

RESEARCH ARTICLE

## The Pugwash scientists' conferences, Cyrus Eaton and the clash of internationalisms, 1954–1961

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### Abstract

This paper examines the contest between Canadian American industrialist Cyrus Eaton and the Pugwash scientists' leadership for influence over the early Pugwash scientists' conferences. Eaton's activism has generally been dismissed in the historical literature as ineffective, naive and too uncritical of the Soviet Union. This paper argues that he was genuinely committed to international peace and security, that Eaton shared with Pugwash scientists a belief in the importance of intellectuals to global unity, and that he worked to bring about greater international peace and understanding through both his personal activism and his own conferences held in the town of Pugwash. Eaton, however, favoured a broader push for peace, which included participation by a wider range of intellectuals and a call for rapprochement with the Soviet Union. These differences between Eaton and the Pugwash scientists, I argue, were more than simply about approach: they represented different internationalist visions and manifested in different conceptualizations for the Pugwash scientists' conferences. Eaton hoped to incorporate non-scientists and humanism into the conferences, and integrate them into his own broader conference programme at his Thinkers' Lodge at Pugwash. The scientists, however, wanted to keep their conferences as distinctly scientists' events, tied to science and its authority.

'Peace in Pugwash' was the headline of a Cleveland magazine's coverage of a gathering of intellectuals from around the world at the Nova Scotia town of Pugwash. 'Pugwash is a sort of informal United Nations', the article explained, inaugurated 'in the belief that another war might well mean the annihilation of civilization'.<sup>1</sup> Pugwash is now synonymous with the scientists' anti-nuclear weapons organization, the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, which held its first meeting there in July 1957. Yet the conference referred to by the magazine was not a meeting of these scientists, but rather an earlier 1956 meeting on education. The funder of the first scientists' conference, Canadian American industrialist Cyrus Eaton, organized a range of meetings geared towards peace and understanding at Pugwash. These were also known, during their time, as Pugwash conferences.

This paper explores the Pugwash conferences as a site of contestation between Eaton and the Pugwash scientists' leadership's differing internationalist ideas and activism. Although there been a recent surge of interest in Eaton's relationship with the

<sup>1</sup> 'Peace in Pugwash', *Cleveland Plain Dealer Pictorial Magazine*, 16 September 1956, pp. 22–3.

Pugwash scientists, his activism is still dismissed as ineffective, naive and too uncritical of the Soviet Union.<sup>2</sup> By bringing Eaton's rhetoric and activism into conversation with that of the Pugwash scientists' leadership, I argue that he was genuinely committed to international peace and understanding, and shared with Pugwash scientists a belief in the need to bridge political divides in order to tackle the dangers of nuclear weapons. Unlike the Pugwash scientists' leadership, however, he was publicly strongly critical of US foreign policy and emphasized the need for intellectual engagement by a wide range of elites. The Pugwash scientists' leadership, on the other hand, focused solely on science and scientists in their search for interconnection across international boundaries. Eaton's rhetoric centered around calls for world peace, global disarmament and an end to the Cold War, while the scientists' leadership, on the other hand, preferred low-key statements on a narrower range of technical or political issues. They saw blanket calls for world peace and global disarmament as too radical: counterproductive and ill-suited to their approach.

This article moves beyond the current literature by using Eaton's personal papers at the Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland alongside the papers of Joseph Rotblat at Churchill College, Cambridge, to show that the scientists and Eaton had different visions for the Pugwash scientists' conferences, which were shaped through this clash.<sup>3</sup> Eaton hoped to incorporate non-scientists and humanism into these conferences, and integrate them into his own broader conference programme at his Thinkers' Lodge home at Pugwash. The scientists' leadership, in contrast, wanted to keep their conferences within the realm of scientists' diplomacy – that is, distinctly scientists' events, tied to science and its authority, and speaking on matters through their science or related to it. As part of their engineered separation of Eaton from their conferences, the scientists' leadership crafted an official history of the conferences which helped them to embed their ideological vision into the conferences' origins, and circumscribe Eaton's role to that of funding and logistical support.

By highlighting Eaton's internationalism, this paper sheds new light on the origins and politics of the Pugwash scientists' conferences. These conferences have played an important role in our histories of post-war scientific internationalism, helping historians connect the activities of the atomic scientists in the late 1940s with the arms control agreements of the 1960s and 1970s. The conferences have stood for an alternative to the confrontational diplomacy of nation states: an unadulterated scientists' internationalism built on their epistemic communities, their disinterested approaches to problem solving, and their ability to bridge national and political boundaries by so doing.<sup>4</sup> Yet we are now developing a more nuanced view of the politics of the Pugwash conferences which makes clear that its internationalism was not the clear-cut application of rational thinking to international affairs, but rather had its own politics and political engagements with other actors and organizations.<sup>5</sup> By focusing on the ideological aspects of the clash between Eaton and the Pugwash scientists' leadership, this paper shows that scientists' scientific internationalism was intertwined with other forms of internationalism in the 1950s and 1960s, and developed in conversation with them, or even in opposition to them. In that sense, scientific internationalism is akin to other types of twentieth-century internationalisms which were also often intertwined and developed in conversation with each other.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Carola Sachse, 'Patronage impossible: Cyrus Eaton and his Pugwash scientists', in Alison Kraft and Carola Sachse (eds.), *Science, (Anti-)Communism and Diplomacy*, Leiden: Brill, 2020, pp. 80–117.

<sup>3</sup> Sachse, *op. cit.* (2).

<sup>4</sup> Matthew Evangelista, *Unarmed Forces: The Transnational Movement to End the Cold War*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002, pp. 146–7.

<sup>5</sup> Kraft and Sachse, *op. cit.* (2).

<sup>6</sup> Glenda Sluga and Patricia Clavin (eds.), *Internationalisms: A Twentieth-Century History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.

This clash also has important implications for the way we think about scientists' conferences more generally. We tend to see such conferences as well-defined and delineated events and organizations, shaped by the disciplinary contours of their science and the research interests of their scientists. By highlighting the struggle over the meaning and vision of Pugwash, this paper points to these conferences' ideational malleability, and provides a study of how this malleability may be resolved and how the conference's meaning and vision solidified. The closure around what Pugwash meant and represented, and the circumscribing of Eaton's role by the scientists' leadership, was partially carried out through the writing of an official history of the scientists' Pugwash conferences, which located the origins, vision and ideological drive of the conferences firmly within the internationalist activity of scientists. In that sense, these conferences have something in common with politically charged conferences such as the Paris Conference of 1919, whose meaning and impact have been debated for decades and interpreted in differing, often contradictory, ways, and whose histories have been written and rewritten to present particular understandings of the conference which conform to differing understandings of the international relations and political economy of the post-war years.<sup>7</sup>

