

## Patronage Impossible: Cyrus Eaton and His Pugwash Scientists

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A United Press International (UPI) report from 13 September 1960 proved to be the last straw.<sup>1</sup> It cited the “wealthy industrialist” Cyrus Eaton from Cleveland: “The next session of his ‘Pugwash Scientists Conference’ will be held in Moscow because of the State Department’s refusal to permit Red China physicists to attend.”<sup>2</sup> The following day, the *New York Herald Tribune* and other leading US newspapers disseminated Eaton’s statement. It was not the first time the “red capitalist,” with his expressions of friendship towards the Soviet Union in general and Nikita Khrushchev in particular, had put US foreign policy to the test. The strongest reaction, however, came not from government circles in Washington, but from the three American members of the London-based Continuing Committee of the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs (PCSWA; Pugwash): biophysicist and former Manhattan Project scientist Eugene Rabinowitch, biologist and geneticist Bentley Glass and nuclear chemist Harrison Brown.

Eaton was a wealthy industrialist whose business portfolio included not only coal, iron and steel companies but also the Chesapeake Ohio Railway: his interest in averting nuclear war led to his becoming an early and principal patron of Pugwash. However, since the first conference, which took place at Eaton’s country lodge in Pugwash, Nova Scotia (Canada) in 1957, Rabinowitch

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1 This article could not have been written without the ongoing scholarly discussions with my colleague Alison Kraft, her help with the English language and her willingness to share archival materials with me, especially those held in the Rotblat papers (Henceforth: RTBT) at the Churchill Archives Center, Cambridge, UK. My warm thanks also go to Teresa Kewachuk for her generosity in enabling access to the collection of historical documents at the Thinkers’ Lodge in Pugwash and making my stay there in late summer 2014 a productive and enjoyable experience. This manuscript was written in the library of the Max Planck Institute for History of Science in Berlin and I greatly appreciate and would like to thank the librarians there for their excellent help and support. Finally, special thanks go to Camilla Nielsen (Vienna) for translating my text.

2 *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists (BAS)* 16, no. 8 (1960): i. Marcus Gleisser, *The World of Cyrus Eaton* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1965/2005): 229.

had observed his unconventional and rather brash activities with great suspicion and had sent critical reports about them to London on numerous occasions.<sup>3</sup> In Fall 1960 he felt he had to take action. Together with Brown and Glass he penned a “Letter to the Editor” for the October edition of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists (BAS)*.<sup>4</sup> The letter stated that Eaton had funded three Pugwash conferences in Canada and had also provided substantial funding for the Kitzbühel/Vienna meeting in Austria in 1958. It emphasized that Eaton had neither initiated these conferences nor had any say in determining their content. It also made clear that in the future, he would no longer be allowed to support any event and would be invited to attend only as a guest, rather than as an active participant. Brown, Glass and Rabinowitch emphasized too that the possibility of a US conference venue had not been explored. Rather, Soviet colleagues had offered to host the upcoming sixth conference in Moscow because all of the previous conferences had taken place in the West. That said, the three letter writers remained committed to holding another conference in the United States as soon as possible. The American Pugwash group as well as the Continuing Committee was acutely aware of the need to demonstrate balance between east and west, not least in protocol issues such as the location of conference sites. Eaton, who liked to flaunt both his involvement in the Pugwash conferences and his personal friendship with Khrushchev in the American media, represented a challenge primarily for US Pugwashites, who feared for their reputations at home. But the way in which they defined this problem was heavily influenced by American anti-communism; moreover, this also influenced how Brown, Glass and Rabinowitch framed the issue in discussions with British and Soviet Pugwash colleagues within the Continuing Committee.<sup>5</sup> That is to say, these conversations were steeped in political

3 Rabinowitch to Rotblat, 15 November 1957 and 23 November 1957. RTBT 5/1/1/8-2. Rabinowitch to Rotblat, 23 October 1958. RTBT 5/4/7/1. Rabinowitch to Rotblat, 21 May 1959. RTBT 5/2/1/4 (15).

4 “Scientists and Cyrus Eaton.” Letter to the editor by Harrison Brown, Bentley Glass, and Eugene Rabinowitch, in: *BAS* 16, no. 8 (1960): i–ii. Rabinowitch had co-founded the *BAS* in 1945 and was its editor until his death in 1973. In effect, this was, therefore, a letter to himself.

5 For broader historical context on the experiences of American scientists in the anti-communist climate in the country see, for example: Jessica Wang, *American Science in an Age of Anxiety: Scientists, Anticommunism, and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999). Zuoyue Wang, *In Sputnik's Shadow: The President's Science Advisory Committee and Cold War America* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2008). Paul Rubinson, *Redefining Science: Scientists, the National Security State, and Nuclear Weapons in Cold War America* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2016). Sarah Bridger, *Scientists at War: The Ethics of Cold War Weapons Research* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016).

considerations specific to the nation-state – specifically, the US. Here, then, we have an example of the way in which domestic matters exercised powerful and enduring influence over the emerging transnational character of Pugwash.

The fact that these senior American scientists were now actively seeking to dissociate themselves from Eaton raises a number of questions. How did the conflict arise? Why did it come to a head in 1960, and why was such a distancing even necessary at a time when American anti-communism had already passed its zenith? To be sure, the conflict with Eaton, which culminated in the summer of 1960, also conjured up memories of the McCarthy era. The difficulties with Eaton forced senior figures within Pugwash, especially the American group, to confront several sensitive but crucial aspects of their transnational project at what was a formative phase in the development of the PCSWA. It was not just about the ever-precarious funding of meetings which involved substantial travel and accommodation costs for scientists from around the world. Also at stake was the public image of Pugwash: American press coverage of Eaton and his links with Pugwash was having a powerful and negative effect on public perceptions of Pugwash. There was also the question of where the “eminent men of science” convening under the rubric of Pugwash could best position themselves so as to be able to make a contribution to preventing nuclear war in a rapidly evolving global landscape of peace and anti-nuclear movements, the various initiatives – statements, petitions, organizations – of concerned scientists, as well as self-proclaimed and official expert boards convened by the government.<sup>6</sup>

In the following, I first identify the sources of conflict between senior Pugwash scientists and Eaton – whose patronage was, undoubtedly, crucial to Pugwash in its early years. A sketch of Cyrus Eaton as a public figure in the 1950s illustrates both his self-assured manner and his idiosyncratic political actions, which were the source of growing unease and ultimately proved incompatible with the Pugwash style. The shared interest of preventing nuclear war proved an insufficient basis for a fruitful and sustainable relationship between the Ohio businessman and senior American scientists keen to protect their own reputation and that of Pugwash. In the final section, I analyze how this incompatibility became untenable for Brown, Glass and Rabinowitch amid an intensifying presidential campaign which, as we will see, created a political dynamic that came to bear centrally upon the agenda of the transnational Pugwash conferences.

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6 For more information on the context of the international anti-nuclear (weapons) movement, see Lawrence S. Wittner, *Resisting the Bomb. A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement 1954–1970* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997).

## 1 Framing Pugwash: Locations, Money, Management, Brand Names and the Media

In the turbulent years following Stalin's death in 1953, when the entire political world was thinking about new ways to communicate in order to contain the nuclear threat, Cyrus Eaton decided to use the idyllic lodge he had owned since 1929 in his home village of Pugwash, for a new purpose. He had it elaborately rebuilt, replacing its former use as a bed and breakfast place for tourists to remodel it as a venue for scientists and scholars from around the world to come together in a relaxed setting in order to exchange ideas about the global situation.<sup>7</sup> At "Thinkers' Lodge," as it became known, prominent figures – including British biologist Julian Huxley – gathered for the first time in the summer of 1955. The following year, this comfortable "hideaway for brains" drew eleven scholars of the type "from whom governments seek advice" who in their discussions focused on the situation in the Middle East right after Egyptian president Abdel Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal.<sup>8</sup> Eaton's retreats in Pugwash continued to take place until 1961, addressing various themes and bringing together different participants.<sup>9</sup>

Only a few days after the publication of the Russell-Einstein Manifesto in July 1955, Eaton wrote to the author of this "brilliant statement on nuclear warfare," Bertrand Russell, offering to finance the conference called for in the

7 <http://thinkerslodge.org/history/thinkers-lodge>. Accessed 30 March 2017. Pineo Lodge, as it was originally called, functioned as a guesthouse and teahouse run by one of Cyrus Eaton's sisters from 1930/31 to 1953.

8 The participants were Heinrich Brüning (former Reich Chancellor of Weimar Germany; Harvard University), Chien Juan-Sheng (Peking Institute of Politics and Law), H.N. Fieldhouse (McGill University), Paul Geren (US State Department, United Nations), Majid Khadduri (Johns Hopkins University), Leo Kohn (Hebrew University), Jean Lapierre (French consul at Halifax), Stephen Longrigg (Brigadier in the British Army), John Marshall (Rockefeller Foundation), Alexander Samarin (metallurgist, Academy of Sciences, Moscow), James Baster (United Nations, UK). See: Wilson MacDonald, "Pugwash, Toronto," The Pine Tree Publishing Company, 1957 (printed facsimile of a handwritten manuscript), Thinkers' Lodge Papers (hereafter, TLP). Ian Sclanders, "Cyrus Eaton's hideaway for brains," *Maclean's*, Canada's National Magazine, 27 October 1956. TLP, Folder: clippings. (Hereafter: TLP, clippings).

9 Robert G. McGruder, "Loved and hated. Eaton: One-man sage of changing fortunes in business and politics," *The Plain Dealer* (Cleveland), 1 January 1977. TLP, clippings. In addition to the Pugwash conference convened by Russell and Rotblat, two further retreats for North American college presidents and deans took place in 1957 alone. Sylvia Nickerson, "Taking a Stand: Exploring the Role of the Scientists prior to the First Pugwash Conference on Science and World Affairs, 1957," *Scientia Canadensis: Canadian Journal of the History of Science, Technology and Medicine/Scientia Canadensis: revue canadienne d'histoire des sciences, des techniques et de la médecine* 36, no. 2, (2013): 63–87, 72.

Manifesto on the condition that it would be held at Thinkers' Lodge in Pugwash.<sup>10</sup> This condition, however, was just as unacceptable to Russell and the cohort around him in London as a similar offer of funding made by the Greek shipping magnate Aristoteles Onassis, contingent on the conference being held in Monte Carlo. In London, it was hoped that sponsors could be found whose financial support did not come with conditions, enabling the conference to take place as planned in New Delhi following the Indian Science Congress in January 1957. Senior Indian scientists and Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru had signaled their enthusiasm for this project in conversations with the British physicist and Nobel laureate Cecil Frank Powell, who had been a co-signatory of the Manifesto. However, the Suez Crisis in fall of 1956 and the resulting precarious travel conditions thwarted these plans.<sup>11</sup> Eaton's offer was now reconsidered.<sup>12</sup> Eaton's wealth meant that he would have no trouble flying participants in from ten different countries and four continents in July 1957 and arranging for their onward travel to the remote village of Pugwash where they would find newly refurbished accommodation at his lodge. Anne Jones, the lady of the house, made sure there was a dignified setting for the "stimulating conversations." Having attended university with his daughters and sharing their father's dedication to the cause of peace-building, she married Eaton shortly after the 1957 conference.<sup>13</sup> Bertrand Russell and Joseph Rotblat, the only non-Nobel laureate signatory of the manifesto but who, from the outset, had shouldered the greatest burden in organizing and disseminating information about the project, now accepted Eaton's offer. But they insisted that the conference be kept strictly separate from Eaton's other activities both in Pugwash and beyond.<sup>14</sup> However, it would soon prove impossible to maintain this separation which clouded the claims of Pugwashites to intellectual independence in the public sphere.

