Serious Discontent Sweeps American Imperial Empire

By JAY LOVESTONE.

As the rumblings of revolution are again giving Europe the Red Tremors, giant waves of discontent are sweeping the islands in the grasp of American imperialism.

The Philippines are astir with protest against the dictatorial regime of the iron-fisted Military Governor, General Leonard Wood.

Cuba is in the throes of a serious conflict over the domination of the island by American sugar and shipping interests.

Porto Rico is pleading for independence. The Virgin Islands are groaning under the super-Prussian rule imposed upon them by their new Yankee masters. The wounds inflicted upon the Haitians and the Dominican Republic by the Marines serving as revenue collectors are not healing as rapidly as our Senatorial whitewashers of these outrageous crimes would wish. Nor is the Territory of Hawaii welcoming the suzerainty of the Bankers Trust Co., of New York. And despite Obregon's selling out to Wall Street, not everything looks rosy to American investors in Mexico.

Dollar Democracy and Dollar Diplomacy.

The rule of dollar democracy by our financiers and industrialists at home has been translated into a regime of dollar diplomacy abroad and in our vast colonial possessions. American democracy now truly rests upon a monarchy of gold and an aristocracy of finance.

The story of the rise of Yankee imperialism reads like a gripping best-seller.

In the Philippines the American imperialists have a territory the size of the Kingdom of Italy and the population of Canada. Sixty-five per cent of the foreign commerce of the Philippines is done with this country. These islands are teeming with natural resources, are only three days away from China, the richest and cheapest labor mine in the world, and are the gateway of American capital to the prize market of the Far East where 800,000,000 people live.

In Cuba our financiers have holdings totaling hundreds of millions of dollars. This little so-called independent republic, tho one-third the size of the Philippines, has already developed a foreign trade three times the size of the Pacific possessions, or over a half a billion dollars. American sugar magnates own 60 per cent of the plantations and finace most of the rest.

The Standard Oil Co. is getting great concessions in Ecuador, Bolivia, Colombia, Peru, Mexico, Argentina, and Central America. The contract recently closed between Bolivia and the Standard Oil gives the American corporation 2,560,000 acres of petroleum land for 55 years and the right to build and run railways, tramways, harbors, telephone and telegraphs, and all other Bolivian public utilities.

American bankers have concluded successful loans to Guatemala, Costa Rica, Salvador, and Honduras. In Guatemala an American bank has just been set up to draw all paper money out of circulation.

Colombia has borrowed $4,000,000 and is negotiating for an $80,000,000 loan. Ecuador is surrendering its customs receipts to the Standard Oil for a $33,000,000 loan. Peru has pledged its customs to American financiers in consideration of a $50,000,000 loan. Haiti has borrowed $7,500,000, and Chile, $44,000,000; Uruguay, $13,000,000; Brazil, $50,000,000; Argentina, $250,000,000.

Like Roman Empire of Old.

In more ways than one does this American colonial empire resemble the Roman Empire of old. But the most outstanding resemblance between the policy of the Roman imperial republic of yesterday and the modern American capitalist imperialistic republic of today lies in the management of the colonies. The American military governor generals of the colonial possessions are the exact prototypes of the procurators and proconsuls governing the provinces of the old Roman Empire. In Rome men were given the office of proconsul or procurator in order to enable them to exploit the province they governed as a source of income to redeem either their personal fortunes or the fortunes of their political friends and masters. On exactly the same principle are our colonial military governor generals chosen today. General Leonard Wood was sent into the Philippines to force upon the Filipinos an economic policy which would enable him to repay in valuable concessions the powerful bankers and manufacturers who financed his primary campaign of 1920, costing close to $2,000,000. Thus we find today Major General Enoch H. Crowder, formerly chief of the American military staff, serving as "ambassador" to Cuba. An American commission is now in Bolivia watching the collection of taxes in the interests of the Standard Oil. In Nicaragua, the only solvent country in Central America, the United States administers the treasury and the customs of the country in the interests of the American bankers and investors.

Trouble in the Philippines.

Since he has arrived in the Philippines, Military Governor General Wood has pursued a policy of forcing the natives to hand over valuable concessions to American capitalists. In this campaign General Wood has made the Philippine National Bank the target of his attack. Tho he has recently declared in Manila that "the Philippine National Bank is in better shape now than it has been for the last four years," Governor General Wood is now doing his very worst to put this bank, run by the native government, out of business. The object behind this drive of the agent of American imperialism is to remove all hindrances and obstacles to the domination of the islands by American capital.

The Filipinos strongly resent this move of Wood. The Senate and Legislature have gone on strike against this high-handed policy of their American masters. There is talk of independence amongst large numbers of the native population. The Filipinos are bent on preventing the American capitalists from gobbling up their country.

