

Official Communications

Letter of the P. P. T. U. S. to the Latin American Trade Union Congress,
Montevideo, Uruguay

Dear Comrades:

THE Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat extends its fraternal greetings and best wishes to the first congress of the Latin American Trade Union Confederation. The tasks and problems confronting the trade union movement of Latin America are in almost every respect identical with those forcibly occupying the daily attention of the P. P. T. U. S. This is because most of our affiliated organizations exist in colonial and semi-colonial countries and are exploited and ruthlessly oppressed by the forces of imperialism, of which Britain and America are the leading powers.

These unscrupulous powers, in their competitive struggle for markets, raw materials and cheap labor, are using the same methods to enslave the peoples of Latin America to their respective groups of finance capital as they have practiced for decades in the Pacific

area. They seek to divide the native bourgeoisie and utilize one group against another, or one republic against the other, as in Paraguay and Bolivia. When this does not suffice to obtain domination they resort to invasion, rapine and murder as in China, Nicaragua and Egypt, and finally subject them completely to colonial status as in Cuba, Philippines, India, etc.

The Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat takes cognizance of the fact that several of the South American republics border the Pacific Ocean and are either dominated or under the influence of Britain or the U. S. A. It is in the Pacific where the struggle between the various groups of imperialists manifests itself most keenly; and every day gives added justification for the repeated warnings sent out by the P. P. T. U. S. of the growing war danger.

The Anglo-American naval rivalry, the Anglo-French agreement to naval cooperation and the strengthening of the military forces of France, the secret negotiations to revive the Anglo-Japanese alliance, the strengthening of the Pacific fleets by Britain and America, the construction of a British naval and air base, with heavy fortifications, at such a strategic point as Singapore, the improvement and strengthening of Pearl Harbor, the Pacific forts and garrisons of the U. S. A., etc., are all indicative of a real world war danger. In fact, few seem to realize that war actually exists today in colonial and semi-colonial countries, such as China, South America and India; invasion of Shantung by 20,000 Japanese troops who killed 5,000 Chinese at Tsinan, the occupation of Nicaragua by American marines, and constant murdering of Indian workers and nationalists under British rule, etc.

This hostile world struggle for power to exploit the world's workers is shrouded by hypocritical pretences of a desire for "peace" and "cooperation between nations". The "Kellogg Peace Pact" is an instrument of war, and intended to disarm the masses before the real declaration of war. The invitation to Canada to join the Pan-American Union, dominated by Wall street, is but one more act portraying the imperialist struggle. The rapid buying of shares in Latin American industries dominated by British capital, reacts violently against the British financiers, and leads to bitter antagonisms, the same as American and British rivalry does in the Far East. We need no more eloquent support than the words of Senator Gillette, expressed during the discussion on the Naval Construction Bill. He said:

"We must prepare for war as other nations do. . . . The United States must not forget the principal nations of the world are our debtors and wealth makes an attractive prey. There is already keen rivalry with Britain which promises to increase. . . . England refuses to decrease her naval armament; so the only course for us is to increase our navy. . . . Peace treaties can no more keep people from fighting than prohibition laws could keep people from drinking."

But the war danger has even a greater significance and is more serious for the international working class movement. The intense preparations for war are directed pri-

marily against the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the permanent and real menace to all imperialist nations. The workers and peasants of the Soviet Union are in control of one-sixth of the globe. They support the workers and peasants of all countries, and assist the colonial and semi-colonial peoples towards their independence. Therefore hardly a week passes but acts of violence are committed against the U. S. S. R. which are instigated chiefly by the British Foreign Office:

Japan is encouraged in its encroachment upon Soviet communications in the East. Poland and the Little Entente are actively encouraged to commit violence against the only Workers' State on the western borders of the Soviet Union, while Britain prepares her air and military bases in the Far East, and creates rebellion in a State friendly to the Soviet Union, Afghanistan, in order to extend her hostile operations closer to the Soviet border. It is this hostile world situation directed against the Soviet Union, the colonial and semi-colonial peoples and the international proletariat, which primarily influences the policy of the P. P. T. U. S.

In order to fight against this imperialist exploitation and suppression, whether directed from their agents among the native bourgeoisie or Foreign Offices, we must unite and strengthen the fighting trade unions in every country, especially in the colonial and semi-colonial countries. This will also give a great impetus to world trade union unity.