Eaton was the sole financier of the first two conferences, held in Pugwash in July 1957 and in the Canadian town of Lac Beauport in March 1958. Moreover, he did not adopt a stance of noble detachment but rather participated, together with his wife Anne, as a very active 'guest' at almost all conferences, be it in Pugwash or elsewhere – and he made no secret of this. The connection

10 Eaton to Russell, 13 July 1955. RTBT 5/2/1/1-11.

11 For further details on plans for and discussions of the conference between 1955 and 1957, see the chapter by Geoffrey Roberts in this volume.

12 Joseph Rotblat: *Pugwash – the First Ten Years. History of the Conferences of Science and World Affairs* (New York: Humanities Press 1968), 13.

13 Rotblat, *First ten*, 16. Andrew Brown, *Keeper of the Nuclear Conscience. The Life and Work of Joseph Rotblat* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 135–141.

14 Rotblat, *First ten*, 13–14.

Eaton was making between himself and the PCSWA was readily apparent in press reports as early as May 1958:

Man's mind devised the thermonuclear bomb, and man's mind can devise a way to avoid destroying himself with that bomb. Because he believes this, Cyrus Stephen Eaton has dipped into his millions to sponsor two international conferences of nuclear scientists and to begin preparations for a third, probably in Austria this September.<sup>15</sup>

Within the Continuing Committee, and especially amongst its US members, there was irritation at such press reports because they suggested that scientists were serving as "Eaton's puppets," following the call of a super-rich philanthropist with "naïve appeasement" ideas.<sup>16</sup> Such episodes served as an incentive to find other sponsors. As it turned out, the third and hitherto, largest conference held in the Austrian town of Kitzbühel and in Vienna in September 1958 was made possible by public funding.<sup>17</sup> Instrumental in this was the physicist and Pugwashite Hans Thirring who, as Silke Fengler discusses elsewhere in this volume, had strong connections to social-democratic circles of Austria's Second Republic. However, the American participants' travel expenses still had to be raised by soliciting donations in the United States. In the end, about a dozen sponsors had been found; together, they provided just \$24,000, with \$10,000 coming from Eaton.<sup>18</sup> Eaton was, of course, present at that conference, and in Vienna he insisted on giving one of the concluding public speeches in the ceremonial hall of the Austrian Academy of Sciences.<sup>19</sup> All the more effort was made to organize the following conference without

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- 15 Richard H. Smith, "Eaton, Capitalist Peacemonger," *Sunday* 25 May 1958. TLP, clippings.
- 16 Rabinowitch to Rotblat, 21 May 1959. RTBT 5/2/1/4 (15). Rabinowitch to Rotblat, 15 November 1957. RTBT 5/1/1/8-2.
- 17 Rotblat, *First ten*, 22. For background information, see Silke Fengler's chapter in this volume.
- 18 The donations ranged from 100 to 5,000 dollars, and not all of them could be clearly attributed. The donors came mainly from New York (4) Boston (1) or resided in Rome (1) or Geneva (2). Three donors were women. "Donation list for the Vienna Conference of Scientists." RTBT 5/2/1/3 (37).
- 19 Apart from Eaton, the speakers included Austrian Federal President Adolf Schärf, scientists Powell (UK), Russell (UK), Aleksandr Topchiev (USSR) and Thirring (Austria). Report by Günther Rienäcker to the Central Committee of the Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands regarding his participation at the third Pugwash Conference, 1 October 1958, 5. DY 30/48026, Bundesarchiv Berlin (hereafter BArch). In his report on the Kitzbühel/Vienna conference, Rotblat mentions the "guests" Anne and Cyrus Eaton as well as their extensive support, but he makes no reference to Eaton's closing speech. Rotblat, *First ten*, 20–23.

Eaton's support which was held in Baden (near Vienna) in July 1959, and was an altogether smaller and more intimate affair.<sup>20</sup> However, that same year, in a move indicative of the extent of the financial difficulties enveloping the PCSWA, the scientists returned to Pugwash, Nova Scotia, for the fifth conference in August 1959 which was given to the theme of Biological and Chemical warfare. As with the first conference, Anne and Cyrus Eaton took care of everything, easing preparations and lending a professional air to the gathering.<sup>21</sup> This was particularly noticeable because in Baden the organizers had not only gone without Eaton's financial support, but also without managerial support from his office which, as Rotblat later noted, had negative effects on the conference: "The Baden Conference was not as effective as the previous Pugwash Conferences, probably because of the lack of proper organization."<sup>22</sup>

From the first conference onward, Eaton's personal assistant Betty Royon, herself "a millionaire with a Phi Beta Kappa key," and her secretarial staff provided managerial and administrative support to the PCSWA – this was a huge advantage which helped reduce mutual misunderstandings of the kind which had overshadowed the Baden meeting.<sup>23</sup> In 1958 and 1959, Royon was aided in her administrative role by Patricia Lindop, a young British radiobiologist, short-term partner and long-standing colleague of Rotblat, who later participated in many Pugwash meetings as a scientist in her own right. Together, Royon and Lindop transcribed papers written by conference participants, often at the last minute; they put in night shifts to record the proceedings of daily meetings so that they could be circulated to everyone the next morning. During the second conference at Lac Beauport alone, they processed nearly 1,000 pages of material. Royon and her staff also ran, at Eaton's expense, the back office in Kitzbühel, and following the administrative shortcomings of the Baden meeting they took over again in Pugwash in 1959 using "all modern equipment."<sup>24</sup> Moreover, they compiled the official proceedings, usually

20 Protokoll über die Sitzung des Pugwash-Kreises in der Bundesrepublik (Minutes of the Meeting of the Pugwash Circle in the Federal Republic), 1 October 1959, 2. RTBT 5/5/2/64 (3). Rotblat, *First ten*, 23. See Fengler's chapter in this volume.

21 Rotblat, *First ten*, 24–26.

22 Rotblat, *First ten*, 24.

23 Booton Herndon, "Cyrus Eaton: Bouncing Billionaire," *True. The Man's Magazine*, January 1958, 19–21 and 90–92, 90. TLP, clippings. Rotblat later reported that the Baden meeting was difficult, with some "very heated" sessions "particularly on the deadlock in the Geneva negotiations on a test ban treaty" and traced "mutual accusation" and "mistrust" between the Americans and the Soviets – somewhat vaguely – back to "a lack of understanding the different ways of handling reports of official negotiations in the respective countries." Rotblat, *First ten*, 23.

24 Rotblat, *First ten*, 25.

several hundred pages in length, after each conference and sent them out not only to all the participants of previous conferences but also to the “heads of state or government” and to other interested parties.<sup>25</sup> Only Eaton’s Cleveland office run by Betty Royon was able to organize the questionnaire that was sent out to 35,000 scientists worldwide in 1958 to determine how the recently adopted Vienna Declaration and the agendas of the Pugwash conferences defined therein were to be positioned in the future.<sup>26</sup> In 1960, Royon became a casualty of the growing desire of American Pugwashites to distance themselves from Eaton and was divested of her administrative role largely at the instigation of the American and the British members of the Continuing Committee.<sup>27</sup>

However, separating Pugwash from Eaton’s financial and organizational support was still not enough. The name Pugwash continued to denote two different things: the on-going retreats Eaton organized on his own initiative in his Thinkers’ Lodge every summer – as well as the scientists’ conferences that had been organized by the Continuing Committee in London once or twice a year at different places all over the world since 1957. Neither the press nor Eaton himself tried to differentiate the two types of conference. Shortly after the first scientists’ conference in Pugwash in 1957, Rabinowitch had already complained to Rotblat about Eaton’s counter-productive “drum beating” in the press, to which Eaton had close contacts – especially the *New York Herald Tribune* – and by means of which he was coopting the scientists’ conferences for his own agenda.<sup>28</sup> Astonishingly, this did not deter the Continuing Committee from calling the conference held in Kitzbühel and Vienna in 1958 – the

25 Rotblat, *First ten*, 19.

26 Rotblat, *First ten*, 19, 25, 35–36; Brown, *Keeper*, 149–154.

27 *BAS* 16, no. 8 (November 1960), ii. Two years later, Gleisser describes Royon as “still bridling with the words of the trio” (i.e., Brown, Glass, Rabinowitch), denouncing them as the “petty jealousies of some men of science.” Gleisser, *World*, 231. “Participants in the Pugwash Conferences of Science and World Affairs meetings 1957–2007,” official list found on the website of the Pugwash organization: <https://pugwashconferences.files.wordpress.com/2014/05/participants-and-meetings-1957-2007.pdf>. Accessed 30 March 2017. This includes not only all the Pugwashites but also some observers and important staff members; Royon, however, is not listed.

28 Rabinowitch to Rotblat 15 November and again 21 May 1959, RTBT 5/1/1/8-2. The interview in question was printed as “Cyrus Eaton: Let’s Meet the Soviets Half-Way,” *New York Herald Tribune* 8 November 1957 and cited in the anonymous article entitled “Cyrus S. Eaton – Industrialist with Vision,” *The American Review of East-West-Trade* 22 (March 1969): 14–26. TLP, clippings. It was also reprinted as “Eaton, Cyrus: Let’s Meet the Soviets Half-Way,” in Chalmers M. Roberts, ed. *Can We Meet the Russians Halfway?* (New York: Doubleday, 1958), 92–94.



first on the European continent – the “Third Pugwash Conference.” In order to continue their new tradition, they decided to stick with the “absurd but unforgettable” name Pugwash in spite of on-going confusion in the media.<sup>29</sup> Rabinowitch and his American colleagues repeatedly insisted on changing the name so as to sever the link with Eaton which, in their view, was not only off-putting to other potential American sponsors but also politically compromising the entire undertaking in the US. But they did not succeed in making themselves heard. In June 1960, the Continuing Committee deferred discussion of the name to the next conference. In November 1960, the Soviet member of the Continuing Committee, petro-chemist Aleksandr V. Topchiev, warned in stark terms against addressing the name issue during the Moscow conference.<sup>30</sup>

Hopes were set on the newly appointed public relations officer (P.R.O.) Wayland Young, 2nd Baron Kennet, a colourful figure in British public life who was both a member of the Labour Party and the House of Lords, whilst also an architect, politician, journalist, father of six children and author of a manifesto for the sexual revolution.<sup>31</sup> He spent three somewhat turbulent years monitoring and correcting information in the press for the Continuing Committee and tried, in vain, to introduce a new name: Conferences on Science and World Affairs (COSWA).<sup>32</sup> At the suggestion of the Continuing Committee, the tenth conference, held in London in 1962, adopted the combined name Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs (P-COSWA) with the added stipulation that each national group be allowed to shorten this name at their discretion.<sup>33</sup> In everyday business, people simply used the name Pugwash. In spite of the hardships experienced by the American scientists, it had become a common view in the early years, when the goal was to establish the scientists’ conferences as a regular forum, that any publicity, however absurd or dubious, brought visibility and was better than none at all. From then on, those who had taken part in a Pugwash conference were identified as “Pugwashites.”