### The First Scientists' Conference

The emergence of Pugwash and Cyrus Eaton's sponsorship of the first scientists' conference at Pugwash, Nova Scotia in July 1957 is well documented, not least in the official histories produced by Pugwash itself. Growing concerns over nuclear war led British philosopher Bertrand Russell to organize the so-called Russell-Einstein Manifesto, announced in July 1955 and ultimately signed by several scientists from around the world, calling for an end to war as an instrument of foreign policy.<sup>8</sup> Russell and allied scientists mobilized to arrange an international meeting in New Delhi for December 1956, but the Suez crisis led to its cancellation. In stepped the prominent US Canadian steel and railroad magnate Cyrus Eaton with an offer to pay travel, room and board for a conference in his hometown of Pugwash in Nova Scotia, Canada.<sup>9</sup>

Eaton had in fact made the offer to fund Russell's conference in 1955, but India was then a more promising location for the scientists' conference. Once India had fallen through his offer was accepted, and the first meeting of what would subsequently be known as the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs was held in Pugwash between the 6 and 11 July 1957. Twenty-three participants, the vast majority scientists, contributed to formal discussions, and the final statement called for, amongst other things, the end of the arms race, the creation of a system of arms control (including a suspension of bomb tests) and greater international 'mutual understanding'.<sup>10</sup>

Histories of the Pugwash scientists' conferences tell of the growing success of Pugwash and its estrangement from Eaton heading into the 1960s. There were subsequent scientists' conferences in March and September 1958, June and August 1959, and then once or twice a year subsequently. Eaton, however, only fully financed the first three scientists' meetings, and then partially financed or logistically supported two more. Thereafter his involvement with and influence on the conferences melted away. The conferences

<sup>7</sup> Michael Graham Fry, 'British revisionism', in M.F. Boemeke, Gerald D. Feldman and Elisabeth Glaser (eds.), *The Treaty of Versailles: A Reassessment after 75 Years*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp. 565–602.

<sup>8</sup> Sandra Ionno Butcher, *The Origins of the Russell-Einstein Manifesto* (Pugwash History Series, 1), Fredericksburg, VA: Pugwash, 2005.

<sup>9</sup> Joseph Rotblat, *Scientists in the Quest for Peace*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1972, p. 3.

<sup>10</sup> Joseph Rotblat, 'II. Bertrand Russell and the Pugwash movement: personal reminiscences', *Russell: The Journal of the Bertrand Russell Archives* (Summer 1998) 18, pp. 5–24; Rotblat (ed.), *Proceedings of the First Pugwash Conference on Science and World Affairs*, London: Pugwash Council, 1982, p. 11.

themselves continued to grow in prominence in the 1960s, and scholars have accorded them a not insignificant role in assisting nuclear arms control.<sup>11</sup>

### Thinkers' Lodge

Narratives on the origins of Pugwash give the impression that Eaton's interest in international affairs was sparked by Bertrand Russell's calls for international peace in 1955.<sup>12</sup> However, as Carola Sachse has noted, Eaton's active interest in international cooperation dates back to at least 1954. In December of that year, on his seventy-first birthday, he launched his activism through a press release, declaring that he would convert his Pugwash property ('a fifteen-room white clapboard house on a grassy tree-shaded brow overlooking Northumberland Strait') into a 'Thinkers' Lodge' where intellectuals and experts from around the world would discuss contemporary issues, and build bridges across political and cultural divides.<sup>13</sup> Eaton later recalled that an earlier successful meeting of educationalists at his summer home at Deep Cove prompted him to launch Thinkers' Lodge.<sup>14</sup> He was particularly struck by the need to understand and use scientific and technological discoveries and inventions for the benefit of mankind. 'It seemed to me', Eaton explained in an interview to *Time* magazine in July 1955, that 'international scholars, if brought together, might be able to suggest how to use these discoveries to promote the health and happiness of the great family of mankind, rather than to extinguish the race completely'.<sup>15</sup>

Eaton's Thinkers' Lodge conferences pre-dated the scientists' conferences. Although the participating scientists saw their first meeting as unique and unprecedented, for Eaton the first scientists' meeting in July 1957 formed part of his wider Thinkers' Lodge initiative. Eaton first heard of Russell's manifesto, and the philosopher's intention to call a conference of scientists to discuss nuclear matters, in July 1955 as he was arranging this first Thinkers' Lodge conference at Pugwash. Eaton immediately wrote to Russell offering to host the scientists.<sup>16</sup> Russell did not accept this initial offer, and Eaton's Thinkers conference went ahead as planned in August. Academics, newspapermen and industrialists gathered to reflect, in Eaton's words, 'on some of the more profound problems that concern the family of mankind'.<sup>17</sup> The presence of British biologist Julian Huxley helped capture US and Canadian press attention, and the conference's success led Eaton to push ahead with further meetings.<sup>18</sup>

Next, in July the following year, Eaton hosted a conference organized by the Liberal Education Commission of the Association of American Colleges to discuss liberal-arts

<sup>11</sup> Alison Kraft, Holger Nehring and Carola Sachse, 'Introduction', *Journal of Cold War Studies* (Winter 2018) 20(1), pp. 4–30; Matthew Evangelista, *Unarmed Forces: The Transnational Movement to End the Cold War*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002, pp. 146–7.

<sup>12</sup> Butcher, op. cit. (8); Alison Kraft, 'Dissenting scientists in early Cold War Britain: the "fallout" controversy and the origins of Pugwash, 1954–1957', *Journal of Cold War Studies* (Winter 2018) 20(1), pp. 58–100.

<sup>13</sup> Ian Sclanders, 'Cyrus Eaton's hideaway for brains', *Maclean's*, 27 October 1956, pp. 24–5; Sachse, op. cit. (2).

<sup>14</sup> Eric Dennis, "'World thinkers" get together', *Halifax Chronicle-Herald*, 3 August 1955.

<sup>15</sup> 'Following are questions asked by Mr H.T. Shey, *Time Magazine*, and answered by Mr Cyrus Eaton', 28 July 1955, Folder 6031, Box 266, Cyrus S. Eaton Papers, Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio (henceforth Eaton Papers). Also Cyrus S. Eaton, 'Letters to the editors: Hinduism', *Life* (28 February 1955) 38(9), p. 7.

<sup>16</sup> Letter, Cyrus Eaton to Bertrand Russell, 13 July 1955, Folder 5/1/4/7, Rotblat Collection, Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge (henceforth Rotblat Papers).

<sup>17</sup> '13 college heads ponder at home for thinkers', *Washington Post*, 8 July 1956, p. A6.

