

# THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

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## Maverick Millionaire

### Cyrus Eaton at Age 86 Still Pushes for Peace And Stirs Controversy

### Tycoon Promotes East-West Contacts, Helps Treaties.

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One day a State Department escort brought some visiting Russian journalists to Cleveland, and offered to take them to a football game. The newsmen said they would rather see how a real American capitalist lived. Cyrus Eaton, chairman of the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway, happened to be available.

The industrialist, then 71, immediately hit it off with his Communist guests. The experience prompted Mr. Eaton to embark on an unlikely project for a man of his age and position: To Western contacts with the world's top Communists and thereby attempt to promote peace.

That was 15 years ago. Since then, the project has made Mr. Eaton one of the nation's most controversial businessmen. While many assumed his peace interests would dwindle with time, at age 86, the Canadian-born American railroad tycoon is still pressing his crusade, winning both applause and invective.

Every time a visiting Russian raises his vodka glass to toast Mr. Eaton, some politician or editor still labels him a Communist, a traitor or a fool. Yet he has clearly carved for himself a unique niche in East-West relations.

Mr. Eaton is one of the few Americans consistently welcome in the Communist world's highest circles — no small feat for a capitalist industrial empire builder. Though he is sometimes dismissed as a "well-meaning old man," his supporters say he makes a far greater contribution to Soviet-American understanding than many realize. For instance, an informal international conference is widely credited with laying much of the groundwork for the 1963 Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

pace rarely slackens. In New York last week Mr. Eaton conferred with Rumanian President Ceausescu. In Paris yesterday and Monday he talked with top American and Communist negotiators at the Vietnam peace talks. Today he is scheduled to fly to Poland to receive a University of Warsaw honorary degree for contributions to East-West relations. He'll also confer with Polish cabinet ministers.



#### Talks at Pugwash

The peace work began shortly after the journalists' visit in 1955. Mr. Eaton soon created the famous "Pugwash Conferences," named after the Nova Scotia village where he was raised, maintains a farm and holds many of the talks. These conferences periodically bring together leading scientists, statesmen and educators from East and West to discuss world issues.

At the Pugwash Conference in Moscow in late 1960, Walt W. Rostow, a top political adviser to President-elect Kennedy and Jerome Wiesner, Mr. Kennedy's scientific adviser, discussed a possible nuclear test ban treaty with leading Soviet officials. The men informally agreed on common grounds for such a pact; these helped form the basis for the actual treaty, diplomats say.

The conferences also helped prepare the way for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) currently under way in Vienna, says William Polk, a former State Department official who heads the Adlai Stevenson Institute of International Affairs in Chicago.

#### A Global Minefield

"The world today is like a minefield, and members of the conference thread their way through it," says Mr. Polk. He describes conference members as "advance men who can afford to make mistakes and admit them because they are not representatives of governments who have to save face." Though they are often highly placed, conference participants speak as private individuals.

Mr. Eaton also helped arrange U.S. trips of Premiers Khrushchev and Kosygin and numerous other Soviet leaders. Tower International Inc., headed by Mr. Eaton's son, Cyrus Jr., works to arrange American corporate ventures behind the Iron Curtain. Among other projects, the profit-making concern has helped American companies establish hotels in Rumania and undertake movie productions in Hungary.

The senior Mr. Eaton is currently trying to assemble a syndicate to sell 50,000 head of cattle breeding stock, preferably from the U.S., to the Soviet Union. "I expect to make a profit in the transaction, too," he says. Russia is short of meat.

Mr. Eaton's periodic analyses of Communist developments have often proven correct. For instance, well before the Russian launching of Sputnik I in 1957 amazed and shocked the West, Mr. Eaton repeatedly warned of Soviet technological progress.

Tanned and erect, the white-haired industrialist can still exhaust a much younger visitor trying to keep pace with him on a walk. His hearing is failing, but his measured speech sprinkled with classical allusions, is so precise it often sounds as though it were written out in advance.