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- 29 Wayland Young, “Pugwash,” *Encounter* (February 1963): 54–57, 54. Rotblat, *First ten*, 20.
- 30 Meeting Minutes, Pugwash Continuing Committee: 21–23 June 1960, 26–29 November 1960 and 2–4 December 1960. RTBT 5/3/1/5. Patrick David Slaney, “Eugene Rabinowitch, the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, and the Nature of Scientific Internationalism in the Early Cold War,” *Historical Studies in the Natural Sciences* 42, no. 2 (April 2012): 114–142, 129.
- 31 Wayland Young, *Eros Denied: Sex in Western Society* (New York: Grove Press 1964). Rotblat, *First ten*, 33–34. Notes: Pugwash Continuing Committee 21 June 1960, 1 and 23 June 1960, 1. RTBT 5/3/1/6 (3).
- 32 Young to Editor of *Fortune Magazine* 28 March 1961. RTBT 5/4/2/17. Young, “Pugwash,” 1963, 54.
- 33 Rotblat, *First ten*, 43.

This honorary title was not officially accorded to Eaton as a sponsor and regular guest. But as long as he was a prominent public figure in the US, he was still referred to as the “initiator” of the Pugwash conferences in the North American press. The Canadian media, which had initially criticized him for communist liaisons, later celebrated the successful Nova Scotian farm boy all the more because he had brought international renown to the small fishing village on the Northumberland Strait.<sup>34</sup> Very few journalists were concerned about differentiating between the format of Eaton’s retreats and the scientists’ conferences, and Eaton himself did not contribute at all to clarifying this issue. With professional backing from his own press team, he was active behind the scenes, giving interviews and occasionally making himself heard in his own articles.<sup>35</sup> These statements were often seen as provocative because they did not subscribe to the prevailing discourse in the US of suspicion and mistrust of the Soviet Union, positing instead reciprocal trust as a means to prevent a nuclear war, which was paramount. Together with his critical statements on American foreign policy during the Cold War and acerbic comments on leading politicians, his clever business methods, his spectacular success as a financier and his carefully staged second life as a farmer, cattle breeder and grandfather of thirteen children, he was simply able to supply the better stories.<sup>36</sup> For journalists, Eaton’s flamboyant and accessible style made for more attractive and exciting reports than the more reserved and very carefully worded Pugwash conference statements, that were purged of controversies and personal opinions: put simply, newspapers had to be sold, and the readers entertained.

Much more than one would expect from an altruistic philanthropist, Eaton shaped the outer appearance of the Pugwash conferences – with the financing, the management and the name, which referred to the birthplace of the famous self-made billionaire and the original site of the initially little-known conferences. But that was not the whole story. Due to his carefully crafted media profile (managed by his own press office) on the one hand and the media’s

34 See, for example: Anonymous, *The Chronicle Herald* (Halifax, Nova Scotia), 6 October 1960; Smith, “Eaton, Capitalist Peacemonger,” *Sunday* 25 May. Both sources in: TLP, clippings. Wittner, *Resisting*, 111; Gleisser, *World*, 226–228; Brown, *Keeper*, 145.

35 Several of his articles can be found in TLP, clippings. For example: “Cyrus Eaton Sees great Challenge to Mankind,” *Detroit Times* 19 January 1958; “Cyrus Eaton Calls on US to End Its Boycott of Cuba,” *Los Angeles Times* 21 February 1974; Letters to the Editor. Progress in Cuba, *New York Times* 27 January 1976. On the effective presswork of Eaton’s office, see: Gleisser, *World*, 265–274.

36 For a critical account of his business practices, anything but demure, see the title story “Cyrus S. Eaton,” *Finance* 4 (1966): 8–10. TLP, clippings.

need for controversies, scandals and home stories on the other, Eaton's worldview, his ideas of peace-building and his self-assured commentaries on political life in the US, often found their way into the press where they were easily but wrongly taken for the original PCSWA agenda – especially since the Pugwashites themselves still had to define their own way how to confront the public.<sup>37</sup>

## 2 Eaton's Public Persona

As much as Eaton sought to stage his public profile, he did not have it fully under control. At least three different but related decisive factors were in play here: Eaton's political agenda, as far as he formulated it himself; the co-opting of his peace-building mission by Soviet rulers; and the way he was perceived by the American public.

### 2.1 *Eaton's Agenda: "Let's Meet the Soviets Half-Way."*<sup>38</sup>

Cyrus Eaton's interest in Russia reached back to the late Imperial Period. It was the Baptist network in Cleveland that linked his uncle Charles Eaton, at the time a preacher at the Euclid Avenue Baptist Church and a long-standing Republican congressman from 1924 onward, with two prominent figures: John D. Rockefeller, the most famous member of the church, who continued to spend his summers at his estate in Cleveland after having moved his businesses to New York, and William Rainey Harper, the founding president of the University of Chicago. In the opening years of the twentieth century, the younger Eaton was financing his studies at the Baptist-oriented McMaster University in Toronto with summer jobs in Cleveland, where he worked as a messenger and caddy for Rockefeller and his golf partners, among them Harper and Uncle Charles. It was at the Forest Hills Golf Course that he ultimately decided not to become a minister but to go into business. Here he had heard Harper talk enthusiastically about Russia's "immense natural resources, both agricultural and mineral."<sup>39</sup> Here, too, began his life-long friendship with Harper's son Samuel, who in 1906 was to become the first US expert in Russian

37 On trips abroad Eaton was also usually accompanied by the head of his press office. See, for example, "Program for the visit of the American industrialist Cyrus S. Eaton, 3–5 June 1960," DC 20/507, BArch Berlin. Notes: Pugwash Continuing Committee 10 September 1960, 8. RTBT 5/3/1/6 (4).

38 Cyrus Eaton, "Let's Meet the Soviets Half-Way," *New York Herald Tribune* 8 November 1957 (see footnote 28).

39 Cyrus Eaton quoted from Gleisser, *World*, 234.

Language and Institutions and a faculty member at the University of Chicago. Samuel Harper's notes on "The Russia I believe in" shaped Eaton's strongly positive image of Russia.<sup>40</sup>

It was thus no coincidence that in 1955 when the State Department asked Eaton whether he could welcome two Soviet travel delegations, he was more than happy to oblige. First, he led a group of Soviet farm officials through his Acadia Farms on the outskirts of Cleveland, showing them his purebred Beef Shorthorn cattle herds and commenting on himself with the *bon mot* cited frequently ever since: "It's better to trade bulls than bullets."<sup>41</sup> Soon afterwards, he also welcomed a group of seven Soviet journalists, including Khrushchev's son-in-law Alexsej Adzubei, the publisher of the government paper *Izvestia* until Khrushchev was removed from office.<sup>42</sup> This time Eaton appeared with his family. The journalist Boris Polevoy, who was to devote an entire chapter of his travel report to their visit to Acadia Farms, later wrote to Eaton emphasizing that he and the group had felt themselves to be on the same wavelength as Eaton:

Like you, we believe that we must be tolerant of one another's views, that we should understand one another, trade with another, be friends and not interfere with another's way of life [...] Today, when two completely different social systems exist on this crowded good old earth of ours, the greatest thing, as I see it, is to ensure that all countries of the world might live side by side in peace and comfort like good neighbors without elbowing one another or quarreling over the fence; that they respect one another's opinions, learn to be good friends and to trade with one another not only pedigree cattle but, also say, technical inventions, ores, machines and whatever they possess that might be of use to their trade partners.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>40</sup> His notes were published posthumously. Samuel N. Harper, *The Russia I Believe In*, ed. Paul V. Harper (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1945). Paul A. Goble, "Samuel N. Harper and the Study of Russia: His Career and Collection," *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique* 14, no. 4 (1973): 608–620. Cf. Gleisser, *World*, 233–235. Jay Miller, "Cyrus Eaton – Khrushchev's Favorite Capitalist," <http://teachingcleveland.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/cyrus%20eaton%20final%20version.pdf>. Accessed 30 March 2017.

<sup>41</sup> The *bon mot* was quoted frequently, for example: Anonymous, "Cyrus S. Eaton. Industrialist," footnote 28, 18. Carola Sachse, "Bullen, Hengste, Wissenschaftler. Diplomatische Tiere im Kalten Krieg," in *Wandlungen und Brüche. Wissenschaftsgeschichte als politische Geschichte*, eds. Johannes Feichtinger, Marianne Klemun, Jan Surman and Petra Svatek. (Göttingen: V&R unipress. 2018), 345–353.

<sup>42</sup> McGruder 1977, see footnote 9.

<sup>43</sup> Polevoy to Eaton, 26 March 1956 (English translation, included in file). TLP.

But the story did not end here. In his thank you note, Poleyoy mentioned that he was also “extremely interested” in Eaton’s “idea about setting up a ‘Haven for Minds,’ where thinkers of the USA, the Soviet Union, Britain, China, France, India and other countries” could exchange thoughts irrespective of any political and religious differences. Apparently, in those meetings Eaton had succeeded in conveying to the Soviet Union his idea of organizing scientists’ conferences that transcended all political divisions. The family-like setting and the charm of his youngest granddaughter, “that dignified young lady” who left a special impression on Poleyoy, had laid the groundwork for trust.<sup>44</sup> Further visits of Soviet state guests to Acadia Farms followed; moreover, when Soviet visitors were unable to obtain visas allowing them to leave the United Nations headquarters, Eaton organized instead gala dinners in New York. The American press reported frequently, and often critically, on Eaton and his Soviet guests, usually in connection with the Pugwash conferences.<sup>45</sup>

Against this backdrop, the *New York Herald Tribune* gave Eaton a chance in August 1957, one month after the first PCSWA at Thinkers’ Lodge, to describe in detail his impressions of this meeting, which he summed up in the exhortation: “Let’s meet the Soviets half-way!”<sup>46</sup> This, in turn, resulted in an opportunity to give an interview led by Mike Wallace on a nationally televised prime-time show in May 1958.<sup>47</sup> Here Eaton was able to explain to the American TV audience his views of the Soviet Union and the development of US-Soviet relations. After all, the Pugwash conferences had shown him “that men of different languages and different philosophies can get together and discuss crucial questions, come to a common understanding, and part great friends.” But that was not all. On the one hand, given the “scientific miracles” that Russia had achieved and her “immense power of retaliation,” the following had become clear: regardless of how “frightful” communism may seem, “we can’t destroy it; it’s here to stay. Russia. China.” On the other hand, no “intelligent Russian” would still believe that the United States would “ever become communist.” Eaton was convinced “that the Russian today, whether it’s the Russian scientist or the Russian people, they don’t want war” and that “as I’ve seen the Russian: he loves his children, he loves his grandchildren, he loves his country, he wants to get along.”

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44 Poleyoy to Eaton 26 March 1956. TLP.

