

~~Cyrus S. Eaton~~ *Steno transcript*

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ADDRESS OF CYRUS S. EATON
DELIVERED BEFORE THE ECONOMIC CLUB OF DETROIT
AT COBO HALL, DETROIT, MICHIGAN
ON MAY 24, 1965

Despite those very kind remarks, I must tell you that my life is a failure. I feel as Andrew Carnegie did 50 years ago who had devoted the last 25 years of his life promoting peace, who suddenly found the civilized world involved in a struggle to destroy itself.

Six months ago when this trip was planned, after you extended your kind invitation to me, I expected to go abroad and to bring you back a very happy report. I can only bring you bad news.

Six months ago Lyndon Johnson had been elected by an overwhelming majority, and those of us who have been striving for peace felt that with his great prestige and influence, he would take over the international problems; that he would visit the Soviet Union, take them into his friendship; that he would visit our allies in France and Great Britain, and through the compromises for which he had been famous, he would bring about better understanding and more friendship between the communists and the capitalists.

In six months the trend has been constantly in the other direction. There is increasing anger and bitterness between the East and the West. Every day there are new threats of use of

force and actual employment of force.

The giant Soviet Union, the giant China had kept out of this quarrel in Viet Nam, but now they are ready to go in, and go in with everything they have, and I needn't remind you that they have plenty.

In my sober judgment we are on the brink of catastrophe and unless some miracle occurs in the next month, I fear that mankind is doomed.

If you will bear with me, I will recite in detail my experiences of the past three weeks which regretfully lead me to this solemn conclusion.

Our first stop was _____ had arranged beforehand to meet with people who could speak with authority for the government.

So I said, "What is your view of the situation in Viet Nam?"

The reply was, "They drove us out and they will drive you out. Viet Nam," they said, "for a hundred years was a part of the French empire, but 20 years ago they decided on their independence. We wouldn't grant it. We went to war, and after 10 years of war in which we put in everything that we had, we were driven out. The same will happen to you. We have had long experience there and we would be glad to make available all of our experience. We would be glad to help solve this

problem. But we realize that our advice would not be welcome and there is nothing that we can do.

"We recognize the long friendship between France and the United States. We are always mindful of the great part of the United States in World Wars I and II, but we also remember that when Cornwallis surrendered to George Washington at ~~Yorktown~~, it was the activity of the French fleet that made that surrender possible and started your great country on its brilliant career.

" philosophy of a situation. We believe that nationalism in the end is going to be more persuasive than any world ideology whether it is communism or christianity or American leadership, so therefore we in France are greatly disturbed over what we see, but there is nothing we can do but shudder and await the outcome."

From there we went to Czechoslovakia, to its capital, Prague. The night we arrived, they were having an immense celebration covering the 20th anniversary of the end of the war and what they call liberation. We were invited to that celebration that was held in their great castle that had 2,000 people comfortably assembled and was quite a brilliant affair.

Mr. Novatny, the president, and his wife sought us out early and then they brought around various of the distinguished visitors, among whom was Mr. PODGORN the influential man from Russia that is frequently talked of perhaps as the one man

successor to the present three if ever a change should take place, a man with great experience and force. He had been our guest a number of times in Cleveland and we had seen him in the Soviet Union.

He took occasion to take us aside for a half hour to deliver a blistering attack on the policies of the United States in Viet Nam. He had with him influential people.

He had his First Secretary of the Foreign Relations Department, Mr. ^{KUZNETSOV} Knetchnicoff. He also had the young man astronaut who had stopped out of the plane in mid-air recently, and of course that young man was a great hero to everyone assembled, especially the young people. They almost mobbed him.

Then we met the ambassadors of America, Great Britain, France, Canada. The whole atmosphere of that place was permeated with denunciation of the United States because of its policy in Viet Nam.

The next day was the big celebration, the assembly of their armed forces. The entire city turned out. For miles people were lined on both sides of the street.

The president had a speaker's desk arranged. We were seated near him. And in an impassioned oration he expressed his great gratitude to the Soviet Union for having rescued them. Then he wound up with a terrible denunciation of what the United States was doing to their sister country in Viet Nam. That was

very sobering.

We had conferences with each of the ministers. We were talking perhaps promoting trade relationships between our two countries. And they said, "We are more eager than we could tell to trade with America, but when we try to export our things into the United States, they charge three times as much duty as is imposed on most other countries. If we talk about credit, you won't extend it. But Great Britain and France and West Germany and Italy and all the other countries of Europe who are your allies are glad to trade with us and extend us credit. Why won't you?"

May I remind you that Czechoslovakia is not entirely, by any means, a communist country. In the cabinet there are three other strong parties: catholic party, ^{the} so-called people's party and the socialist party. Each of those has a representative in that cabinet.

The catholics are represented by a catholic priest who stands six feet four. He, like most other members of the cabinet, spent time in a German concentration camp or in prison. So they are all embittered toward West Germany, unfortunately.

But this striking catholic priest who is an orthodox practicing catholic He said the first time he is coming to the United States to tell his fellow catholics here that America and his country ought to get along together.

