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## AN INDUSTRIALIST LOOKS AT COMMUNISM

by Cyrus Eaton

As a dedicated capitalist, I recently went to Russia to try to see for myself what makes the rival system of communism tick. I visited the Soviet Union for a relatively brief period, and I do not pretend to have come away with all the answers. But I saw enough to convince me that communism is not likely to crumble from within, despite all the wishful thinking of some diehards.

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics occupies the largest land area of any nation in the world, and its 200,000,000 people are moving swiftly to make the utmost of the broad array of resources that abound in their vast and varied terrain. You are struck with this sense of both distance and speed as you wing your fast way the comparatively short 1,000-mile journey from Copenhagen to Moscow by giant Russian jet plane in two hours.

Your impression of speed is reinforced as you observe the rapid pace with which the Russian people move, even as they walk along the city streets and country roads. You simultaneously observe that they must be ardent devotees of physical fitness, for they combine powerful physiques with abundant good health. Watch them at their jobs, and you conclude that love of hard work occupies a high place in their credo. Especially striking is the large number of women enthusiastically performing tasks that we normally consider the exclusive province of men.

As you visit the Soviet schools and libraries, you are impressed with the obvious eagerness of both young and old to learn. From 5,000 to 10,000 people come each day to Moscow's All-Union Lenin Library, which contains 20,000,000 books and pamphlets. You cannot fail to marvel at the almost universal literacy of



a nation in which, forty years ago, 80% of the people could neither read nor write.

At the same time, one must not forget that Russia has traditionally held a position of prominence among nations in cultural fields. Some of the world's literary masterpieces have been produced by Russian writers, and the theater, the opera and especially the ballet, today as in the past, flourish and excel in Russian hands. The museums, particularly in Leningrad, serve as a reminder of Russia's reverence for the arts.

Throughout my stay in the Soviet Union, I made a determined effort to meet and talk to as many people of all ages and occupations as possible. Regrettably, I do not speak Russian, so I was obliged to communicate through an interpreter. I did not have to rely on my interpreter, however, to sense that one of the most marked characteristics of the Russians is their friendliness. With this pronounced trait, I feel there goes hand in hand an overwhelming desire for peace. Here, in my mind, lies great hope for the future harmony of the world, for I believe the people of America match the Soviet populace both in capacity for friendliness and in love of peace.

I met the editors of Pravda, Izvestia and Trud, the three leading papers, as well as a number of magazine editors, and the head of Tass, Russia's wire service. I hardly need point out that Soviet journalism differs markedly from American, but I do want to stress that I was impressed with the intelligence and ability of these leading editors. I also had private conferences with ambassadors and foreign correspondents of leading countries. Able is also distinctly the word for the men who head Russia's government, industry and banking.

I would not know where to look for the American who would want to trade our system for the Russian way. On the other hand, I think we Americans must



take full cognizance of the fact that the Russians are enthusiastically sold on their system. In the forty years since their revolution, they have made immense material and intellectual progress on a mass scale, and they are determined to continue to get ahead. Furthermore, they are as imbued with devotion to Mother Russia as we are with respect for our beloved Stars and Stripes. The nation that succeeded in launching the first Sputnik and sending a missile into orbit around the sun must be taken as seriously as the country in whose laboratories the first nuclear chain reaction was produced.

From my 90-minute interview with Premier Nikita Khrushchev, I believe I gained some insight into the Russian attitude. I hope I also left with him some notion of the intensity with which an American industrialist can and does believe in both capitalism and peace.

Mr. Khrushchev expounded in detail the reasons why the Russians want peace. First he cited the colossal cost of armaments, and pointed out that, in these days of astounding scientific progress, today's effective weapons may well be obsolete six months from now. The more you spend on armaments, in fact, the more you have to spend. Then he quickly enumerated half a dozen programs, to which the Soviet Union has committed itself, and for the rapid accomplishment of which the maximum of money and labor are required.

At the top of his agenda was a broad expansion of schools, colleges, and other educational facilities, requiring hundreds of thousands of new buildings and additional teachers.

Second came an ambitious housing and home building program. "You will observe the great number of apartment houses that have been put up in Moscow," Mr. Khrushchev said. "We have only started. We want every citizen of the Soviet Union to have a comfortable modern home."



Next Mr. Khrushchev called attention to important developments under way in the agricultural field, in which he takes particular interest and pride because of his own farm background. He mentioned that he had opened up great areas of virgin territory. He wants to expand that program, while also introducing the most modern scientific agricultural methods on all farms, old and new.