45 Numerous examples are documented in the form of press clippings in TLP, clippings.

46 Cyrus Eaton, “Let’s Meet the Soviets Half-Way,” *New York Herald Tribune* 8 November 1957. See footnote 28.

47 <http://www.hrc.utexas.edu/collections/film/holdings/wallace/>; the Mike Wallace interviews were broadcast by ABC. Accessed 30 March 2017.

Eaton, however, did not just bank on the common family-based emotions that he had so carefully cultivated at Acadia Farms: he also congratulated his Russian guests on the creation of an education system “that’s now the marvel of the world.” First and foremost, however, he relied on what he saw to be the fundamental appeal of the American way of life, which he described as an irresistible consumer paradise:

The more they see us, the more they’re going to admire our way of living [...] As they become acquainted with what’s going on in the world, as they make these great strides in their economic life – which they are making. They’re not going to be interested in military exploits. They’re going to enjoy their way of living; or better way of living. They want to imitate American: better homes, better food, better clothing and more automobiles. And more of all the wonderful things that make life so attractive here.

In Eaton’s view, all one had to do was give the Russians a chance to experience things for themselves. Their strong “faith in the evolution of humanity” would then let “these natural forces modify the Russian and his internal and external attitudes.”<sup>48</sup> Eaton was not thrown off when Mike Wallace confronted him with a contradictory natural law and cited the brutal short version of historical materialism with which – in an earlier interview with Wallace – Khrushchev had recently tried to intimidate American TV viewers by asserting that “your grandchildren will live under Socialism [...] Whether you like it or not, history is on our side, we will bury you.”<sup>49</sup>

Instead, Eaton sought direct contact with the Soviet premier. He took the mailing of the proceedings of the Pugwash conference in Lac Beauport as an occasion to write to Khrushchev personally. At the end of May 1958, he received a reply. Khrushchev expressed his respect for the scientists’ initiative, acknowledging the responsibility of his government “for its part in the fate of the world” and recalling that his government had just imposed a unilateral ban on nuclear tests. He also expressed appreciation of Eaton’s personal efforts in this direction, noting “the important part you are playing personally

48 All citations: Transcript of the Mike Wallace interview with Cyrus Eaton, 4 May 1958. [http://www.hrc.utexas.edu/multimedia/video/2008/wallace/eaton\\_cyrus\\_t.html](http://www.hrc.utexas.edu/multimedia/video/2008/wallace/eaton_cyrus_t.html). Accessed 30 March 2017. The interview was apparently dated inaccurately in the transcript; it actually took place a week before the interview announced for 11 May 1958 with William Douglas. Gleisser, *World*, 176–178.

49 [http://www.hrc.utexas.edu/multimedia/video/2008/wallace/eaton\\_cyrus\\_t.html](http://www.hrc.utexas.edu/multimedia/video/2008/wallace/eaton_cyrus_t.html). Accessed 30 March 2017.

in promoting the efforts of the scientists of the world in their struggle against atomic danger, and in establishing mutual understanding and trust between our countries.”<sup>50</sup>

It took Eaton only a few days after receiving this letter to make a formal statement to the world. Here he even elaborated on the second Pugwash conference, in spite of the fact that the Continuing Committee had decided not to publish any documents. He also interpreted Khrushchev’s reply to him as “full evidence that Russia wants to meet us half way.”<sup>51</sup> And this was how Eaton wanted to accommodate the Soviet premier.

## 2.2 “Khrushchev’s Favorite Capitalist”<sup>52</sup>

Of course, Eaton was not the first to draw Khrushchev’s attention to the Pugwash conferences. The Soviet leader was regularly kept abreast of developments by the Soviet members of the Continuing Committee and by the World Federation of Scientific Workers, whose president Frédéric Joliot-Curie had added the call for such a conference to the Russell-Einstein Manifesto.<sup>53</sup> Eaton was not the only American interlocutor who Khrushchev listened to. He also spoke with chemistry Nobel laureate and peace activist Linus Pauling, who had been accepted into the Soviet Academy of Sciences in 1958, and with Leo Szilard, who had gone from being a nuclear physicist to a molecular biologist and was one of the most vehement critics of US nuclear policy. At his initiative, the Kremlin enabled the mother and sister of Edward Teller, the “father” of the American hydrogen bomb and a vehement anti-communist, to finally emigrate to the US from Hungary.<sup>54</sup> In Khrushchev’s personnel and staffing structure, with which he hoped to advance his new disarmament initiative, Eaton still played an exceptional role: as a strong – and also American – sponsor, he

50 Khrushchev to Eaton 1958-5-31, as cited in Gleisser 2005, 223. See Wittner 1997, 106, footnote 30.

51 Eaton statement 1958-6-6, as quoted in: Gleisser 2005, 225.

52 Jay Miller, “Khrushchev’s favorite capitalist,” 2010. <http://teachingcleveland.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/cyrus%20eaton%20ofinal%20version.pdf>. Accessed 30 March 2017. Connecticut Walker, “Cyrus Eaton: The Communists’ Best Capitalist Friend,” Oakland Tribune – Parade 5 December 1971, 8–11. TLP, clippings. Similar descriptions could be found throughout the press at that time.

53 See the chapters by Fabian Lüscher and Roberts in this volume.

54 Wittner, *Resisting*, 105–106, 256–257, 345. Szilard’s conversations with Soviet scientists in Lac Beauport enabled Teller’s family members to obtain an exit visa. On Khrushchev’s conversations with Norman Cousins in the early 1960s see Allen Pietrobon, “The Role of Norman Cousins and Track II Diplomacy in the Breakthrough to the 1963 Limited Test Ban Treaty,” *Journal of Cold War Studies (JCWS)* 18, no. 1 (winter 2016): 60–79.

was to dispel the suspicion voiced again and again in the West that Pugwash was merely another communist front. Also on the domestic front Khrushchev needed support: With his ban on nuclear arms tests in March 1958, the Soviet Premier had entered his personal Cold War on two fronts: first, against both his own military and the majority of the scientists in the Soviet nuclear program, who perceived in the ban a real danger of falling behind the US in weapons technology. Second, against the Eisenhower Administration in Washington, which interpreted his unilateral test ban as a ploy to draw worldwide public opinion to the Soviet side. From the American perspective, Khrushchev only wanted to distract from something that was more important: concrete agreements to keep outer space, which had just become accessible through the Soviet Sputnik program, out of the arms race.

In the years 1958 to 1960, with a moratorium on nuclear weapons tests in place, the focus of the disarmament negotiations moved forward with discussions for a test ban treaty whilst a great deal of effort was being given to what requirements had to be fulfilled before a summit of all heads of state from the nuclear powers could take place. Khrushchev wanted to initiate such negotiations in a summit without any preconditions, in order to demonstrate the good will of both sides. For the administration in Washington, that was nothing but propaganda; a summit could only represent the completion of negotiations after concrete results had been achieved on an administrative level. It was in this propaganda war to sway public opinion worldwide that Eaton entered the game. Like Khrushchev, he repeatedly argued for talks without any conditions: for him, disarmament was not an “essay contest” but a grave concern, “a matter of life and death for all humanity.”<sup>55</sup> The chief diplomatic correspondent of the *Washington Post*, Chalmers M. Roberts, compiled a brochure in 1958 which reflected Eaton’s creed in its very title: “Can We Meet the Russians Halfway?” The brochure juxtaposed excerpts from interviews and speeches with and by Khrushchev with statements of leading Western – most notably US – politicians, journalists, political scientists and historians. Eaton was the only one among them to fully align with Khrushchev.<sup>56</sup>

55 “Ike, Khrush Urged to End War Threat,” *The Cincinnati Post and Times Star* 31 October 1958. Cf. Al Ostrow, “Reds’ Envoy here, Asks US Trade,” *The Cleveland Press*, 12 April 1958, (On the 1958 visit to Cleveland of the Soviet Ambassador Mikoyan, arranged by Eaton). All in: TLP, clippings.

56 Roberts, *Can we meet*, 1958. In addition to Khrushchev and Eaton, the authors included Dwight D. Eisenhower, Winston Churchill, John Foster Dulles, George F. Kennan, Richard Nixon, Konrad Adenauer, Lyndon B. Johnson, Dag Hammarskjöld, Walter Rostow and Raymond Aron.



Khrushchev immediately returned the favor and invited Cyrus and Anne Eaton to Moscow in September 1958. On the front page of *Pravda*, Eaton recommended, in a separate article, that President Eisenhower “pay a three-day visit of friendship and good will to the Soviet Union,” to which Khrushchev would respond by visiting the US.<sup>57</sup> The Eatons’ trip was scheduled so that they – Khrushchev’s special emissaries, as it were – could travel straight from Moscow to the third Pugwash conference in Kitzbühel and Vienna. In the US, Eaton’s efforts in Moscow drew more attention than the entire Vienna Pugwash conference – even if meeting also with some scepticism.<sup>58</sup>

The following year, the Eatons once again launched a diplomatic mission. In the midst of the second Berlin crisis, triggered by Khrushchev’s threat to transform Berlin into either a demilitarized special zone or make it all part of the German Democratic Republic, they announced a trip to Eastern Europe for early summer 1960.<sup>59</sup> Their first stop was Prague, where Cyrus Eaton was awarded an honorary doctorate; Budapest, Warsaw and East Berlin followed. At each stop along the way, Eaton appeared at specially organized press conferences voicing criticisms of US foreign policy whilst at the same time making friendly remarks about his high-ranking Eastern European interlocutors and the general situation in the satellite states.<sup>60</sup> Here, however, it was apparent to his Czechoslovakian and Hungarian hosts that Eaton was not particularly knowledgeable about the conditions in Europe and that he was “completely insufficiently” informed about the German problem and “the entire complex of questions regarding peace treaty – West Berlin.”<sup>61</sup> By contrast, Anne – well known as a Democratic delegate at the Democratic Convention in Ohio – insisted on going through all items on the agenda together with her husband and was perceived as considerably “more vital,” “clearer and more straightforward,” and “more positive and progressive.”<sup>62</sup> In short, she was perceived as having a political awareness and sensibility lacking in her husband.

57 Translation of Eaton’s article in *Pravda*, 7 September 1958. RTBT 5/4/7/1.

58 *Time*, the weekly news magazine, reported extensively on Eaton’s Moscow trip. For example: 15 September 1958, newspaper clipping, RTBT 5/4/7/1. The *New York Times* published an interview with Eaton. Rabinowitch to Rotblat, 23 October 1958. RTBT 5/4/7/1.

59 Christian Bremen, *Die Eisenhower-Administration und die zweite Berlin-Krise, 1958–1961* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 1997).

60 The embassies of the German Democratic Republic in Prague and Budapest reported extensively on Eaton’s appearances in Prague and Budapest during the preparation of Eaton’s visit to East Berlin – on the basis of Czechoslovakian and Hungarian memos. DC 20/696, 49, 52–55, 59–81. BArch Berlin.