But the picture there was one where I could say that almost every man, woman and child was filled with indignation at our war in Viet Nam.

Then we went to Hungary, to the beautiful city that is their capitol, one of the most lovely in all the world.

By a coincidence, Mr. Gromyko, who is the Foreign Secretary of the Soviet Union, arrived in Budapest the same day we did and he was having a series of conferences with the head of the government, with his Foreign Secretary and all the departments alternating in our conference.

My son was there, who wants to engage in business with Hungary. So they said to us: "The first thing we need are more hotels; that we had a million, four hundred thousand tourists last year. We could have 10 times as many if we could afford hotel accommodations. We would welcome private investment in Hungary, whether it is industry or any form of business and we will give you wonderful tax privileges. We will do many things that you couldn't obtain in your own country. Will you come in and spend some of your money and your knowhow in upbuilding this land."

And when we conferred with Mr. Kadar, the head of that government, who had also been a German prisoner and treated very roughly, he said, "Why won't you trade with us?" He said, "Our biggest trade is with West Germany." He said, "They don't love communists any more than you do, but that doesn't keep them

from doing business with us."

Budapest, of course, is a marvelous city. I think one of the finest occasions we had there was a reception given us by the scholars, the scientists, the artists and musicians, the poets. They have in that country a wonderful of people that stand for the things of the mind and the spirit.

But we found the Hungarians more sophisticated on the subject of communism than we did in Czechoslovakia.

One man said, "In spite of this Viet Nam trouble, let's talk business and see what we can do."

But after Mr. Gromyko had been there four days, they had a meeting of the cabinet, in which they did two things: They considered the proposition my son had made for the establishing of a hotel and approved that.

The second thing they did was to pass a resolution denouncing the United States for its part in Viet Nam, and issuing a proclamation that any Hungarian was free to enlist in the military forces of Viet Nam, either North or South, to fight for those people. That was a very sobering experience too.

We took the plane then to Moscow. And nothing is a greater index to the progress of the Soviet Union than their aviation. 10 years ago their planes were fairly rough. One of the but not comparable to our girls. This time on that plane there were four handsome youngsters that looked as though

they had been trained for the ballet, skillful, handsome, bright; just an index to the progress made in those countries if they have a chance.

It happened to be a clear day. We could see every foot of the distance of the country over which we flew. You get some idea of the geographical extent of that empire and well remember that it is about three times as big as the continental United States, and it has almost every natural resource: great quantities of iron ore, of coal, of tin, of zinc, of natural gas, of oil; farming areas that compare with Iowa and the Dakotas. And I would like to find out how much there is, but they hint all the time that their gold mines are quite abundant and they are getting quite .

When we arrived there, of course we were met by a delegation maybe of a hundred representing most of the ministries: Foreign Trade, Finance, Agriculture, The Foreign Department, the scientists whom we had seen a lot of over the years, the scholars, the promoters of peace.

And they had the usual reception where we were taken into a big private room and there were exchanges of toasts and drinks, and then we started for our hotel, and here occurred what I want to bring to your attention, and I think it represents the most significant thing in international relationships today.

A spokesman was sent with us. The spokesman said,

"You have been a friend to the Soviet Union. We gave you the Lenin Peace Prize, gave you a medal for your contributions to Soviet agriculture. You have been very kind to our people and we regard you as one of our friends."

He said, "A very serious thing has happened in world relations. We are on the verge of a great crisis which our people take with the utmost seriousness. When you have been here in the past, you have always been on the front pages of our newspapers and radio and television."

Mind you, among the group that greeted us was the editor of Pravda, the editor of Izvestia, the manager of their state radio and television.

The spokesman said, "The crisis is upon us. Our principal preoccupation at the moment is to do nothing that will in any way offend China, and if you are displayed on the front pages as in the past, we will be accused of harboring American capitalists, and that will disturb the very delicate understanding which we have reached. We hope that you as an old friend won't take it amiss. All your conferences that were planned will be arranged and will go on, but there must be nothing said in the Soviet press.

"When you get back to America you can say anything you want to. The press can present whatever they want to. But here there is to be complete silence because of our great desire to

establish friendly relations with China because of the world crisis in which we want to stand together."

That was pretty sobering.

In the evening we had the usual welcome, an eight-course dinner, four kinds of wine, with vodka ahead and brandy afterwards. Not being able to respond to that, I have to rely on my associate who was along, who has great capacity for those things. He took care of it.

The next day our first appointment was with the Secretary of Foreign Trade. He said, "You know, we want to trade with you." He said, "There is a British delegation here today with a great slogan for us to buy British and," he said, "I estimate that we will buy from Great Britain this year, in '65 probably about \$200 million. We would rather trade with the United States. Our trade would be much bigger than that. Why won't you trade with us?"

We then went to a very interesting function. Shastri, the Prime Minister of India, was there with a big Indian delegation, so we were competing with him for attention. They were having a huge reception for him at one o'clock that day, and they thought they would take a chance on inviting us to that one, and we went. It was held in that huge hall, the Hall of St. George in the Kremlin. I should think it would be a thousand feet long, and it was arranged with tables along like this loaded with