<sup>18</sup> Milton Bracker, 'Scholars gather to discuss world', *New York Times*, 2 August 1955, p. 21; Bracker, 'Thinkers differ on how to relax', *New York Times*, 3 August 1955, p. 10. 'Background on the Pugwash gatherings', 22 March 1960, Folder 5996, Box 264, Eaton Papers. Memo, Julian Huxley, 'Memorandum on possible annual discussion groups', 24 August 1955, Folder 6031, Box 266, Eaton Papers.

and humanities education.<sup>19</sup> A month later he assembled a group of diplomats, politicians, scientists and political scientists to promote discussion and understanding across political divides. This was the first Pugwash Thinkers' Lodge conference to include broad international participation: prominent individuals from China, the Soviet Union, Iraq and Israel joined others from the United States, Canada, Britain, France and Germany.<sup>20</sup> The conference focused on the Middle East, particularly inter-state relations and economic and social development. However, the unfolding Suez Canal crisis contributed to tensions between participants ('After three days of acrimony', reported *Newsweek*, 'host Eaton called off the next day's meetings and took his guests for a boat ride on Pugwash River').<sup>21</sup> In November 1956 Russell wrote to Eaton indicating a rekindled interest in Eaton's offer.<sup>22</sup> As a result, the meeting hosted by Eaton at Thinker's Lodge from the 7 to 10 July 1957, while one of many as far as Eaton was concerned – indeed, he would host two back-to-back meetings of educators there in the week that followed – would come to be identified by the scientists as the inaugural 'Pugwash conference'.<sup>23</sup>

Histories of the early Pugwash scientists' conferences emphasize the importance of the setting and format of the early conferences for their success.<sup>24</sup> Although the agendas and sessions were arranged by scientists, much of the setting and broader format of the July 1957 scientists' conference in fact closely followed the pattern of Eaton's earlier Thinkers' Lodge conferences. Indeed, Russell himself would later recall that one of the reasons he had agreed to Eaton's funding offer was because Eaton 'had held other sorts of conferences there of a not wholly dissimilar character' to the one he envisaged for his scientists' movement.<sup>25</sup> Discussions were held behind closed doors, and participants (officially at least) presented their own opinions rather than representing institutions. Spouses were welcomed, and participants spent between eight days and two weeks in a mixture of discussions, games and outdoor activities. Indoors there would be card games, fireside chats and singing, and of course teas and dinners. The outdoor experience was as central to the conference experience: outdoor activities focused around sightseeing, shopping, bird-watching, croquet, boating, fishing and golf. Meals were usually in the dining room, but were sometimes taken in a converted lobster-packing shed by the water's edge. As sleeping space in the lodge itself was limited, participants would often stay overnight at nearby houses. Eaton and his family, supported by a small staff, would be on hand to act as hosts and create a 'family atmosphere'.<sup>26</sup> It was a place, according to one magazine, where intellectuals could 'relax, breathe sea air, swim, eat lobsters, drink vintage wines and stimulate one another with scintillating conversation'.<sup>27</sup> 'Fresh air and freedom, natural beauty and good companionship served as a setting for spiritual release and intellectual effort', noted one participant, neatly summing up Eaton's vision of the Thinkers' Lodge experience.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>19</sup> F.L. Wormald, *The Pugwash Experiment: An Essay in Liberal Education*, Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges, 1958, pp. 14–19. '13 college heads' op. cit. (17).

<sup>20</sup> 'Background on the Pugwash gatherings', op. cit. (18), pp. 2–3; Sclanders, op. cit. (13).

<sup>21</sup> Sclanders, op. cit. (13); 'Scholars from 9 nations trade views at retreat', *Washington Post*, 7 August 1956, p. 28. 'Host at Pugwash', *Newsweek*, 20 August 1956, pp. 35–6.

<sup>22</sup> Letter, Bertrand Russell to Cyrus Eaton, 19 November 1956, Folder 6056, Box 267, Eaton Papers. Also Rotblat, 'II. Bertrand Russell', op. cit. (10).

<sup>23</sup> 'Educators discuss role of intellect', *New York Times*, 17 July 1957, p. 43. Wormald, op. cit. (19), pp. 21–3; Marcus Gleisser, *The World of Cyrus Eaton*, Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2005, pp. 212–17.

<sup>24</sup> Rotblat, op. cit. (9).

<sup>25</sup> Bertrand Russell, *The Autobiography of Bertrand Russell*, 2nd edn, London: Routledge, 2014, p. 576.

<sup>26</sup> Wormald, op. cit. (19), pp. 14–15.

<sup>27</sup> Sclanders, op. cit. (13).

<sup>28</sup> Wormald, op. cit. (19), pp. 17–18; Bracker, 'Thinkers differ on how to relax', op. cit. (18); 'Scholars from 9 nations trade views at retreat' op. cit. (21).

Discussions at the Thinkers' Lodge conferences, although themed, were nevertheless wide-ranging and tended to dwell on big questions of import to society or international relations. Eaton's objective for the August 1955 conference, for example, was for intellectuals to 'exchange views, and design formulas for us to live by in this brand new world of ours'. Huxley, speaking to a reporter on his way to the meeting, thought that they would talk about atomic war, overpopulation and ideological confrontation between East and West ('the general ideological problem').<sup>29</sup> The actual conversations during the conference, however, turned out to be more diverse, ranging from the impact of nuclear energy on humanity to Byzantine architecture, and the role of bread and steel in civilization.<sup>30</sup> Although Eaton sometimes participated, he did not intrude on the organization of talks, seminars and panels at the lodge: these were decided by the participants. They were also male-dominated events. Wives (if attending) would occasionally observe or participate in the sessions; at other times they were explicitly barred from commenting (in which case they 'sat outside the charmed square, listening, watching and knitting').<sup>31</sup>

The first scientists' conference was by most accounts a success. Western and Eastern bloc scientists held constructive conversations on nuclear weapons and nuclear energy, and their statements were circulated amongst scientists. A Pugwash Continuing Committee was soon formed to organize subsequent conferences and direct the emerging organization. Initially consisting of Bertrand Russell as chairman, Cecil Powell and Joseph Rotblat from the UK, Eugene Rabinowitch from the USA, and Dmitri Skobelzyn from the USSR, the committee decided that a second conference should be quickly held to address the recent breakdown of disarmament discussions in London. Eaton once again agreed to fund and host, and the conference was eventually held in March 1958 at Lac Beauport, a small ski resort near Quebec, as Pugwash was deemed too inhospitable at that time of year.<sup>32</sup> Eaton, meanwhile, continued to hold his Thinkers' Lodge meetings at Pugwash: the next one was the August 1958 'Anglo-American Conference' which brought together academics to discuss issues in the humanities, and how they could contribute to the problems of international relations. In July 1959 educators once again gathered at Pugwash in two back-to-back conferences to discuss, amongst other things, the application of classical philosophy to modern civilization.<sup>33</sup>

Eaton's conferences sprang from a separate ideological and internationalist source to that which supported the scientific internationalism of the Pugwash scientists. For Eaton, hosting and funding the scientists' conferences was part of this wider programme to bridge political and cultural divides by bringing intellectuals and other elites together in discussion. Crucially, although science was a source of some of the most pressing issues, from his perspective scientists were only a part of the solution. His opening address at the 1957 scientists' conference, for example, talked not of scientists coming together but of 'people of differing viewpoints'.<sup>34</sup> US newspaper reports on this conference (often based on Eaton's press releases) echoed this view. For the *Washington Post* the conference was another in a series of 'annual events ... talking-and-thinking sessions for groups of leaders in various fields'.<sup>35</sup> The *New York Times* noted that the conference brought together 'the world's great minds ... international thinkers and scientists' for 'an exchange

<sup>29</sup> 'Nova Scotia village host to thinkers', *New York Herald Tribune*, 2 August 1955.