Talking to a visitor at his Nova Scotia farm, Mr. Eaton expresses a pragmatic attitude: He doesn't much like the Communist system, but figures that its industrial and scientific successes and its political domination of much of the world amply demonstrate its durability. He believes face-to-face contacts at all levels can best ease world tensions. Increased trade is the surest way to improve East-West relations, he argues.

Mr. Eaton deplors the Vietnamese war partly for its tendency to foster American inflation and divert resources. "No one has ever had the economic opportunity America has now," he argues. "Why the hell do we have to go and get ourselves into a war now?"

The Cleveland, who visited Hanoi last year, thinks President Nixon should move urgently to initiate top-level peace talks. "If Mr. Nixon and the Hanoi leadership would sit down together, they could end this war overnight," he contends.

Despite his dovish views and trip to Hanoi, Mr. Eaton probably wouldn't feel at home at a militant New Left gathering. He isn't closely linked to any political party and the candidates he does support tend to be moderate Democrats, among them Cleveland's black mayor, Carl Stokes.

#### Lenin Peace Prize

Of course, dovish views and praise for Soviet achievements boost Mr. Eaton's standing in the Communist world, and Soviet appreciation of the American businessman is readily apparent. In 1961, Mr. Eaton received the Soviet Union's Lenin Peace Prize for "unrelenting efforts to bring about better international understanding." As one example, the Russians specified the Pugwash Conferences.

But many believe that what really sets Mr. Eaton apart in the Communist world is, ironically, his stature as a self-confessed, successful capitalist. Citizens of Communist countries often indicate considerable respect for American industrial achievements; they are also taught from childhood that millionaires have enormous power in capitalist countries.

Peace efforts gain Mr. Eaton considerable respect in Russia, "but his importance in the social and economic life of the U.S.A. obviously adds to his prestige," says Vladimir P. Pavlichenko, a Russian United Nations official.

It is hard to determine just how important Mr. Eaton really is in business these days. Sources estimate his personal fortune at about \$100 million but he won't confirm or deny the figure. Nine years ago *Fortune* magazine estimated that through his positions and shareholdings, Mr. Eaton controlled or significantly influenced companies with assets totaling \$2.6 billion. He has since shed some of these interests, but he won't detail his current business activities.

Mr. Eaton started as a shopkeeper's son from Pugwash, a lobstering village. As a 17-year-old visiting Cleveland in 1900, he one day dined with his Baptist minister uncle at a parishioner's home. The hostess was appalled to find the youth working during the trip as a downtown hotel clerk. She asked her husband to find him a better job.

The husband was John D. Rockefeller Sr. Mr. Eaton soon became a clerk, errand boy and companion for Mr. Rockefeller during summer vacations. After graduating from McMaster University, Toronto, in 1905, the future pride of Pugwash became a Rockefeller troubleshooter.

At 24, Mr. Eaton borrowed the money to start his own Canadian power plant and was soon worth millions. At one time or another, he controlled Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. and held big interests in B. F. Goodrich Co. and

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Firestone Tire & Rubber Co. In 1925 he wrote an \$18 million personal check to acquire control of Trumbull Steel Co. He then merged Trumbull with several other steel companies to form Republic Steel Corp., the nation's third largest steelmaker. Later on, he became involved in Chesapeake & Ohio Railway affairs and was elected chairman of the carrier in 1954. This post is his main business activity today.

## **No Golf With the Boys**

Though Mr. Eaton is enormously successful in business, some associates claim he tends to remain remote from business associates.

The fact is, there's never been time for golf with the boys and even today Mr. Eaton's routine would exhaust many a younger man. Up at 5:30, he spends an hour or so "tramping" around his farm outside Cleveland. Driven to his 36th floor downtown Cleveland office by eight, he works there until mid-afternoon. This leaves the late afternoon free for more tramping and horseback riding.

Mr. Eaton shuns tobacco, tea, coffee, alcohol and fatty foods. He attributes his vigor to "my forms of recreation—tramping and reading what you would call the classics—which allow me to save all my nervous energy for (work)."

Despite his healthy routine, Mr. Eaton has had to cut back—a little bit. He quit ice hockey at 70, tennis at 75 and skiing at 80. His horseback riding makes doctors shudder, so he says he may give it up—at 90.