



Literary
= Bio Book
H

BRITISH INFORMATION SERVICES

POLICY AND REFERENCE DIVISION

March 1978

BIOG-

THE RT. HON. EDWARD HEATH, MBE, MP

Mr. Edward Heath is Conservative Member of Parliament for Bexley. He was Prime Minister from 1970-74 and Leader of the Conservative Party from 1965-75; in the latter capacity he was Leader of the Opposition in Parliament from 1965-70 and again from 1974-75. He lost the election for the party leadership in February 1975.

Edward Heath has been Conservative Member of Parliament for Bexley since 1950. He was born in 1916, son of a Broadstairs business man, and was educated at Chatham House, Ramsgate, and at Balliol College, Oxford. At Balliol he was organ scholar (one who carries out the duties of organist in the College chapel) and took his degree in 'Modern Greats' - Philosophy, Politics and Economics. While an undergraduate he was President of the University Conservative Associations and Chairman of the Federation of University Conservative Association for the year 1937. During his last year at Oxford he was President of the Union, the University debating society, and visited the United States on a debating tour of American universities.

His interest in politics took him to Europe on the eve of war; after leaving Oxford he visited Poland and Danzig, and hitchhiked his way home across North-Western Europe. On the outbreak of war in September 1939 he volunteered for service with the Royal Artillery, which he joined in 1940 as a gunner and in which he was later commissioned. After periods as Adjutant and as a Battery Commander with his regiment, he became second in command of a regiment of the Honourable Artillery Company in which for a short time he later held the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. He took part in the campaign in North-Western Europe, was awarded the MBE (Military Division) and was mentioned in despatches.

After the war, Mr. Heath kept up his connection with the Army in the Honourable Artillery Company, the oldest formation in the Territorial Army. He commanded the 2nd Regiment of the HAC

845 Third Avenue, New York, N.Y., 10022, Telephone: (212) 752-8400 /from...

This material is prepared, edited, issued or circulated by British Information Services, 845 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10022, which is registered under the Foreign Agents Registration Act as an agent of the British Government. This material is filed with the Department of Justice where the required registration statement is available for public inspection. Registration does not indicate approval of the contents of this material by the United States Government.

from 1947 to 1951, and then held a three-year appointment as Master Gunner within the Tower of London, the Master Gunner being selected from the officers of the Honourable Artillery Company.

After the war Mr. Heath entered the Civil Service, receiving an administrative appointment at the Ministry of Civil Aviation. Later he decided to take a part in politics, and resigned from the Civil Service on being adopted as prospective Parliamentary candidate for Bexley. He was one of the nine Conservatives who wrote One Nation - A Tory Approach to Social Problems, published in 1950. Between leaving the Civil Service and entering Parliament he worked in journalism and in merchant banking. When he became a junior minister in the Conservative Government he resigned his position in a merchant banking firm, returning to his seat on its Board when his Party went out of office in 1964 until his election as Leader of the Conservative Party.

After his election to Parliament Mr. Heath held various appointments in the Conservative Government between 1951 and 1964: he was appointed Assistant Government Whip in February 1951 and in the following autumn, a Lord Commissioner of the Treasury, (senior Government Whip). In May 1952 he became Joint Deputy Chief Whip; in June 1953 Deputy Chief Whip and in December 1955 Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury, and Government Chief Whip. At the same time he was created a Privy Councillor.

In October 1959 Mr. Heath became Minister of Labour; in July 1969 he was appointed Lord Privy Seal. He spoke on Foreign Office matters in the House of Commons - the then Foreign Secretary being a member of the House of Lords - and served within the Foreign Office, being specially concerned with European affairs. At the time of Britain's first application to join the Common Market he was in charge of the negotiations on Britain's behalf. Although the negotiations broke down, Mr. Heath's work was the subject of widespread tributes at home and overseas, and was recognised by the award of the Charlemagne Prize of the City of Aachen, made annually for "the most notable achievement in the service of encouraging international understanding and cooperation in Europe." Later, Mr. Heath attended the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe and the signing in Moscow of the partial test-ban treaty between Britain, the United States and Russia. In October 1963 he was appointed Secretary of State for Industry, Trade and Development and President of the Board of Trade and in this capacity he led the British delegation to the GATT meeting at Geneva in May 1964 and attended the UN conference on world trade.

After the change of government in 1964 Mr. Heath became a member of the Consultative Committee of the Leader of the Opposition, his responsibilities being, at first, leading for his party on economic affairs and, as chairman of the Conservative Party's policy committee, of planning future policy. From February 1965 he had responsibilities for Treasury affairs, economic matters, and co-ordination in the field of home affairs.

After becoming Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Heath travelled extensively not only through all parts of Great Britain to study local problems, but also in Europe, the Far East, Canada

/and ...

and the United States. He made a number of visits to Australia and also found time to visit the Middle East. And he continued, in writings and speeches - one occasion was that of the Godkin Lectures at Harvard in 1967 - to deal with the subject which has been one of his main preoccupations for more than twenty years, namely Britain's relations with Europe.

Mr. Heath was British Prime Minister when Britain signed the Treaty of Accession to the European Economic Community in January 1971 and when the British House of Commons passed the European Communities Bill in July of that year. In 1971 also he received a second West German award, from the FVS Foundation in Hamburg, which gave him its then recently instituted European Prize for Statesmanship for his "outstanding services to the entry of Britain to the European Community, to European unity and to the standing of Europe in the World."

Mr. Heath's major recreations are sailing and music. He has been Chairman of the London Symphony Orchestra Trust since 1963, and in November 1971 he conducted the Orchestra, at the invitation of its principal conductor Andre Previn, in Elgar's Cockaigne overture at its gala concert in the Royal Festival Hall, London. For some years he has been a keen yachtsman and bought an ocean racer called "Morning Cloud" prior to the 1969 season. After several local successes Mr. Heath and his crew won the classic Sydney-Hobart Race in December 1969. In 1971 he was Captain of Britain's team of three yachts which won the Admiral's Cup races.

Mr. Heath has written several books on his travels, on sailing and on music.

- - - -

CLRrs