But our task is a difficult one: in China, Indonesia, Korea, Japan and Formosa, the right to organize real militant trade unions is crushed by the police and armed forces. Thousands of workers and peasants have met execution squads bravely in China and Indonesia during the last two years, while many have met their death and lay imprisoned in Japan, India, Korea, etc. But in spite of this, the struggle to maintain the fighting unions continues with intensified vigor.

As in Latin America, our great task is to organize the unorganized workers and unite the scattered, sectional and craft unions into industrial class unions. This can best be done by forming factory committees representative of all workers in a given establishment. This is essential in order to fight the almost unbelievably low standards existing in the Far East and to fight for better treatment generally, both from the native employers and imperialist exploiters.

The organizations numbered among our affiliated membership are those of Australia, China, Japan, Korea, Indonesia, Philippine Islands, U. S. S. R., U. S. A. (T. U. E. L.), and the British Minority Movement and the United French Confederation of Labor are also connected because they are immediately concerned with the colonial possessions of France and England. Not only must we draw the Indian Trade Unions into the P. P. T. U. S., but all the South American Unions from countries bordering the Pacific should become affiliated. We must also maintain a close working agreement with constant organic contact, with the Latin American Trade Union Confederation in order to obtain the maximum results from our activity.

Like the P. P. T. U. S., you have many opponents and obstacles that will have to be overcome. Not least among them is the Pan-American Federation of Labor and their agents in Latin American unions: the "Amsterdam" International and its Secretariats (the International Federation of Transport Workers, etc.). Inspired by Albert Thomas of the International Labor Office of the League of Nations, a movement has been launched in opposition to the P. P. T. U. S. in the form of calling a Pan-Asiatic Conference to be held in Calcutta. This attempt to undermine the growing influence of the P. P. T. U. S. has the support of Suzuki, the agent of the Tanaka Imperial Government inside the Japanese trade union movement, and a few self-seeking individuals of the Indian T. U. C. The I. L. O. has also the full support of the Social Democratic traitors and bureaucrats of Amsterdam, and the Labor and Socialist International in their splitting maneuvers against the P. P. T. U. S.

The success or failure of the I. L. O., assisted by these renegades, depends upon the intensity of our work and degree of organization we obtain, in rallying the masses both to the Pan-Pacific and the Latin American T. U. C. We must not under-estimate these forces, which should rather inspire us onward to further active organizational work and unity of our forces.

The Pan-American Federation of Labor, assisted by the reformist officials of the Mexican trade unions (CROM) and other yellow unions represents the forces of American imperialism within the labor movement. Their aim is to enslave the Latin American peoples, and the P. A. F. of L. is the parallel move-

ment to that of the Pan-American Union led by Hughes—they are both agencies of Wall street.

Like J. H. Thomas and Ramsay MacDonald of Great Britain, who supported armed invasion and massacres of the Chinese trade unionists and organized peasants, and who attempt emasculation of the independence movement of India, Green of the American Federation of Labor who dominates the Pan-American Federation of Labor, also supports the invasion and massacres of the Latin American workers and peasants. These traitors must be exposed and driven from the labor movement in order to safeguard the interests of the workers and peasants of the whole of Latin America. The only real trade union centre is now the Latin American Trade Union Confederation. By persistent efforts you will win the workers from the Pan-American Federation of Labor by adopting and propagating a class policy.

In order to promote unity of action, we hope that your conference will recommend that the Latin American trade unions from countries bordering on the Pacific become directly affiliated to the P. P. T. U. S., that your decision will be to work in organic alliance with our parallel movement to yours; and we therefore, in order to commence this alliance, invite the Latin American Trade Union Confederation to send two delegates to our Second Congress which will be convened at Vladivostock on August 1st. (Our Congress is proscribed in Australia by the Bruce Government where we decided to hold it by invitation of the Australian Unions).

Again extending to you our heartiest greetings and salutations knowing that your Congress will be an epoch-making one, which we feel sure will result in uniting all the important and best trade unions under the leadership of the Latin American Trade Union Confederation, thus placing upon a firm and permanent basis the only real challenge within the trade union movement which will defend the interests of the Latin American working class and rout the agents of American imperialism (Wall street) from the organized labor movement.

THE PAN-PACIFIC TRADE UNION SECRETARIAT,

(Signed) Chairman: SOU CHAO-JEN.
Secretary: EARL BROWDER.

Shanghai, February 14, 1929.