61 DC 20/696, 55 and 73. BArch Berlin.

62 DC 20/696, 76, 79, 64. BArch Berlin.

It may have been a mere coincidence that the Eatons wanted to spend a few days in Paris before continuing on to Eastern Europe. But it could not have worked out better. In the course of the crisis-ridden negotiations between the great powers over a comprehensive test ban treaty, which had begun with the second Geneva Conference in the summer of 1958 and only ended with the Limited Test Ban Treaty (LTBT) in August 1963, a solution was closer than ever in the spring of 1960, only to be followed immediately by a deep crisis. The Paris conference of heads of state from the US, the Soviet Union, Great Britain and France had been scheduled for 16 and 17 May 1960. By then the final technical difficulties related to monitoring the ban on underground tests were to have been resolved. In spite of the fact that a US Lockheed U2 had been shot down over the Soviet Union on May 1 and the surviving pilot, Gary Powers, confessed that he had been engaged in a spying mission, all heads of state travelled to the conference and arrived on time. At the first informal meeting, however, Khrushchev called upon Eisenhower to apologize, to bring those responsible to justice, and to impose a guaranteed ban on reconnaissance flights. When Eisenhower refused to consider these demands, the Soviet delegation did not appear at the opening session and the Western powers declared the summit a failure.<sup>63</sup>

However, Stalin's court jester, who had also "returned laughter to the Soviet citizens" following his master's death, did not let the Western powers have the final say.<sup>64</sup> At his press conference in Paris on 18 May, Khrushchev snubbed and openly offended Eisenhower.<sup>65</sup> Indeed, insights gleaned from his encounter with the Eatons in this moment indicate that he had already staged his departure. A few days earlier, the Soviet embassy had informed Eaton that Khrushchev wanted to meet him in Paris. But there was not much time. The only option was 19 May, the day the Eatons landed in Paris-Orly, from where Khrushchev planned to depart. After their delayed landing, Anne and Cyrus were immediately led to the farewell ceremony for the Soviet premier. Khrushchev was already waiting for them on the red carpet in front of the Soviet plane that was about to take off. He pressed a bouquet of flowers, which

63 Benjamin Greene, *Eisenhower, Science Advice, and the Nuclear Test-Ban Debate, 1945–1963* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2006). Vojtech Mastny, "The 1963 Test Ban Treaty," *JCSWS* 10, no. 1 (Winter 2008): 3–25.

64 Jörg Baberowski, *Verbrannte Erde. Stalins Herrschaft der Gewalt* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer 2012/2014): 481, 490, quote on 503.

65 Khrushchev's explanations and speeches from May 1960 are available at: [https://archive.org/stream/RedenChruschtschow1960/Reden%20Chruschtschow%201960\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/RedenChruschtschow1960/Reden%20Chruschtschow%201960_djvu.txt). Accessed 30 March 2017.

he had just been given, into Anne's arms and chatted with his "two old friends" in front of the press cameras for another twenty minutes.<sup>66</sup> It was only then that Khrushchev allowed his plane to take off for East Berlin.

Shortly after this encounter, the "last tycoon" was awarded the Lenin Peace Prize – a reward for Eaton's diplomatic missions on Khrushchev's behalf. As early as May 3, 1960, the Soviet news agency TASS reported on this, adding that Eaton was the only North American to be awarded this prize. Eaton received the award not in Moscow but in Pugwash where his famous peace-building efforts had first begun. Soviet nuclear physicist Dmitri Skobel'tsyn, a Pugwashite from the very beginning, arrived from Moscow in early July to give a speech at the award ceremony in the presence of the Soviet ambassadors from Washington and Ottawa, all against the backdrop of regional folkloristic festivities marking Dominion Day, with about 5,000 people in the audience.<sup>67</sup> In his acceptance speech, Eaton underlined the importance of "more than 20 conferences [...] held under the Pugwash name," including the five "scientific meetings," once again conflating two very different conference series. He also reiterated his unwavering trust in Khrushchev who, he was sure, would, sooner or later, adopt the American way of life:

I have not the least doubt that Premier Khrushchev and the members of his government would like to concentrate the immense resources of their vast country not on the costly modern instruments of annihilation, but on more and better homes and schools, on industrial and agricultural progress, and on physical fitness and intellectual excellence.<sup>68</sup>

### 2.3 *Enfant Terrible of the US Establishment*

Unlike some American businessmen – and several American Pugwashites – Cyrus Eaton was at no time "afraid of being accused of being pro-Red."<sup>69</sup> It

66 Gleisser, *World*, 248. For Anne Eaton and her political ambitions in the ongoing election campaign, this scene in particular was compromising, see: Gleisser, *World*, 249–252.

67 Eaton office to Otto Grotewohl 6 July 1960. DC 20/696, 82–83. BArch Berlin. C.B. Johnson, "Russia's Peace Prize Presented to Cyrus Eaton," *The Chronicle-Herald*, 2 July 1960. TLP, clippings. Gleisser, *World*, 243–247.

68 Cyrus Eaton In Acceptance Of International Lenin Prize Award, 1 July 1960. TLP, Folder: Pugwash Address.

69 *Detroit Free Press*, 24 April 1958. (Quoted here from Anonymous, "Cyrus S. Eaton. Industrialist," footnote 28, 22), Eaton criticized his colleagues: "Most industrialists realize the deadly character of what we are doing. They are unhappy over the astronomical taxes it demands. But most of them are afraid of being accused of being pro-Red."

was this maverick spirit that drew respect even from his greatest critics in the United States, where anti-communist denunciations were rampant. His legendary double success as a businessman – after a disastrous fall at the beginning of the Great Depression, Eaton had made a comeback in the 1930s – may have also contributed to the fact that the more simple than concise wording of his peace-building convictions in the media were rarely rendered without a clause of distancing irony.<sup>70</sup> The caustic satire that some of his activities might have roused was, in any case, absent.

The official institutions of US anti-communism, however, launched furious attacks against him. Eaton's television appearance with Mike Wallace in May 1958 prompted the chairman of the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC), Francis E. Walter, to take action. On this occasion, Eaton had also criticized the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and all other "governmental agencies" that were "engaged in investigation, in snooping, in informing, in [...] creeping up on people" as a "police state" which trusted its citizens even less than the Soviet leaders did theirs. As he put it, the entire surveillance system in the US, with its branches covering all political realms, was more extensive than Hitler's "spying organization," including the Gestapo, had ever been.<sup>71</sup> These were pretty strong accusations. But in contrast to his Russian adventures, Eaton's critique of the domestic control system was almost unanimously applauded by the North American press, which celebrated him as an advocate of the freedom of expression and the Bill of Rights. He could hardly wait for the HUAC to deliver the subpoena they had already announced. He would have been more than happy to explain in Washington where he saw the greatest danger of all the snooping and state-imposed secrecy, namely in the obstruction of scientific progress and of the free international exchange of ideas among "his" scientists on ways to prevent a nuclear war. When the subpoena had still not arrived one month later, he set out for Washington himself. At his regional congressman's office, he met Walter and a long verbal battle ensued, but the subpoena still failed to materialize. Perhaps Walter had finally realized what was at stake: "Go right ahead and speak your mind,

70 Gleisser, *World*, 50–69, 80–111. For descriptions of Eaton's financial success from this time see the cover stories: "Industrialist Cyrus Eaton: imagination & stubborn virtues," *Forbes* (May 1965): 17–22 and "Cyrus S. Eaton," *Finance* (April 1966): 8–10. Both in TLP, clippings. George E. Condon, "The Man in the Tower," in George E. Condon, *Cleveland. The Best Kept Secret* (New York: Doubleday, 1967), 307–315.

71 All citations: Transcript of the Mike Wallace interview with Cyrus Eaton 4 May 1958. ([http://www.hrc.utexas.edu/multimedia/video/2008/wallace/eaton\\_cyrus\\_t.html](http://www.hrc.utexas.edu/multimedia/video/2008/wallace/eaton_cyrus_t.html)). Accessed 30 March 2017.

Cyrus,” the *New York Herald Tribune* had already conveyed to Eaton weeks before, “Representative Walter is making a fool of nobody but himself.”<sup>72</sup>

From this experience, Eaton concluded that public support for anti-communist investigations was waning. The HUAC, FBI and CIA were, however, still subverting the success of his Pugwash conferences by monitoring the participants and passing on false information to politicians and the media so as to disparage in particular foreign Pugwashites, notably accusing Austrian physicist Hans Thirring of being a Soviet agent.<sup>73</sup> However, Eaton was not just concerned about the welfare of his conference participants, he was interested in the big picture. Several months later, in an interview he gave for an editorial published in *The Nation*, he outlined his twelve “proposals for an American foreign and domestic policy.” The first thing he called for was the dismissal of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles. In his view, the man who “blithely courts the ultimate world catastrophe of the bomb without even consulting the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee” constituted an uncontrollable risk.<sup>74</sup>

If [...] Mr. Dulles in the big press conference says that what we need to think about is how we can most effectively fight what we most hate [...] – those are terrific words to use when speaking of a proud and powerful nation of two hundred and twenty-five million people that have the military strength that’s beyond anything that’s ever been created in the world. Those are unwise and foolish words and oughtn’t to be said by any responsible statesman in this country.<sup>75</sup>

Here was someone who considered his own secretary of state to be a dangerous blockhead, who himself formulated a striking foreign policy agenda – including unconditional reciprocal state visits by Khrushchev and Eisenhower, the recognition of Red China, a treaty of peace and friendship with the Soviet Union, a halt to the nuclear arms race and non-intervention in the domestic

72 Cited here from Max Freedman: “Right to criticise without fear of reprisal,” *The Manchester Guardian* 12 May 1958. TLP, clippings. This article offers a good overview of press coverage of the events of May 1958; further press clippings in TLP, clippings. Gleisser, *World*, 176–189.

73 Eaton to Rotblat, 13 May 1958, RTBT 5/1/14-2. On Thirring see Fengler’s chapter in this volume.

74 John Barden, “Cyrus Eaton: Merchant of Peace,” *The Nation*, 31 January 1959, 85–91, here 87.

75 Transcript of the Mike Wallace interview with Cyrus Eaton 4 April 1958. ([http://www.hrc.utexas.edu/multimedia/video/2008/wallace/eaton\\_cyrus\\_t.html](http://www.hrc.utexas.edu/multimedia/video/2008/wallace/eaton_cyrus_t.html)). Accessed 30 March 2017.

affairs of other nations, and who also advocated strengthening the influence of scientists in disarmament policy. Furthermore, he discussed this with other heads of state, most notably on the Soviet side.<sup>76</sup> Eaton was seemingly seeking to pursue a different type of foreign policy – without a political mandate. Indeed, this was a charge directed at him regarding his trip to Moscow in 1958. His meetings with Khrushchev were seen as violating the Logan Act of 1799, which prohibits US citizens, under threat of sanction, from coming into contact with foreign governments “with intent [...] to defeat the measures of the United States.”<sup>77</sup>

Eaton, however, was not deterred by this; after all, he would not have received his passport without the consent of the State Department. He certainly could count on Washington placing trust in him. After all, construction of an enormous, elaborately camouflaged nuclear bunker for the US administration had just begun under the western wing of the Greenbrier Hotel in White Sulphur Springs, Virginia, which belonged to Eaton’s Chesapeake Ohio Railway, and counted the Eisenhowers and the Kennedys among its regular guests. This top secret facility was completed in 1961 but only became known to the public some thirty years later in 1991, just prior to being taken out of service.<sup>78</sup> Indeed, he saw himself in agreement with President Eisenhower, who “has wanted Russia to see as many Americans as possible so they will know us better over there.”<sup>79</sup> In the early summer of 1960, when Senator Thomas Dodd, then head of the U.S Senate Internal Security Subcommittee, threatened once again to enforce the Logan Act on the occasion of Eaton’s tour of Eastern Europe, Eaton reprimanded him while speaking from the lectern at Prague University, as he accepted an honorary doctorate for his achievements in connection with the Pugwash conferences. This time he appealed to “the world’s best informed scientists,” who agreed – as Dodd allegedly had not realized – that “the first day of a nuclear war would see the deaths of seventy-five million Americans, while another fifty million would die from fallout.” In view of this, he and the scientists of Pugwash would not cease “to warn the world of the hazards of nuclear, chemical and biological warfare and [would] offer suggestions to all heads of state on ways and means of diminishing them.”<sup>80</sup>

In any case, Eaton did not stop meddling in American foreign, disarmament and security policy, and he stayed true to his convictions, namely the

76 Barden, “Merchant of Peace,” 87.

77 1 Stat. 613, enacted January 30, 1799, codified at 18 US C. § 953 (2004).