Also prominent on Mr. Khrushchev's list was a transportation plan calling for new highways as well as substantial additions and improvements to existing railroad facilities. Large scale expansion of Soviet electric generating and transmitting facilities is also in progress. Attention is also being turned to the chemical industry, and so on down the list.

"To take our country from its backward position of forty years ago to the modern ideal we hold for it calls for unlimited capital and for the labor of all of our people," Mr. Khrushchev stated emphatically. He added that machinery, equipment and materials from the United States could be used in these vast Soviet expansion programs, and that there should be profitable opportunities for trade between our two countries. By engaging in mutual trade, furthermore, he felt that we might find a way of establishing friendship between our two nations.

Then Mr. Khrushchev made the observation that I consider the most significant of the entire long discourse. If by some means, he said, genuine cooperation and understanding could be created between the Soviet Union and the United States, if these two most powerful nations the world has ever seen could come to work together in harmony, all of the political disturbances in every other part of the world would be adjusted by compromise and peaceful means, instead of becoming the occasion for fomenting renewed bitterness and hatred between the USSR and the USA. Both of these giant nations are so extensive geographically and so richly endowed in natural resources that neither needs have much incentive to impose on other coun-





tries. If the two giants agree, the rest of the world will pose no major problem. This suggestion, I believe, is realistic and offers promise of a workable peace.

For my part, I told Mr. Khrushchev I thought capitalism had produced excellent results in my country, and would remain the ideal system for us. I reminded him that Andrew Carnegie, perhaps the most successful steel man in our history, had dedicated his large fortune to the promotion of peace and education, and I suggested that the Russians consider Carnegie as a typical American capitalist. I told Mr. Khrushchev that anyone who pictured the American businessman as encouraging war preparation in order to sell more iron ore, coal and steel, misunderstood the United States. I stated that I had long advocated a working partnership between capital and labor, and that I liked to have the men and women who work for companies with which I am associated become stockholders, as I believed that the ownership of American industry should be widely diffused.

Mr. Khrushchev did not overlook the opportunity to inject good-humoredly at this point that while he considered this a commendable policy, in his country they did even better: the people owned everything. He went on to assert that he had no desire to try to change the form of government or the system of economics of America. He added that the Soviet Union was eager to live on good terms with the United States, and that he wished the United States would stop our world-wide denunciation of the Soviet system, and cease trying to ring Russia with missile and bomber sites.

Now let's consider the alternatives to reaching a livable accommodation with communism. Through the Pugwash conferences I have for several years been trying to promote understanding on a private and informal level between scientists and scholars of East and West. The proceedings and conclusions of our several Pugwash Conferences of Nuclear Scientists have been made available to the heads of the world's major states, as well as the Pope and the United Nations. From



President Eisenhower, India's Prime Minister Nehru, The Vatican, Canada's Prime Minister Diefenbaker, Yugoslavia's President Tito, to name just a few, have come letters endorsing the purpose of the Conferences. When I was introduced to Premier Khrushchev in Moscow, his first words were, "I have personally read the Proceedings of the Pugwash Conferences, and I want to thank you on behalf of the Soviet people for bringing the scientists of the world together. It is a highly constructive move."

At the recent Third Pugwash Conference of Nuclear Scientists, 80 experts gathered from 22 eastern and western nations to consider "The Dangers of the Atomic Age and What Scientists Can do About Them." As they ended their meetings, they reached the unanimous conclusion that enough atom and hydrogen bombs have now been stockpiled by both sides to blow all the cities off the face of the earth and to annihilate all their inhabitants. They further agreed that there is no defense, civil or military, against the bomb.

In the absence of an understanding between the capitalist and the communist nations, both sides will go on increasing their lethal stockpiles. Twelve years of this cold war have already cost astronomical amounts. Ever-increasing expenditures have been accompanied by ever-increasing hatred and bitterness. Continuation of the cold war will create a crushing burden of taxation that will bankrupt us.

Meanwhile, make no mistake about this: every day that the arms race continues, the chance of mutual destruction grows greater. Any day, by accident or by design, some fool, some fanatic, even some fumbler, may touch off the explosion that will cause the holocaust.

Which course shall we choose? Certainly the risk in a treaty of peace and friendship with the Soviet Union is fraught with far less hazard to humanity than either the cold war or the hot war.