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Mr K's capitalist friend on Power and the Pentagon

by DONALD EDGAR



● On the left, Mr. Krushchev. On the right, Mr. Cyrus Eaton. This meeting was at Orly Airport, Paris, last month.

Not often that I come away from an interview with myself—"I at was a great

at night as I went to lift in Claridges and Mr. Cyrus

the 76-year-old and rich North industrialist who trying to build between the East and

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nerals have been by their successes in I and II. They have e part played by the

British. They have a complex of omnipotence. It's a state of mind that they have got themselves into.

"As you know," he added, "at the moment the world is teeming with generals who are heads of state. We have had two fine generals who have exercised power in recent years. There was General Marshall, who was Secretary of State.

"He was a fine man. But the trouble of it was that he thought in terms of military power. And it was Marshall who laid down the basis of our post-war policy.

"And then General Eisenhower came later as President. And they can't escape the idea of military strength. They have a military complex.

"You remember we had a great general in our civil war, Ulysses Grant. He was a great general but he turned out a poor President. You had Wellington who was a great soldier—but not so good, it appears, as a politician.

"The trouble is we are relying too much on weapons of war. Not on a mentality of political thinking."

Mr. Eaton, who has spent some time with Mr. Krushchev in the past, has just come back with his

wife from a tour of Eastern Europe—Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Eastern Germany.

I asked him whether he had found many restrictions on liberty.

He became even more lively.

"We have more in the United States," he said. "Do you know that there are practically half a million people in the United States whose job in one way or another is to supervise the citizens?"

Alarmed

THERE are in all 75 agencies. We didn't see policemen everywhere in the countries we have just visited. But if Ike came to Cleveland there would be 60 security men looking after him. We found nothing like that where we went.

"We have more of a police state than there is in those countries."

Mrs. Eaton nodded agreement. She is a very attractive woman—many years younger than her husband. She was sitting in the wheel chair that is her life. She is a polio victim.

"How did you find it otherwise in Eastern Europe?"

"Well, they are worried. They are greatly alarmed over the rearming of Germany. They feel that the United States is encouraging the Germans.

"And I was greatly concerned over the lack of effective diplomatic activity on the part of the American diplomats and their allies.

Out of touch

THEY are all out of touch with the people. There is little or no contact with political leaders. The representatives of the English speaking world have a real hatred of Communism.

"Therefore it is not fashionable to mix. And therefore they are living in a world completely cut off from reality.

"They still repeat the old clichés and they still keep themselves to themselves."

I then asked Mr. Eaton why he thought the Summit talks had broken down.

"In my opinion," he replied, "There was a great influence brought to bear on President Eisenhower after his meeting at Camp David with Mr. Krushchev.

"I think at that time there was an honest desire to reach an understanding.

"But then pressure was brought. There was the Atomic Energy Commission. The Pentagon. The C.I.A.—The Central Intelligence Agency.

"All people who have a vested interest in keeping tension between the East and the West.

"And, of course, the Germans did their bit."

His reasons

MR. EATON then started to talk about the reasons that had made him, "a dedicated capitalist," pursue his policy, in spite of all the troubles

he has run into.

"First, there was the awareness of the annihilation that an all out nuclear war would mean. Secondly, there is the crushing burden of taxation to carry out the cold war. And thirdly there was the conviction that World War Two didn't produce the results we have hoped for.

"I had two sons and six nephews in the war. Two of the nephews were killed. And then I saw so many of the most brilliant sons of cousins and friends who were killed, many of them in the Battle of the Bulge in the winter of 1944-45.

He mentioned then about his last meeting in Paris with Mr. Krushchev. "What do you think of him?" I asked.

(over)

"Oh, he's a very clever man. He impressed me right from the start. He has a keen intelligence, blunt frankness and an extensive knowledge of what is going on in the world.

"He astonished me by the width of his information. He is hard working and widely read. I told him that if he had come to America as a boy he would have been the head of one of our greatest corporations."

I felt the time had come to ask Mr. Eaton what he felt about the long-term development of capitalism and communism.

"I think that undoubtedly capitalism is going to undergo many changes and be influenced by the Socialist experiment. But I think that on the other hand Socialist countries will also change as they develop economically.

A chance

"If we let time and evolution work, free from the threats of a hostile attitude by the Western world, then I think there would be a great chance of lasting peace. The emphasis must be on the pro-

gress of the human race."

"How are you able to think in these terms when you are a supremely successful example of high capitalism?" I asked.

"Oh," answered Mr. Eaton, "I don't think there is much in the prestige of wealth. You can only wear one suit. You can only eat three meals a day.

What matters is the creativeness. That is the real distinction between one man and another."

We then talked about other Americans who have also tried to work for peace.

There was Ford with his Peace Ship which he sailed across the Atlantic to try to end the First World War.

There was Andrew Carnegie, the great steelmaster, who left most of his fortune in the interests of peace.

But is it altogether strange that Nobel, the explosives king, Carnegie maker of one of the materials of war—and now Eaton, who is also a great steel man, should devote themselves to peace?