<sup>30</sup> 'Background on the Pugwash gatherings', op. cit. (18), p. 2.

<sup>31</sup> Wormald, op. cit. (19), pp. 16, 24.

<sup>32</sup> Rotblat, op. cit. (9), pp. 7–8.

<sup>33</sup> Association of American Colleges, 'Intellectual Life Conference 1959: Pugwash VI and VII: information for participants', July 1959, Folder 5989, Box 264, Eaton Papers. 'College deans attend new Pugwash talks', *Washington Post*, 23 July 1959.

<sup>34</sup> Rotblat, *Proceedings*, op. cit. (10), p. 33.

<sup>35</sup> 'Scientists study world atom peril', *Washington Post*, 9 July 1957, p. A11.

of views between men of many nations and ideologies'.<sup>36</sup> This vision reverberated through Eaton's later conferences. There was widespread agreement at the August 1958 Anglo-American Conference that humanists needed to join scientists in speaking up about the dangers of atomic energy, with two sessions focusing on how they could contribute. The 'Pugwash Statement' issued by the conference noted,

The need to make the greatest intellectual effort yet required in the life of man binds together the historian, the classical scholar, the scientist and the artist ... Inherited traditions have been among the most powerful forces directing mankind, and they have been largely the creation of scholars, artists and scientists. If the ultimate catastrophe comes, their abduction or inadequacy will be in part responsible.<sup>37</sup>

Through a series of television and newspaper interviews in 1956 (that is, before the first scientists' conference) Eaton explained how intellectuals meeting at places such as Pugwash could overcome national and ideological divisions. 'The scholars, the writers, the people of eloquence of the world', he claimed in a televised interview with Edward R. Murrow, would bring the world together rather than letting it destroy itself in nuclear war.<sup>38</sup> This diplomacy, he emphasized in another 1956 interview, was a replacement for the failings of statesmen, too many of whom were 'swashbucklers' busy 'grimly arranging the destruction of mankind' rather than using 'intelligence and patience in international affairs'.<sup>39</sup> In another Eaton added that his thinker's retreat would also help overcome social divisions and increase mutual tolerance within the United States.<sup>40</sup> These convictions came together most clearly in a November 1957 *New York Herald Tribune* article which laid out Eaton's fundamental belief that contact between people helped them understand their shared humanity, but also emphasized the importance of 'exchanges' and 'conferences' between 'disinterested' scientists, educators and artists.<sup>41</sup> These beliefs dovetailed with Cyrus Eaton's interest in humanism and humanist activism. He had been attracted to humanist ideas since at the least the 1940s: he had written in *The Humanist* in 1945, and in the mid-1950s had emerged as a leading funder of the American Humanist Association. In the late 1950s he attended several humanist conferences, and entertained several humanists at Thinkers' Lodge, most prominently Julian Huxley.<sup>42</sup>

### 'What is Pugwash?'

Although Eaton's emphasis on humanism and broader intellectual intercourse was a crucial difference to the approach adopted by the Pugwash scientists' leadership, it was not the main source of friction. That came from his calls for international peace, his increasingly aggressive criticism of the US government, his apparent closeness to the Soviet Union, and ultimately conservative America's criticism of his activism. Eaton's calls for peaceful coexistence with China and the Soviet Union, already prominent by late 1956, intensified and developed into calls for rapprochement by the end of 1957.<sup>43</sup> His criticism of US policy took an even more aggressive tone in late 1957 when he incorporated attacks

<sup>36</sup> 'First citizen of Pugwash', *New York Times*, 11 July 1957, p. 6.

<sup>37</sup> 'Pugwash statement of the Anglo-American conference', 14 August 1958, Folder 6138, Box 272, Eaton Papers.

<sup>38</sup> Radio Reports, Inc., 'Murrow interviews Cyrus Eaton', 14 December 1956, Folder 9653, Box 396, Eaton Papers.

<sup>39</sup> 'Stop goading Russ, red China, we can't win - Cyrus Eaton', *Toronto Daily Star*, 15 November 1956.

<sup>40</sup> Edwin H. Wilson, 'The other Cyrus Eaton', *The Humanist* (1956) 16(2), pp. 85-9.

<sup>41</sup> Cyrus Eaton, 'Let's meet the Soviets halfway', *New York Herald Tribune*, 8 November 1957.

<sup>42</sup> Stephen P. Weldon, *The Scientific Spirit of American Humanism*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2020, pp. 81, 112-13.

<sup>43</sup> 'Stop goading', op. cit. (39). Eaton, op. cit. (41); 'Cyrus Eaton urges U.S.-Soviet accord', *New York Times*, 3 December 1957, p. 27.

on the FBI and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles. This assault began first in Canada in November 1957 but was most forcefully unleashed during an infamous May 1958 television interview with Mike Wallace in which he likened the FBI to the Gestapo.<sup>44</sup>

Eaton brought together criticisms and constructive suggestions in a radical ‘program for the peace of the world’ for a 1959 profile in *The Nation*, a twelve-point agenda described by the writer as ‘specific and barbed’, though in fact a mix of the specific and the general. On foreign policy he called for the dismissal of Dulles, for reciprocal visits by Eisenhower and Khrushchev, for the recognition of China and her admission to the United Nations, for a ‘treaty of peace and friendship’ with the Soviet Union, for a halt to the nuclear arms race, and for the US to ‘quit meddling in the affairs of other nations’. His domestic proposals consisted of calls to ‘abolish the secretive practices of American police organizations and confine them to legitimate police work’, to ‘forget anti-communism as a security measure’, to establish warmer relationships between capital and labor, and to strengthen the banking system. Finally, on the foreign front, he called for ‘the world’s scientists and scholars’ to push their governments towards peace, and on the domestic front for ‘new leadership’ from capitalism (industrialists, labor leaders, and farmers) and thinkers (‘the preacher and the scholar’).<sup>45</sup>

Such radical statements attracted criticism in the United States, which spread from a few conservative commentators in 1957 to the conservative press more broadly and eventually to conservative politicians. This criticism quickly came to be intertwined with disparagement of the Pugwash scientists’ conference and those involved. So, for example, in May and July 1958, Fulton Lewis Jr launched a series of radio addresses criticizing Eaton for, amongst other things, financing a conference which allowed scientists to launch statements which supposedly expounded Soviet propaganda.<sup>46</sup> In August 1958 the conservative *American Mercury* attacked Eaton, portraying both his Thinkers’ Lodge meetings and the scientists’ conferences as pro-Soviet. These scientists, alongside the other, ‘thinkers’ were, the article implied, largely communist sympathizers.<sup>47</sup> Conservative activist Robert Welch’s *American Opinion* dubbed the scientists’ conferences Eaton’s ‘Hogwash Conferences’ in a 1959 article attacking Eaton.<sup>48</sup>

The early scientists’ conferences came to be seen in the US as Thinkers’ Lodge conferences, organized, at least partially, by Eaton. This was in no small part due to Eaton himself, who referred to the scientists’ conference in many of his public announcements from July 1957 onwards, including some of his most controversial ones. His attacks on Dulles and US foreign policy at the Montreal Canadian Club in Toronto in February 1958 and at the National Press Club in Washington, DC in October 1958 included lengthy references to the scientists’ conferences, and his May 1958 Wallace interview similarly began with the success of the conference. Eaton often presented the scientists’ conferences as part of his Thinkers’ Lodge initiative, and as evidence of the possibility of broad-ranging intellectual and elite agreement across political and cultural divides. He also often called for intellectuals, politicians, and business leaders to follow the scientists and to reach out to the Soviet Union.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Cyrus Eaton, ‘Time for a new look at international relations’, *Commercial and Financial Chronicle*, 20 February 1958, pp. 1–6; ‘Cyrus Eaton warns of world “suicide”’, *New York Times*, 11 February 1958, p. 6; interview with Cyrus Eaton at <https://hrc.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15878coll90/id/55/rec/13> (accessed 30 April 2023).