78 Ted Gup, “The Ultimate Congressional Hideaway,” *The Washington Post* 31 May 1992, W11.

79 Quote from Gleisser, *World*, 238.

80 Quote from Gleisser, *World*, 250.

coexistence of capitalism and communism, trust in the desire for peace, also among politicians on the other side, and conducting unconditional conversations in person without conditions attached. He did good deeds – or at least what he considered to be such – and spoke about them in all media without shying away from being provocative. He defined the role of “his” Pugwashites in ways that echoed those of his friend Khrushchev. That is to say, they were to give scientific legitimacy to his political views. Such a role was wholly unacceptable to western scientists and for American Pugwashites in particular. This kind of thinking was not only eroding their professional integrity, but remained potentially highly damaging to their scientific reputations and careers at home within a political climate still touched by the remnants of McCarthyism. Moreover, in their view it endangered the transnational Pugwash project as a whole, and especially so during the presidential election campaign of 1960.

### 3 The Pugwash Conferences: Searching for Their Own Path

The scientists’ behind the conferences inspired by the Russell-Einstein Manifesto who still called their meetings “Pugwash conferences” despite the strife surrounding the name, found it much more difficult than Eaton to define their political mission and develop a style of cooperation and communication suited to their goals. In the early years of this process, the conflict with Eaton loomed large, serving not least to make clear to them the kinds of behavior and public profile that they did not want for the project they were embarked upon. Even if this problem was initially limited to the US Pugwashites, their British and Soviet colleagues could not ignore it and ultimately had to agree to a solution *à l’américaine*.

In 1955 and 1956, it had not proved at all easy to persuade senior scientists to follow the call of the Russell-Einstein Manifesto and to participate in a conference geared to discussing the “perils of the nuclear age.” However, the twenty two scientists from ten countries who ultimately gathered in Pugwash in 1957, and those who followed in their wake at subsequent Pugwash conferences, came to greatly appreciate the value of these events in creating an atmosphere conducive to discussions and as a place where it was possible to have informal conversations with colleagues from the other side of the bloc divide. In the 1950s, the international scientific community of “eminent” nuclear physicists was not very large. If scientists didn’t know each other personally from professional conferences, they were familiar with each other’s work from scientific publications. They trusted, as Rotblat put it, in “each other’s scientific

integrity” and were convinced that as physicists they were qualified to engage in “rational analysis and objective inquiry” as well as to deal with political problems “without prejudice but with respect to facts.”<sup>81</sup> Rotblat, Rabinowitch and other like-minded colleagues involved in the early days of Pugwash believed “that all scientists – including those from the other side of the Iron Curtain – have a common language and can productively discuss even controversial political matters.”<sup>82</sup> Most of them banked on what Rotblat called the “scientific approach” to achieve political goals: these goals were, namely, preventing a nuclear war and ultimately doing away with war as a means of political conflict.<sup>83</sup> How this could be achieved was the subject of discussion first within the Continuing Committee which, initially, comprised Russell, Rotblat, Powell, Rabinowitch and Skobel'tsyn.

When this small circle – sometimes expanded in an *ad hoc* way to include guests such as Leo Szilard and the West German physicist and philosopher Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker – met for the first time in London in December 1957, there was agreement on three equally important goals: “to influence governments, to form a channel of communication between scientists, and to educate public opinion.” Those present realized fully that it was not possible to achieve everything at once, so they came up with two types of conferences: one that they defined as “private meetings” in order to be able to openly discuss, in a small circle of highly-qualified scientists who were “influential with their governments,” the controversial points which kept disrupting the disarmament negotiations – without having to make public statements. In this setting, it was hoped that mutual antagonisms and reservations could be eliminated, disarmament models calculated and mutually acceptable control procedures developed as a means of slowing down the arms race and reducing the nuclear arsenals, while at the same time maintaining an equilibrium in military terms. For Rotblat, the blackboard at which mathematicians and physicists traditionally developed their thoughts symbolized this mode of communication.<sup>84</sup> The second Pugwash conference in Lac Beauport in 1958 was seen as a prototype of this style of meeting. The other type of gathering was the larger “public” conference, which was focused on issues relating to the “social implications of science in general” but also with the “particular problem of averting the dangers of the atomic age.” These conferences were meant to

81 Joseph Rotblat, “The Early Days of Pugwash,” *Physics Today* 54, no. 6 (June 2001): 50–55, 53.

82 Rabinowitch to Russell, 14 August 1957; quote from Wittner, *Resisting*, 35.

83 Nickerson, “Taking a Stand,” 87. Slaney, “Rabinowitch,” 117, 119, 124, 130.

84 Rotblat, *First ten*, 27.



alarm the broader public and, to this end, concluded with press conferences and public statements. The conference in Kitzbühel, with its very large and public closing festivities in the Austrian capital, at which the Vienna Declaration was presented, was the first to follow this format.<sup>85</sup>

This dual model for the conferences, however, did not stand the test of time. On the one hand, the “private” meetings did not reach enough politically influential scientists, especially in the US, something that would have been required to bring the discussion results into senior political circles in Washington. Khrushchev was not the only one unhappy with the fact that there was only talk at the Pugwash conferences, while the decision-makers, in particular the Americans and their scientific advisers, sat somewhere else.<sup>86</sup> On the other hand, although the large Kitzbühel/Vienna conference had resonated considerably with the public in the eastern Bloc, this was not matched in the west. The press in China and the Soviet Union, under dictatorial rule, reported on this conference and the Vienna Declaration arising from it in great detail, but the enthusiasm of thousands of Austrians who had celebrated Pugwash at the City Hall in Vienna hardly spread further west. And certainly it did not travel across the Atlantic, especially since Eaton could not have cared less about the dual strategy of holding both larger (publicly-oriented) and smaller (private) conferences that had just been agreed upon by the Continuing Committee. In Vienna, Cyrus Eaton spoke into every microphone pointed at him, stealing the show from the Pugwash leadership as they sought to address the public.<sup>87</sup> The problem the Pugwash leadership faced in raising its public profile was rendered all the more acute by Bertrand Russell’s gradual withdrawal from Pugwash as he chose increasingly instead to endorse and engage very actively in public protests in the UK for the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.<sup>88</sup> The mantle of leadership, in the sense of coordinating the nascent PCSWA, passed to Joseph Rotblat who, for all his manifold organizational and negotiating skills, could not compete with Eaton’s powerful charisma and taste for being in the public limelight which, as we have seen, derived from a combination

85 All quotes: Rotblat, *First ten*, 17–18. Rotblat developed this typology in describing the conferences in Lac Beauport, Kitzbühel/Vienna and Baden. Wittner, *Resisting*, 36.

86 Wittner, *Resisting*, 345.

87 Rabinowitch to Rotblat, 23 October 1958. RTBT 5/4/7/1. Rotblat, *First ten*, 17.

88 Andrew G. Bone, “Russell and the Communist-Aligned Peace Movement in the Mid-1950s,” *Russell: the Journal of Bertrand Russell Studies* 21 (summer 2001): 31–57. Ray Monk, *Bertrand Russell: The Ghost of Madness* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2000). Cf. Holger Nehring, *Politics of Security: British and West German Protest Movements and the Early Cold War, 1945–1970* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

of his pursuit of and adept handling of publicity, his appetite for political controversy, and his great wealth.<sup>89</sup>

In the process of defining the two different conference formats and combining them with two different public relations strategies, the three goals that had initially defined the Pugwash agenda in 1957 were reduced to two. This did not, however, ease the complex process of building Pugwash, as Rabinowitch noted in 1959, these two goals still caused all the “ups and downs about the Pugwash meetings” that made Rotblat’s everyday work as Secretary General so difficult:

One is to mobilize the scientific community of the world and make them [...] realize their responsibilities, and try to influence the world public opinion. This we could do [...] paying no attention to people’s suspicions about our respectability [...]. The other thing is our attempt to provide indirect communication channels between governments. For this purpose, the trust of the ‘establishments’ is indispensable [...].<sup>90</sup>

Rabinowitch’s informal downsizing of the goals – set out in private to Rotblat – also concealed a more modestly defined role for scientists active in Pugwash. For Rabinowitch, Pugwashites were no longer the guardian of nuclear knowledge enlightening an uninformed public and confronting politicians about the risks of recklessly building up their nuclear arsenals which endangered the future of the planet. Now they only advanced the self-enlightenment of their own scientific communities and beyond that were willing to serve as an informal communication channel between governments in east and west. So, in just a short time, these communication channels, originally conceived by and for scientists, were now being used by governments – albeit via trusted people from amongst the growing ranks of policy and scientific advisers. For Rabinowitch, this second function was the much more important one. It required, as he wrote to Rotblat, people such as geophysicist Edward Bullard on the British side, who had led the British delegation in the Geneva disarmament negotiations, or retired rear admiral and director of British naval intelligence Anthony Buzzard who, as a founding member of the Institute for Strategic Studies, had helped develop the idea of “graduated deterrence.” From the American side,

89 Rotblat, *First ten*, 33 and 42. On the division of tasks between Russell and Rotblat see: Andrew G. Bone ed. “Introduction,” in *Bertrand Russell, Détente or Destruction 1955–57*. The Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell, Vol. 29. (London/New York: Routledge, 2005), xiii–lxiii, liii–liv.

