heroic thousand-year struggle for national identity with fascination, and have been impressed with your courage and cheerfulness, even under the most severe adversity. Your achievements, down the centuries, in science, the arts and commerce and, more recently, in industry suggest that the future holds high promise for Poland.

Everyone in the world who undertakes the study of science treasures the memory of two natives of Poland. Copernicus' theory of the solar system revolutionized world thinking, and opened the way for mankind to begin solving the riddle of the universe. Marie Sklodovska Curie's brilliant work with her husband on radioactivity, and their discovery of radium, laid the groundwork for modern nuclear physics. Through the Pugwash Conferences, I have been proud to become personally acquainted with the late Professor Infeld and other present-day Polish scientists.

The immortal music of Chopin has long found favor with American audiences, and the name of Paderewski is a household word in the United States. I regret my inability to read your great literature in the original language, but I am well acquainted with the Polish literary genius from the works of Conrad, who wrote in English with a mastery rarely matched even by those whose native tongue it is.

Turning to the economic field, to which I, like many of you, have devoted much of my career, I congratulate Poland on the upbuilding of its industry in the period of complete reconstruction since the end of World War II. You are world famous for your steel works and your coal mines, among other industries. Polish flag ships are plying the seven seas, and you are wisely working hard to expand this ocean commerce. In agriculture, there are opportunities for you to cultivate, not only to provide food and fiber for your own people, but also to develop foreign markets such as are now enjoyed by your incomparable Polish hams.

In all of these practical areas that I have mentioned, I have had long experience. History has demonstrated, and it has been the keystone of my unremitting search for international understanding, that the best guarantee of peace is the fullest exchange of goods and ideas between nations, whether of the same or opposing economics, philosophy and religion. In my opinion, every nation has a right to select its own system.

As a dedicated and demonstrated capitalist, I firmly believe that broadly increased trade would be beneficial for both my country and yours. I accordingly pledge myself to do everything I can to assist you in securing American technical information and equipment to advance your industry and agriculture, to encourage your shipping into American ports, Great Lakes as well as coastal, and to work for the removal of present restraints on Polish-American trade.

I also ask you to join me in a special effort to rekindle the pride of the 6-1/2 million Polish-Americans in the land of their ancestors. Let us not forget, for instance, that the United States has shared with Poland such national heroes as Kosciusko and Pulaski for the almost three centuries since the American Revolution.

During the next thirty years, every nation on earth will be obliged to deal decisively with increasingly urgent problems of population and environment, in order not merely to maintain but to improve the quality of life on this planet. Poland, with her rich intellectual and artistic heritage, possesses rare potential for contributing to the desired enrichment of the human race. May you realize that potential in the world of peace for which the people of both Poland and America yearn.