<sup>45</sup> John Barden, ‘Cyrus Eaton: merchant of peace’, *The Nation*, 31 January 1959, pp. 85–91.

<sup>46</sup> Transcript of broadcast by Fulton Lewis Jr, station WGMS, at 7–7:15 p.m., 11 June 1958, document number (FOIA) /ESDN (CREST): CIA-RDP63T00245R000100220039-4, general CIA records, at [www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP63T00245R000100220039-4.pdf](http://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP63T00245R000100220039-4.pdf) (accessed 30 April 2023).

<sup>47</sup> Pat Walsh, ‘What’s eaten Eaton’, *American Mercury*, August 1958, pp. 147–9.

<sup>48</sup> Hilary Grey, ‘The Cyrus Eaton story’, *American Opinion*, March 1959, pp. 13–24.

<sup>49</sup> Eaton, ‘Time for a new look at international relations’, op. cit. (44); press release, ‘Cyrus Eaton’s speech to National Press Club, Thursday, October 30, 1958’, Folder 9975, Box 397, Eaton Papers.



These criticisms did not stop Eaton from his continuing attempts to cajole the Pugwash scientists towards his internationalist views and forms of activism. Publicly tying himself to the scientists was one tactic. But he also asked the Pugwash scientists' leadership to broaden the organization's activities to include non-scientists and other internationalist organizations, and attempted to push them towards a warmer attitude to the Soviet Union. Both strategies were ultimately unsuccessful. Following the first scientists' conference, Eaton wrote to the humanist Ethical Union suggesting that they cooperate with the Pugwash scientists to organize a conference of 'the chief humanists of our day from all countries – the philosophers, historians, sociologists, theologians' – to solve global problems.<sup>50</sup> The Second Congress of the International Humanist and Ethical Union in late July 1957 adopted a resolution he sponsored, calling for 'a broader conference' of 'experts of the highest calibre in political, social, philosophical, and scientific fields' for new thinking for the nuclear age.<sup>51</sup> The Pugwash scientists' leadership, when approached by the Ethical Union and the National Peace Council for just such a joint programme, decided to keep its activities distinct from that of non-scientists. It instead suggested an exchange of delegates: a few humanists would be allowed to attend the next scientists' meeting, and in return a few scientists could attend the 1959 humanists' conference.<sup>52</sup>

Eaton also made policy and organizational suggestions directly to the Pugwash scientists, and bombarded them with statements made by himself and Soviet statesmen. He called on them directly to speak against the arms race: his address to the 1958 Pugwash scientists' conference, for example, asked the attending US scientists to mobilize their academic colleagues to 'raise their voices boldly and loudly'.<sup>53</sup> One communiqué to Joseph Rotblat in January 1958 suggested that Eaton be allowed to bring together individuals from business, finance and journalism to form a Canadian 'committee of sponsors' who could vocally support the scientists' organization.<sup>54</sup> One September 1959 telegram pointed to Khrushchev's recent address at the United Nations calling for universal disarmament, and suggested an 'immediate issuance of a statement endorsing the Khrushchev proposals'. Eaton sent the telegram to Russell, and then to all the members of the Pugwash Organizing Committee, calling on them to send their views to Russell.<sup>55</sup>

These pressure tactics, from an individual who at that point was still an important financier of their activities, caused resentment. Eugene Rabinowitch, the leading US Pugwashite (and long-standing editor and founder of the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, and part of the original atomic scientists' movement in the late 1940s) wrote back to Eaton, explaining that for the Pugwash scientists' conferences to be effective they needed 'self-restraint in public statements', especially if they 'could be interpreted as supporting one or the other side in the world conflict'. This was the 'only basis on which we can bring together all scientists'.<sup>56</sup> In a letter to Russell (which was also copied to Eaton), Rabinowitch added that by expressing support for particular policy statements the

<sup>50</sup> Letter, Eric Baker to Joseph Rotblat, 7 October 1957, Folder 5/3/1/1 (4), Rotblat Papers.

<sup>51</sup> International Humanist and Ethical Union, 'Statement of the board of directors to the final plenary session', July 1957, Folder 5/3/1/1 (4), Rotblat Papers. Bert Gasenbeek and Babu Gogineni (eds.), *International Humanist and Ethical Union 1952–2002: Past, Present and Future*, Utrecht: De Tijdstroom uitgeverij, 2002, pp. 32–3.

<sup>52</sup> 'Meeting between Prof. Rotblat, Mr. Blackham, Rev. W.W. Simpson, Mr. Kenneth Ingram and Eric Baker, 10.10.57', 15 October 1957, Folder 5/3/1/1 (4), Rotblat Papers.

<sup>53</sup> 'Address of Cyrus Eaton Third Pugwash Conference of Scientists', 20 September 1958, Folder 6068, Box 268, Eaton Papers.

<sup>54</sup> Letter, Cyrus Eaton to Joseph Rotblat, 28 January 1958, Folder 6362, Box 282, Eaton Papers.

<sup>55</sup> Telegram, Cyrus Eaton to Eugene Rabinowitch, 20 September 1959, Folder 6215, Box 277, Eaton Papers.

<sup>56</sup> Letter, Eugene Rabinowitch to Cyrus Eaton, 28 September 1959, Folder 6215, Box 277, Eaton Papers. On Rabinowitch see Paul Rubinson, 'American scientists in "communist conclaves": Pugwash and anti-communism in the United States, 1957–1968', in Kraft and Sachse, op. cit. (2), pp. 156–89.

organization 'would lose our peculiar strength and achieve little instead', and that Khrushchev's call for immediate disarmament was unrealistic: it would only be possible once there was 'international cooperation' of the type being fostered by the Pugwash scientists. The organization, he concluded, was a 'potentially important long-range force in human affairs' which should not be squandered on 'political pronouncements' which bring short-term publicity, 'but would not significantly affect the course of world events.'<sup>57</sup>