90 Rabinowitch to Rotblat, 21 May 1959. RTBT 5/2/1/4 (15).

he wished for strategy specialists such as Amrom Katz from the RAND Corporation or NATO scientific adviser Frederick Seitz. Rabinowitch felt that the “private meetings” could very well do without all the “Powells, Paulings, or even Harrison Browns,” who in his view were asserting their own ethics of conviction and did not give a damn about the trust of the political “establishment.”<sup>91</sup> This was certainly true of Eaton, about whom even Russell remarked “that all that interested (him) was Cyrus Eaton, not Pugwash.”<sup>92</sup>

Not all the scientists involved in Pugwash shared Rabinowitch’s views. In the most extensive international questionnaire, organized by Betty Royon from Cleveland in 1959, the majority of those Western scientists who responded at all had advocated “smaller conferences or study groups to explore specific problems.”<sup>93</sup> Pugwash colleagues who had been asked by Rabinowitch in the US and Rotblat in Great Britain the previous year likewise mostly preferred small meetings either “to discuss immediate political problems, and primarily directed at influencing governments” or “to study the social implications of scientific progress, and aimed at clarifying the thinking of scientists themselves.”<sup>94</sup> In the Soviet Union, by contrast, the overwhelming majority of scientists were “in favour of large open meetings aimed at influencing public opinion.”<sup>95</sup> Most Soviet scientists thus shared the view of their political leaders, who supported Pugwash mainly as a scientists’ “movement” similar to other anti-nuclear arms movements worldwide. They saw it as one part of a wider assemblage of “peace-loving forces” which they strongly supported and forcefully advocated.<sup>96</sup>

Prior to the Moscow Conference, which was postponed several times, the Continuing Committee discussed their experience with both types of conference. During these discussions in the summer of 1960, Rotblat noted that “most activities were confined to the private meetings.” But the criticism of “some people outside the movement” that “very little was known about it outside a small circle” could not be ignored.<sup>97</sup> Mainly, the idea was to avoid

91 Rabinowitch to Rotblat, 21 May 1959. RTBT 5/2/1/4 (15).

92 Notes Pugwash Continuing Committee 21 June 1960, 6. RTBT 5/3/1/6.

93 Rotblat, *First ten*, 36. A total of 35,000 questionnaires were sent out, 5,000 in the Soviet Union where the response was 83%, while in the Western countries it was only 20%. The survey in the Soviet Union was organized and probably also evaluated by the Soviet Academy of Science.

94 Rotblat, *First ten*, 17.

95 Rotblat, *First ten*, 36. Rotblat, “Early Days,” 54.

96 On the communist infiltration and cooptation of social movements see Matthew Evangelista, *Unarmed Forces. The Transnational Movement to End the Cold War* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press 1999), 75–76.

97 Notes Pugwash Continuing Committee 21 June 1960, 1. RTBT 5/3/1/6 (3).

frustrating the national groups that now formed crucial nodes in the expanding Pugwash network. What was their role to be and what remained for the Pugwashites to do given the dramatically changed political situation following the cancellation of the Paris summit of the four nuclear powers? All these questions, along with “the constitution of the Movement” were deferred to the next larger public conference which, however, was not to take place until 1962 in London.<sup>98</sup> Until then, only “private meetings” were planned, for which the Pugwash leadership had already coined the saying at the conference in Baden in 1959: “Private but not secret!” – when journalists “were pestering the participants for interviews.”<sup>99</sup> This meant that they met behind closed doors but that proceedings were made available to all Pugwashites and to heads of state – but not to the press.

Topchiev and Skobel'tsyn, the Soviet members of the Continuing Committee, which had expanded since 1958, accepted the distinction between “private meetings” and “public conferences,” but it was not easy for them to understand its importance for their Western colleagues.<sup>100</sup> First, they had no troublesome press at home to contend with. Second, they only attended Pugwash conferences or committee meetings if permitted by, if not at the request of, their political leadership; and third, the constant presence of their KGB translator Vladimir Pavlichenko served always to influence what they could say during meetings.<sup>101</sup> That said, this did not rule out conversations with a trustworthy Western colleague on a *promenade à deux*.<sup>102</sup> Even in summer of 1960, Topchiev saw no reason to redefine the tasks of the “Pugwash Movement.” If Pugwashites were “sufficiently eminent,” Topchiev was convinced that “governments and public opinion could both be influenced by the authority of scientists.”<sup>103</sup> Topchiev had not made the change from scientific enlightener to a role as a provider of political services of the kind envisaged by Rabinowitch. Nor did he share the concerns of his American and British colleagues about Eaton, without whom there would not have been any meetings, after all. Rather, in Topchiev's view, “an efficient P.R.O.” [Public Relations Officer] would quickly correct the “wrong impressions created by his publicity,” and

98 Notes Pugwash Continuing Committee 21 June 1960, 1 and 23 June 1960, 4. RTBT 5/3/1/6 (3).

99 Rotblat, *First ten*, 24. Draft Statement on Dodd report for the Continuing Committee, no date (ca. September 1960). RTBT 5/1/1/15-2.

100 The expansion of the Continuing Committee to a membership of 9 (i.e. US/USSR/UK: 3/3/3) was agreed at the Kitzbühel/Vienna conference in 1958. RTBT 5/2/1/10 (3).

101 See Lüscher's chapter in this volume.

102 Such a scene is described by Rotblat, “Early days,” 55.

103 Notes Pugwash Continuing Committee 21 June 1960, 2. RTBT 5/3/1/6.

if “this business man exaggerates his role he should be stopped.”<sup>104</sup> For the Western and (more importantly) the American members of the Continuing Committee, the situation in the summer of 1960 did not appear so simple – quite the contrary. The power of the press, the still-smoldering embers of anti-communism and the need for discretion among the few US Pugwashites close to the government on the one hand and, on the other hand, their obligations vis-à-vis the growing global Pugwash community, the deficiencies in their own public relations work and the appreciation of the Soviet leadership (which had been voiced in a highly indiscreet way), all made for an explosive device with an uncontrollable fuse: Cyrus Eaton.

Had the conference planned for Moscow taken place in April 1960 as originally planned, everything might have been different. Pugwashites might have contributed to clarifying the technical disagreements on test ban verification in the context of the ongoing Geneva disarmament negotiations and perhaps helped make the imminent Paris summit a success. However, the April date “turned out to be inconvenient to our American colleagues.”<sup>105</sup> Rotblat’s superficial explanation concealed the real problem: an insufficient number of suitable scientists, namely “people favourable to Pugwash ideas and well in with government as well,” had accepted the invitation to match the delegation of Soviet scientists, which was impressive both in number and scientific reputation.<sup>106</sup> Especially because the conference was to take place in Moscow, the balance between both delegations had to be maintained at all costs so as to avoid any additional umbrage in the US. The people whom the Continuing Committee would have ideally preferred to come to Conferences – for example, scientific advisers of the still governing Eisenhower Administration, or those who were associated with the presidential candidates, Nixon and Kennedy – sometimes, for a variety of personal and professional reasons, could not or did not want to be involved.<sup>107</sup>

When the Continuing Committee convened in June 1960 to prepare for the Moscow conference – at this point, postponed to September – the geopolitical situation had taken a turn for the worse with the failure of the Paris summit. Moreover, Khrushchev’s capitalist buddy was enjoying more publicity than ever before as a traveler through Eastern Europe and the winner of

104 Notes Pugwash Continuing Committee 21 June 1960, morning, 6. Skobel’tsyn voiced something similar in his rare comments.

105 Rotblat to Burkhardt, 2 March 1960. RTBT 5/5/2/64 (3). Elsewhere, Rotblat’s explanation for the postponement of the conference also included that there would not have been “sufficient time for preparation.” See: Rotblat, *First ten*, 26.

106 Notes Pugwash Continuing Committee, 21 June 1960, morning, 2. RTBT 5/3/1/6 (3).

107 Notes Pugwash Continuing Committee, 21 June 1960, morning, 9. RTBT 5/3/1/6 (3).

the Lenin Peace Prize. “Mr. Eaton” was not just one item on a long agenda; his spirit pervaded the entire three-day meeting.<sup>108</sup> The question was whether they could simply dispense with “guests” altogether and thus also with Eaton. As the chief organizer of the Moscow conference, Topchiev decided “that it was impossible not to invite him.”<sup>109</sup> But all agreed that his public visibility and internal involvement was to be curtailed. For instance, Eaton should be informed carefully but firmly that Betty Royon was to be replaced in her secretarial role by Pavlichenko.<sup>110</sup> And it was also debated whether a special publicity rule ought to be introduced in Moscow to silence Eaton.<sup>111</sup> But the main question was how to make these changes without offending Eaton and risking a backlash from him: indeed, nothing was feared more than “Eaton’s power in the press and with government officials.” Even worse than being identified with him in the American public sphere was the prospect of making an enemy of him. Thus, as Powell put it, “any formal break” was to be avoided. Indeed, “he must be treated with a great deal of circumspection.”<sup>112</sup> Topchiev, seconded by Skobel’tsyn, kept his cool and assured his colleagues on the Continuing Committee that, once in Moscow, they would have everything – the conference secretariat, the press and Eaton – under control, and so the preparation work continued.

However, things were to take a radically different turn. Over the summer of 1960, the US election campaign became ever more divisive and American scientists sympathetic to Pugwash became increasingly nervous, and several of them even withdrew their acceptance of the invitation to Moscow. This disrupted the balanced representation from East and West, and Rotblat was forced once again to postpone the conference until after the election. Instead of a conference in Moscow, a hastily convened Continuing Committee came together in London for a crisis meeting – at which not all members were present.<sup>113</sup> On the British side, Russell was missing; Topchiev came only with the unavoidable Pavlichenko; Brown, Glass and instead of Rabinowitch, a contrite Jerome Wiesner came from the US. The latter, an MIT professor work-

108 The meeting lasted from June 21 to 23, 1960. Detailed, handwritten notes were made by Patricia Lindop. RTBT 5/3/1/6 (3).

109 Notes Pugwash Continuing Committee 10 September 1960, 8. RTBT 5/3/1/6 (4).

110 Royon’s role was discussed on several occasions in the Continuing Committee in 1960; the Soviet Committee members Topchiev and Skobel’tsyn who had no objection to Royon joined the majority. Notes 22 June 1960, 5–6 and 23 June 1960, 5. RTBT 5/3/1/6(3). Notes 10 September 1960, 8. RTBT 5/3/1/6 (4).

111 Notes Pugwash Continuing Committee 22 June 1960, 6. RTBT 5/3/1/6 (3).

112 Notes Pugwash Continuing Committee 21 June 1960, morning 7. RTBT 5/3/1/6 (3).

113 Notes Pugwash Continuing Committee 10 September 1960. RTBT 5/3/1/6 (4). Rotblat, *First ten*, 26–28. Evangelista, *Unarmed Forces*, 64.

ing in the Research Laboratory for Electronics, had already taken part in two Pugwash conferences. If Kennedy were to win the election, Wiesner would likely become his chief science adviser. Together with Eisenhower's adviser Richard Leghorn, he had travelled to Moscow before and was well informed about the advance preparations for the conference already made by their Soviet colleagues.<sup>114</sup>

In London, Wiesner tried to explain to Topchiev, and to equally frustrated British colleagues, the "politically embarrassing situation" of American scientists, who during the presidential campaign did not dare to travel to Moscow or – given the all-too-obvious Soviet support – did not consider attending a Pugwash conference because "they might be attacked at home."<sup>115</sup> Even if he was convinced that above all in "times of stress" the thread of the talks should not be severed – and for that reason was willing to continue traveling to Moscow – his contributions to the discussion show that Wiesner, too, was still in the grip of US anti-Communist fervor.<sup>116</sup> There was discussion as to whether the conference should not be moved to a neutral location, preferably to Vienna, or if in Moscow, whether the next conference planned for the US could be scheduled earlier for reasons of balance. As for the plenary UN assembly that was planned for the end of September, one could only hope that Khrushchev would make "a quiet speech."<sup>117</sup> Moreover, Pauling – still "held in contempt" by Senator Dodd's subcommittee because of his refusal to name his fellow campaigners – "would bring a certain amount of unfavorable publicity" and had better stay away; a solidarity address for him which Topchiev had already requested in vain in June was still not deemed to be appropriate.<sup>118</sup> Since Eaton's presence would already cast an "unfavorable spotlight" on the conference, Wiesner wanted "as little publicity as possible [...] without giving the impression of absolute secrecy." In the US, they "had been working for two years to get the Government to support the Pugwash Movement and now it seemed possible that they were to do it."<sup>119</sup> This opportunity could not be gambled away.