So serious a turn have events

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Discontent in American Colonies

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taken recently in the Philippines that the imperialists of other countries are afraid that the contagion of national independence will spread from the islands to other countries and make trouble in the entire Far East. Thus the editor of the "Far East," one of the leading Japanese imperialist journals in Tokio, recently declared that the Filipino crisis was "adding fresh fuel to the anti-foreign fires smoldering in China, to the anti-British blazes in India, and to the general unrest against control in many other parts of Asia and in large sections of Africa." This remark is especially significant since normally Japan would like to see the United States get out of the Philippines in double quick time. It is interesting to note how the capitalist imperialists of all countries line up and forget their differences when their fundamental interests are at stake.

Coolidge Threatens Cuba.

Considerable agitation has been stirred up in financial circles here and in Cuba over the Tarafa Bill. Col. Tarafa is a Cuban millionaire who has large railway holdings. He recently proposed a measure aiming at the consolidation of some of the principal railway lines of Cuba and at the elimination of 47 private ports used by sugar companies for exporting their products. Many of these companies have private railways of their own in this territory. These railways would be rendered practically useless, according to their owners.

This bill has been passed by the House and last week the Senate passed it in an amended form by a vote of 92-7. It is now in the hands of President Aayas.

When Tarafa first proposed this measure the American capitalists, who control 85 per cent of the property affected, protested vehemently. Washington immediately reminded Cuba that it was not for such behavior that the Cuban Government was permitted to get a $50,000,000 loan in the United States. The American Sugar Refining Co., the Punta Allegre Sugar Co., the American Metal Co., the Cuban American Sugar Co., the Manati Sugar Co., the San Francisco Sugar Co., and over a score of other American firms, representing a total invested capital of about half a billion dollars sent their agents to Washington to raise a storm of protest. There were even signs of a fake revolution, like the one engineered in Panama by Theodore Roosevelt for the American bankers, being pulled off against the present Cuban administration sponsoring the Tarafa Bill.

Then Major General Crowder rushed to Coolidge to impress him with the seriousness of the Cuban "misbehavior." It was only because Tarafa was clever enough to shield in his bill the Cuban native capitalist interests behind such powerful interests as the Standard Oil dominating the Cuba Co., and the British-owned United Railways of Havana and the influential United Fruit Co. that decisive action by Washington has, to date, been prevented. Tarafa protested that the present system of private sub-ports robbed Cuba of much customs revenue, fostered smuggling, and turned the attendant huge financial benefits to American sugar interests which were in this way supplanting the Cuban government in customs activity.

Much resentment has been stirred up in Cuba against this high-handed attempt of foreign capitalists to throttle the native government. Tarafa is a very able native political leader. Tho he may be forced to yield considerably this time, it is a safe bet to look for numerous difficulties arising out of this dispute in the near future. Already, the arrogant attitude taken by the administration on this matter has gone a long way towards piercing the bubble of "pan-Americanism."

Discontent Hits Other Colonies.

In the other colonies and spheres of American influence there is considerable trouble brewing. Because of the rapid development of land and dispossessed. They are looking forward to complete independencce from the United States. The Virgin Islands are complaining bitterly as can be seen from the following appeal by the editor of the "Emancipator", one of their native papers: "We are serfs who work for wages ranging from ten cents to a dollar a day. Politically we are peons governed by the United States Navy. Federal (U. S.) laws have worked mavoc upon these islands. The people live in one-room houses; eat scanty meals; and are forced to move about in a manner unbecoming civilized people at this age."

Finally, even Mexico does not afford unbounded peace and comfort to American imperialists. Though Obregon has completely surrendered to Morgan and Rockefeller interests and is quickly dropping all pretense at friendshipp even with the most conservative labor elements, there are disturbing factors on the political horizon in Mexico. There is a national election to be held soon. The most likely successor of Obregon i General Calles who still calls himel a friend of the working clcass. In spite of our capitalists being sur that they can win over Calles once he is elecctd president, his probabl election makes the Mexiccan problen still a source of anguish to the American kings of finance and industry.

Tremendous Significance of Problem.

Thus the colonial problem has become one of the major difficulties confronting the Coolidge administration. The problem of keeping the house in order in our vast outlying possessions has taken a place of equa import along side of such pressing national questions as the tariff, the railways, the agricultural cconditions, and the serious disputes between the workers and employers looming up on the industrial field.

Because of the disturbed world conditions and because of the deepening rift in the ranks of the capitalists at home this colonial question assumes tremendous significance. In the campaign of 1923 the policy towards the dependencies and protectorates will play a most important role.