The trigger for the Pugwash leadership's wider-ranging reassessment of their relationship with Eaton was a complaint by Edith Finch Russell, Bertrand Russell's wife, in May 1960. Outraged by the introduction to the proceedings of the fourth scientists' conference, which had been prepared by Eaton's office and described Eaton as the 'founder of the Pugwash movement', Countess Russell wrote a letter to Rotblat demanding action on Eaton's continued association with the Pugwash scientists. She was 'perplexed' to see that participants thought that Eaton 'started the Movement and is responsible for its important doings', and 'alarmed, moreover, by the way in which the Pugwash Movement has been increasingly connected in the public mind with the name of Cyrus Eaton and with political enthusiasms'. She demanded that the 'true facts should be made public' and asked for a 'statement of the historical facts' to be sent to all conference participants to counter the 'falsehoods' spread by Eaton.<sup>58</sup>

The letter, and perhaps also the announcement that same month that Eaton was to receive the Lenin Prize for peace, prompted the Pugwash Continuing Committee to officially reconsider its problematic relationship with Eaton at its June 1960 meeting. It noted that he frequently claimed to be the founder and asserted that the Pugwash scientists' movement shared his views on international affairs. The committee also noted that Eaton's statements made it difficult to secure grants from US foundations, a reference to the Ford Foundation's refusal a few months earlier to fund the organization and its planned conference in India, the difficulty being not only his political statements ('Pugwash is too political for Ford') but the impression that Eaton was already adequately funding the Pugwash scientists.<sup>59</sup> 'The time had come', announced Rotblat, 'for a weakening of the relationship' between Eaton and the scientists.<sup>60</sup> Although the committee decided against 'drastic steps' that might alienate him, they nevertheless decided to 'correct the impression that he is the founder of the Movement'. This was to be done by 'writing a true history of Pugwash.' It was also agreed to 'avoid in the future any action which would tend to perpetuate Mr. Eaton's assumed role in relation to the Pugwash movement', though what this might entail was unclear. The committee even considered changing the organization's name. Options considered, and set aside, included 'The Russell-Einstein Union of Scientists'.<sup>61</sup> It was later decided that each national group could use whichever name they wished, the British group using the name 'Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs' and the US group simply 'Conferences on Science and World Affairs'.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Letter (copy), Eugene Rabinowitch to Bertrand Russell, 28 September 1959, Folder 6215, Box 277, Eaton Papers.

<sup>58</sup> Letter, Edith Finch Russell to Joseph Rotblat, 10 May 1960, Folder 5/1/1/2 (1), Rotblat Papers.

<sup>59</sup> 'Minutes of the meeting of the Pugwash Continuing Committee 21st–23rd June 1960, in London', Folder 5/3/1/2 (2), Rotblat Papers. Letter, Ruth Adams to Joseph Rotblat, 9 February 1960, Folder 5/5/2/135 (2), Rotblat Papers.

<sup>60</sup> 'Notes taken at the meeting of the Pugwash Continuing Committee, Tuesday morning, June 21st, 1960', p. 6, Folder 5/3/1/6 (3), Rotblat Papers.

<sup>61</sup> Minutes of the Meeting of the Pugwash Continuing Committee, op. cit. (59).

<sup>62</sup> Joseph Rotblat, *Science and World Affairs: History of the Pugwash Conferences*, London: Dawson of Pall Mall, 1962, p. 31.

By late 1960, with Eaton at the height of his notoriety in the United States, the scientists' leadership was ready to publicly separate their organization from him. A syndicated news story on the Pugwash scientists' conferences, published in September (and based most probably on a press statement by Eaton's press office), gave them the opportunity to do so. Ostensibly to correct the story, a letter sent to major newspapers later that month (and published in, amongst others, the *Washington Post*, the *New York Herald Tribune*, *Science*, the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* and the *Federation of Atomic Scientists' Newsletter*) distanced the organization from Eaton in a number of important ways. The letter (tellingly titled 'What is Pugwash?' in the *Bulletin*) was also an attempt to publicly define what the Pugwash Scientists' Conferences were and whose vision and activism they reflected. Written and signed by the US Continuing Committee (Harrison Brown, Bentley Glass and Eugene Rabinowitch), it began by arguing that the scientists' conferences were not 'Eaton's Conferences', and now had nothing to do with Eaton, his Thinkers' Lodge initiative, or the town of Pugwash. Eaton had simply offered hospitality for the first meeting, funding for a further two and secretarial support for a third. These conferences were 'initiated ... planned, organized, and directed' by scientists, and its origins, they reiterated, lay in the Russell–Einstein Manifesto.

The authors also explicitly distanced and differentiated the scientists' conferences from Eaton's internationalist activities and statements. Eaton, they claimed, was playing an 'increasingly active and controversial role in political affairs', which made it 'impossible' for the scientists to carry out their conference's mission, which was to deal with the impact of scientific war on world affairs, foster international cooperation amongst scientists, and take up scientists' own 'responsibilities to mankind'. They characterized the scientists' conferences as a 'spontaneous, independent, and nonpartisan activity of scientists concerned with the survival of mankind in the atomic age'. Consequently, Eaton would henceforth only be a 'guest' at the scientists' conferences, not 'a sponsor or active participant'. The authors also suggested that the conferences change their name because of the continuing 'misleading connotations, and confusion with other conferences organized by Mr. Eaton in Pugwash'.<sup>63</sup> In a later private letter to Eaton, Rabinowitch reiterated that Pugwash scientists did not approve of Eaton's 'private-letter, interview, and press-release campaign', which treated them as a "base-ball team" owned and operated by Mr. Eaton'.<sup>64</sup>

The Pugwash scientists' leadership had begun to look for alternative sources of funding even before this break, and it was their success at doing so which allowed them to weaken ties with Eaton – after 1959 Eaton's financial and logistical contributions were greatly reduced.<sup>65</sup> There were, however, limits to how much distance the Pugwash scientists' leadership could put between their organization and Eaton. For a start, the Pugwash leadership was not united in its criticism of Eaton. The US leadership, who authored the 1960 letter, were the most critical, no doubt because Eaton's criticism of the US government made their attempts to secure acceptability and respectability in the country particularly difficult. Rotblat agreed with them, but did not take a strong anti-Eaton stance in public. The Soviet scientists in the committee, however, took a much less critical stance towards Eaton's activities, and often tried to moderate suggested actions aimed at cutting off

<sup>63</sup> Letter to the editor, 'Scientists and Cyrus Eaton', *Washington Post*, 24 September 1960, p. A10; letters to the editor, 'What is Pugwash?', *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* (October 1960) 16(8), pp. 304, 345; letter to the editor, Harrison Brown, Bentley Glass and Eugene Rabinowitch, 'Pugwash conference not "Mr Eaton's"', *New York Herald Tribune*, 2 October 1960; 'News notes', *Science* (7 October 1960) 132(3432), pp. 945–8; 'Organization of the Pugwash conferences and their relationship to Cyrus Eaton clarified', *Federation of Atomic Scientists Newsletter* (October 1960) 13(7), pp. 1, 3.

<sup>64</sup> Letter, Eugene Rabinowitch to Cyrus Eaton, 18 November 1960, Folder 6216, Box 277, Eaton Papers.

<sup>65</sup> Sachse, op. cit. (2).