Topchiev, who had been hit like a "bolt from the blue" by Rabinowitch's cable in summer 1960 telling him that the conference had had to be put back

114 Walter A. Rosenblith, *Jerry Wiesner: Scientist, Statesman, Humanist: Memories and Memoirs* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003).

115 Notes Pugwash Continuing Committee 10 September 1960, 4. RTBT 5/3/1/6 (4).

116 Notes Pugwash Continuing Committee 10 September 1960, 5. RTBT 5/3/1/6 (4).

117 Notes Pugwash Continuing Committee 10 September 1960, 5. RTBT 5/3/1/6 (4).

118 Notes Pugwash Continuing Committee 10 September 1960, 7. RTBT 5/3/1/6 (4). Notes Pugwash Continuing Committee 23 June 1960, 5. RTBT 5/3/1/6 (3). Wittner, *Resisting*, 364.

119 Notes Pugwash Continuing Committee 10 September 1960, 8 and 11. RTBT 5/3/1/6 (4).

once again, followed the American-British exchanges with bewilderment, especially since his attempts to calm down his paranoid colleagues by reassuring them that Pugwash was held in the highest regard in the Soviet Union only fueled American anxieties.<sup>120</sup> Ultimately, however, the top member of the communist nomenclatura and his KGB man Pavlichenko understood that they had to take American fears into account and accept their conditions if they wanted to reach the decision-makers in Washington at all. The Pugwash conferences were to be continued, until further notice, as “private meetings.” Following the series of spectacular political events that had brought the official test-ban negotiations to a standstill, it seemed all the more urgent to the Soviet Pugwashites to provide a discreet communication channel, and therefore they were willing to respect the fears of their American colleagues. To forestall any possible indiscretions on the part of Eaton, who was thinking about bringing not just his wife Anne and his office manager Betty Royon, but also his press officer, it was decided to follow the strict rules that Topchiev himself had suggested. That is to say, on the invitation list a strict distinction should be made between “participants + honorary guests” and “no-one must issue any publicity without consulting the Committee.”<sup>121</sup> The Soviet members of the Continuing Committee had to realize that under the dark clouds of American anti-Communism, Cyrus Eaton was not the one who could open a line of communication. Even for the Soviets, Eaton had become an obstacle, around which they had to navigate carefully.

Actually, this maneuver had only been scheduled for the opening meeting of the Moscow conference at the end of November 1960. A few days after the September meeting of the Continuing Committee in London, the American Pugwashites decided not to wait that long. When UPI reported in September that “Eaton’s Pugwash Scientists” would soon be meeting in Moscow, the American Pugwashites changed tack ahead of time by publicly distancing themselves from Eaton so as to prevent the expected anti-Communist gusts from capsizing the presidential election campaign, which was in full swing.<sup>122</sup> Meanwhile, they could tacitly expect the consent of their Soviet colleagues.

Two months later, in November 1960, the Soviet Pugwashites masterfully performed their part of the job in Moscow. In the shadow of the Kremlin and its highly effective press censorship, they were able to contain Cyrus Eaton, who was uncontrollable in the West, and his entourage, using their publicity rules. The Moscow conference – in spite of or perhaps precisely due to

120 Notes Pugwash Continuing Committee 10 September 1960, 3. RTBT 5/3/1/6 (4).

121 Notes Pugwash Continuing Committee 10 September 1960, 8–9. RTBT 5/3/1/6.

122 See footnotes 2 and 4.



the conflicts that were fought behind closed doors – was a rousing success in the eyes of the overwhelming majority of participants from both East and West.<sup>123</sup> The hope of the American Pugwashites in September 1960 “that the next meeting would be especially influential with governments” had materialized.<sup>124</sup> Here, and at subsequent Pugwash conferences, the personal contacts between the scientific advisers of the Kennedy administration and their Soviet counterparts were intensified, for example, that between Jerome Wiesner and Evgenii Fedorov, the head of the Soviet expert delegation in Geneva in 1958. These contacts were instrumental in sustaining transnational efforts to secure a stop to weapons tests that, during the crises of the early 1960s – from Paris to Berlin and Cuba – were threatened time and again, and contributed to the LTBT that was finally signed in August 1963.<sup>125</sup> Thus, the laborious five-year process of self-discovery driven by the ideas and ethos of the Russell-Einstein Manifesto had been realized, that is to say, Pugwash was serving as a channel of communication between governments, including not only the Soviet regime, but that in Washington. This success was only possible under the conditions insisted upon by the Americans during the troublesome summer and autumn of 1960, as they remained stuck in the climate of anti-communism that continued to influence American politics, and the country more generally. It was not that they were afraid of their Soviet colleagues and their KGB-observers. But their fears of being accused of harbouring communist tendencies or of being denounced as a fellow traveler strongly limited the American Pugwashites’ room for maneuver at the national level – at least for those who sought personal contact with those in government circles and did not, like Linus Pauling, bank on broad social movements as a means to exert public pressure on the centers of political power.

#### 4 Conclusion: Publicity, Privacy and Secrecy

Topchiev had been absolutely right. Without Cyrus Eaton and his extensive patronage in the early years there would have been no Pugwash conferences

123 See Lüscher’s chapter. On the importance of the Moscow conference for the Czechoslovakian Pugwash group see Doubravka Olšáková’s chapter in this volume.

124 Notes Pugwash Continuing Committee 10 September 1960, 5. RTBT 5/3/1/6 (4).

125 Cf. Evangelista, *Unarmed Forces*, 60–89. As Paul Rubinson notes, scientists on both sides, as well as in the context of Pugwash conferences, contributed to preserving the dominance of the logic of deterrence and to making a comprehensive test ban treaty impossible. Paul Rubinson, “‘Crucified on a Cross of Atoms’: Scientists, Politics, and the Test Ban Treaty,” *Diplomatic History* 35, no. 2 (April 2011): 283–319. See also Rubinson’s chapter in this volume.

at all. However, Eaton gave the scientists he supported little time to find their own way for putting the scientific rationality and objectivity that they claimed for themselves into best use for preventing a nuclear war. From the very beginning he confronted them with a problem, which in various forms – depending on the changing political constellations on a national and global scale – would continue to occupy the PCSWA for some time to come. This was the question as to how they were to present themselves in public as they sought broad support from the international scientific communities and public recognition, while, at the same time, they wanted to function as discreetly as possible as a special ‘elites to elites’ communication channel – something that was key to the development of the PCSWA as a forum for second-track diplomacy.

The political contexts and public discourses in East and West which the Pugwashites faced, especially in the late 1950s, related to each other in a contradictory way. There was, on the one hand, the Soviet rhetoric if not policy, which tried to coopt all “peace-loving forces” of the world and in this way to secure not just peace, but also to expand the Communist sphere of influence worldwide. On the other hand, they had also to contend with American anti-communism, which saw the hand of the Soviets behind each peace and disarmament initiative. If the scientists of Pugwash were to have any chance of success at all, they had to navigate around and overcome this double-bind situation. Eaton’s unique public relations strategy which combined plain horse sense with political provocation was not a model for them – quite the contrary. While his public appearances perhaps secured him the applause of the Soviet side, at home he was seen as being at best a naïve fellow traveller.

The “private, but not secret” policy finally agreed upon as the Pugwash mode of working proved to be beneficial in the specific political constellation of this period, marked on the one hand by the change of administration in Washington and on the other by the reform policy of Khrushchev, who would have liked to direct part of his available resources from military purposes to economic and social reconstruction – so long as the great power position of post-Stalinist Soviet Union was not threatened. Coupled with mutual mistrust, this mix of reforms and persistent power politics on both sides resulted in a quick succession of political crises – the construction of the Berlin Wall, the Bay of Pigs, the Cuban Missiles Crisis – and again and again blocked the negotiation of a comprehensive test ban. After Kennedy was elected, it became clear that two Pugwashites (Jerome Wiesner and Walt Rostow) would be advising the new US president, and Pugwash was able to prove its worth several times in functioning as a communication channel that in fostering East–West dialogue could help to repair the torn threads of political discourse. Even before Kennedy’s election, these two Moscow travelers established the first contact between the future administration and the Soviet government. Further advis-

ers – among them George Kistiakowski, Hans Bethe, Franklin Long and Isidor Rabi – were to travel to the following conferences in Stowe (Vermont), Cambridge and London, making Pugwash one of the most important forums of second-track diplomacy in connection with the test ban negotiations.<sup>126</sup> The British government had also changed its position. Initially, they also saw the Pugwash conferences as mere “communist front gatherings.” As late as 1959, the British government was still unsure of how to view the conferences before they asked chief adviser John D. Cockroft of the UK Atomic Energy Authority to put together a scientifically strong and politically reliable team for Moscow. Subsequently, the UK Foreign Office was so convinced of the potential benefits of the Pugwash conferences that it not only backed the two conferences that took place in Cambridge and London in 1962, but also tried to exert influence on “the composition of the British delegation or what they were to say.”<sup>127</sup>

Thus, the success already generated the next problem: with such proximity to the government, how could the independence of the Pugwash conferences be maintained – if not in the East, then at least in the West, where the nimbus of “scientific objectivity” that marked Pugwash (and which rendered it distinct from other international peace initiatives) was linked to the independence and impartiality of the scientists? It was always a balance that had constantly to be recalibrated between privacy, secrecy and publicity, between scientific autonomy and loyalty to governments. The key questions were how exclusive Pugwash conferences had to be in order to serve as a communication channel for governments, and how much backing from popular movements was still needed to be able to tap into grassroots pressure against governments still stuck in the logic of mutually assured destruction. And another question would come up soon: For what purpose was the knowledge of natural scientists and the authority to which they laid claim still necessary if nuclear arms policy was conceived in the war games of military figures, strategists and security experts, while the best of the next generation of scientists working in Russian “nuclear cities” or California labs were developing ever more sophisticated nuclear military gadgets and making themselves mutually indispensable as developers of arms and defense systems in their highly productive scientific competition?<sup>128</sup> Here the self-enlightenment of scientists on both sides of the

126 Eugene Rabinowitch, “The Stowe Conferences,” *BAS* 17, no. 9 (November 1961): 382–386. Kai-Henrik Barth, “Catalysts of Change: Scientists as Transnational Arms Control Advocates in the 1980s,” *Osiris* 21, no. 1 (2006): 182–206.

127 Notes Pugwash Continuing Committee 10 September 1960, 5. RTBT 5/3/1/6 (4).

128 Rubinson, “Crucified,” 314–315. Paul Erickson, *The World the Game Theorists Made* (Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 2015).

Cold War divide would certainly have been called for, but success on this front would have been dependent on much greater publicity than could ever be achieved with the “private, but not secret” policy adopted by the Pugwash leadership from 1960 onwards.

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