Eaton.<sup>66</sup> During the discussion on Eaton at the June 1960 meeting, Soviet chemist Alexander V. Topchiev responded that the other committee members were 'exaggerating the importance of the matter'. Physicist Dmitri Skobelzyn added that if Eaton distorted the truth about the origins and nature of the scientists' organization, then so did the Pugwash scientists' leadership, which 'put themselves forward as conferences of scientists when it was not strictly true in all cases'. Topchiev pointed out that Eaton was a highly regarded figure in the Soviet Union, and joined Skobelzyn in pushing for a softer response to Eaton. Rather than a name change or separation they called for personal persuasion or a bolstering of the scientists' own publicity.<sup>67</sup> The Soviet scientists argued against a name change at several meetings, and in particular insisted at the November 1960 committee meeting that it not be discussed amongst the participants of the scientists' conference in Moscow.<sup>68</sup>

A continuing headache for the scientists' leadership was that Pugwash and Eaton remained intertwined in the public mind, not least because Eaton continued to organize his meetings at Pugwash into the 1960s. For Eaton these meetings were all intellectual responses to big problems of the day, and none was bigger than the threat of nuclear weapons. Eaton's address at the late July 1960 Thinkers' Lodge conference of college deans criticized the media for its 'dangerous jingoism' and warned that 'unthinking readers, listeners and viewers are lulled into insensibility to the serious issues of the day, into awareness of the imminent danger of annihilation by nuclear warheads'.<sup>69</sup> A message to the early July 1960 College Presidents' Conference at the lodge emphasized that their meetings were part of the wider Pugwash conversations, which included the scientists' meetings, to address issues affecting mankind.<sup>70</sup> A later 1960 meeting brought together educators and academics to discuss continuing education; Eaton's address expressed hope that 'an increasingly educated world opinion will force the outlawing of nuclear warheads and other instruments of annihilation'.<sup>71</sup>

Criticism of Eaton and the Pugwash scientists' conferences also tended to link the two closely together. Most notably, in May 1961 the Internal Security Subcommittee, a Senate equivalent of the Un-American Activities Committee, published a critical study of the Pugwash scientists' conferences, claiming that they had been exploited by communists. Yet the report focused on Eaton (to which it devoted twelve pages) and (secondarily) Russell, rather than the scientists. Russell, the report claimed, set the anti-American tone of the conferences, and Eaton financed them because of his 'strong and unconcealed sympathy for Soviet policies and hostility to American policies and activities'.<sup>72</sup> The connections between Eaton and Russell were easily made: Russell had also attacked the FBI in the 1950s, and had openly called for Eisenhower and Khrushchev to agree on coexistence.<sup>73</sup> Criticism of scientists, meanwhile, was dampened because by 1961 the Kennedy

<sup>66</sup> 'Committee meeting, Friday, December 2nd, 1960, Hotel Metropole', Folder 5/3/1/6 (4), Rotblat Papers.

<sup>67</sup> Notes taken at the meeting of the Pugwash Continuing Committee', op. cit. (60).

<sup>68</sup> 'Minutes of the meeting of the Pugwash Continuing Committee held on 26th and 29th November, 1960, in Moscow', Folder 5/3/1/2 (3), Rotblat Papers.

<sup>69</sup> Cyrus Eaton, 'Message from Cyrus Eaton to 1960 Pugwash Conference of College Deans', 21 July 1960, Folder 6143, Box 272, Eaton Papers.

<sup>70</sup> 'Message from Cyrus Eaton to 1960 Conference of College Presidents', 7 July 1960, Folder 10269, Box 398, Eaton Papers.

<sup>71</sup> 'Pugwash Conference on Continuing Education: information sheet (supplement no. 3): Agenda', c. August 1960, Folder 6139, Box 272, Eaton Papers. Cyrus Eaton, 'Address', 15 August 1960, and Quincy Wright, 'Changes in education called for by recent developments in technology and industrialization', 13 August 1960, Folder 6141, Box 272, Eaton Papers.

<sup>72</sup> *The Pugwash Conferences: A Staff Analysis*, Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1951, pp. 93–4.

<sup>73</sup> Barry Feinberg and Ronald Kasrils, *Bertrand Russell's America: His Transatlantic Travels and Writings*, vol. 2: 1945–1970, Abingdon: Routledge, 2013, p. 91; Bertrand Russell, 'Open letter to Eisenhower and Khrushchev', *New Statesman*, 23 November 1957, p. 683.

administration was more open to engagement with the scientists' conferences, which by then involved senior scientific advisers to the administration.<sup>74</sup>

### Origin stories

A significant aspect of the distancing from Eaton's Thinkers' Lodge diplomacy was the reimagining of the origins of Pugwash solely through scientists' and their internationalism. The official scientists' accounts of their Pugwash conferences not only emphatically located the origins of the conference in science and the activism and morality of scientists, but also drew its origins back linearly to the atomic scientists' movement and to the activism of physicists in particular. In most accounts there was no mention of other internationalist currents or activism from the late 1940s through to the 1950s, save for the 1955 London conference on disarmament. So, for example, the official history of the conference, *Science and World Affairs*, written by Rotblat and published in 1962, begins with the activism and moral awakening of scientists in Britain and the US, and the subsequent formation of the Federation of American Scientists and in Britain the Atomic Scientists' Association. The atomic scientists' activism intensified with the first testing of the H-bomb, leading to their participation in an August 1955 conference in London organized by the Association of Parliamentarians for World Government. Scientists signed up to Russel's Russell–Einstein Manifesto, leading directly to the first Pugwash conference in 1957. This larger frame lent itself unproblematically to the dismissal of Eaton's internationalist activism. The book went further than simply circumscribing Eaton's role as that of funder and logistical provider. It disavowed any connection to his Thinkers' Lodge conferences, and made clear that Eaton had been only one of several possible funders for the scientists' conference (another was the Greek shipping magnate Aristotle Onassis), and that Eaton had promised that he would finance anonymously and give the participants autonomy and independence. Eaton, the history implied, had broken his promise.<sup>75</sup>

Others, too, were removed from these histories, which were carefully managed to give the impression that Pugwash began as a purely scientists' meeting, and to make the nascent organization more attractive to US audiences. Historical narratives often state that twenty-two scientists attended the first scientists' conference, when in fact there were twenty-three participants.<sup>76</sup> Left-leaning Australian physicist Eric Burhop attended, but (in agreement with Rotblat and Russell) was discounted as an official participant in order to give the impression that the meeting was more politically centralist than it actually was.<sup>77</sup> Moreover, the twenty-two count included one non-scientist, the Harvard legal scholar David F. Cavers, and one who was not a natural scientist: the Canadian MD psychiatrist (and first director general of the World Health Organization) Brock Chisholm. At least one other non-scientist, the prominent Soviet legal scholar S.A. Galunsky, was invited, but did not attend.<sup>78</sup>

Rabinowitch took the lead in describing the scientific internationalism that he claimed lay behind the scientists' conferences. In a *Bulletin* article in 1965 he explained that the

<sup>74</sup> H.M., 'Science in the news', *Science* (26 May 1961), 133(3465), pp. 1693–5; George Bogdan Kistiakowsky and Charles S. Maier, *A Scientist at the White House: The Private Diary of President Eisenhower's Special Assistant for Science and Technology*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976, p. 322; Zuoyue Wang, *In Sputnik's Shadow: The President's Science Advisory Committee and Cold War America*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2008, p. 185.

<sup>75</sup> Rotblat, *op. cit.* (62), pp. 1–6.

<sup>76</sup> For example: Rotblat, *op. cit.* (62), p. 9; Rotblat, 'II. Bertrand Russell', *op. cit.* (10).

<sup>77</sup> Geoffrey Roberts, 'Science, peace and internationalism: Frédéric Joliot-Curie, the World Federation of Scientific Workers and the origins of the Pugwash Movement', in Kraft and Sachse, *op. cit.* (2), pp. 43–79.

<sup>78</sup> Eugene Rabinowitch, 'Pugwash: history and outlook', *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* (1957) 13(7), pp. 243–8.

main ‘function’ of the organization was to generate ideas in ‘small, “thinking” conferences’. He acknowledged ‘continuing pressure’ to broaden participation to include the social and behavioural sciences, but argued instead that the organization should remain a movement exclusively of natural scientists because its power arose from the ‘consonance’ amongst the ‘world community of scientists’.<sup>79</sup> These themes were developed in private letters to Eaton. In a 1957 letter Rabinowitch pointed out that US scientists were ‘anxious’ that the Pugwash scientists’ conferences not show too much support for Soviet foreign policy and opposition to the West. The conferences were only successful because they worked on ‘an entirely different plane from that of ordinary diplomacy’ and were (because they needed to be) free from ‘the clichés of foreign policy (“appeasement”, “Crusade for freedom”, “coexistence”, etc.)’.<sup>80</sup> In a 1960 letter Rabinowitch explained to Eaton the differences in approach between themselves and the industrialist: ‘the pursuit of certain immediate political aims seems to you more important than gradual progress towards understanding and solution to the fundamental problems which divide mankind; but the latter is the only approach to which scientists can effectively and conscientiously contribute’. Ultimately, although the scientists respected his ‘courage in proclaiming unorthodox and controversial views’, they could not agree with his ‘oversimplified and one-sided estimate of the political realities of our times’.<sup>81</sup>

Rabinowitch’s opposition to rapprochement, and distrust of the Soviet Union, were in tune with wider US opinion which agreed that immediate nuclear disarmament was not realistic or desirable, and that arms control needed to proceed piecemeal and through a series of confidence-building measures. Moreover, since the early 1950s, Soviet calls for complete nuclear disarmament had come to be seen by policymakers as propagandistic, and international organizations supporting such calls as dupes or communist fronts.<sup>82</sup> Even the leading progressive-wing Democrat Adlai E. Stevenson responded to Khrushchev’s calls for nuclear disarmament by countering that it must go hand in hand with conventional disarmament, and that there must be effective international monitoring and other governance mechanisms, including an international force to ensure compliance and stop international aggression.<sup>83</sup> Rabinowitch’s anti-communist stance was also in keeping, as Christoph Laucht and Paul Rubinson have shown, with broad swathes of internationalist scientist opinion in the 1950s.<sup>84</sup> Most Pugwash scientists from the West were also convinced on this by 1958. The Vienna Declaration (issued at the third conference at Kitzbühel and Vienna in September 1958), which codified evolving Pugwash scientists’ thinking on their objectives and role in international affairs, prioritized, as overall aims, the elimination of all wars and the ending of the nuclear arms race. Disarmament was not cast as an overall objective, and instead the declaration emphasized that arms reduction could only come after the creation of a ‘climate of mutual trust’, which, the declaration noted, did not currently exist. The final three points of the declaration codified the organization as one of scientists organized around and through their peculiar abilities, world views and responsibilities.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>79</sup> Eugene Rabinowitch, ‘About Pugwash’, *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* (April 1965) 11(4), pp. 9–15.

<sup>80</sup> Letter, Eugene Rabinowitch to Cyrus Eaton, 10 December 1957, Folder 6214, Box 277, Eaton Papers.

<sup>81</sup> Letter, Eugene Rabinowitch to Cyrus Eaton, 4 October 1960, Folder 6216, Box 277, Eaton Papers.

<sup>82</sup> David Tal, *The American Nuclear Disarmament Dilemma, 1945–1963*, Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2008, pp. 52–60.

<sup>83</sup> Adlai E. Stevenson, ‘Putting first things first: a democratic view’, *Foreign Affairs* (January 1960) 38(2), pp. 191–208.

<sup>84</sup> Christoph Laucht, *Elemental Germans: Klaus Fuchs, Rudolf Peierls and the Making of British Nuclear Culture 1939–59*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, pp. 151–71; Rubinson, op. cit. (56).

<sup>85</sup> ‘Vienna Declaration’, *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* (November 1959) 14 (9), pp. 341–4.

## Conclusion

Rather than treating it as a conference that sprang solely from the vision and scientific internationalism of scientists, we need to incorporate the wider internationalist currents which nurtured the early growth of the Pugwash scientists' organization. Eaton's own internationalism and activism, and particularly his own Pugwash conference series, were the decisive factor pushing him to finance and logistically support the scientists' conferences. His attempts to go further – that is, to place his own ideological stamp on the scientists' conferences, and bind his activism and conferences to that of the scientists' – ultimately failed. That is not to say, however, that he did not shape the scientists' conferences in other ways. This special issue recognizes that context, environment and setting are integral to any conference, and have an impact on the ideational content and outcomes of scientists' conferences. In the case of Pugwash, the intimate collegial nature and setting of the first few conferences, so prominent in histories (and often credited for making the conference a success), owed much to Eaton and his pre-existing Thinkers' Lodge conferences. Indeed, ironically, the approach and format of the scientists' conferences (and not Eaton's) would sometimes be referred to as the 'Pugwash Method' in the 1960s and beyond.<sup>86</sup> Moreover, new research now suggests that the positive Chinese government reception to Pugwash (which itself was often noted in Pugwash histories as evidence of the conference's success) was due to Eaton's rhetoric, his association with the conferences, and, crucially, Chinese participation in an earlier Thinkers' Lodge conference at Pugwash.<sup>87</sup>

More broadly, this paper has suggested that we should give close scrutiny to episodes of scientific internationalism, and contextualize scientists' (and indeed other actors') claims about the origins of these episodes within wider ideational and political contexts. Understandings of the origins and nature of scientific conferences, certainly political ones such as Pugwash, may be more malleable than we might assume, and open to interpretation and reinterpretation. The Pugwash scientific conferences, for example, were often associated with Eaton and his Thinkers' Lodge conferences in their early years. It was the separation of Eaton, through both funding and logistics, but also ideationally through the articulation of the scientists' own approach and the writing of an official history, which helped create Pugwash scientific conferences rooted purely in scientists' internationalism and their diplomacy.

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<sup>86</sup> 'Extending the Pugwash method', *New Scientist* (13 September 1962) 15(304), p. 548.

<sup>87</sup> Gordon Barrett, *China's Cold War Science Diplomacy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022, pp. 68, 91.

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