

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN LUIS CARLOS PRESTES AND WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

Rio de Janeiro,
August 21, 1945.

William Z. Foster,
National Chairman,
Communist Party of the U.S.A.

Dear Comrade:

At its first public meeting, after having won its legality, the National Committee of the Brazilian Communist Party sends its warmest and fraternal greetings to all the brother Communist Parties of the Hemisphere that are fighting under the banner of Pan-American unity and solidarity, for democracy and progress in our fatherlands.

Today when fascism is militarily defeated, when the unity of the United Nations is every day strengthened, as now with Potsdam, and the democratic forces in every country are being consolidated, all the greater are the responsibilities of the Communists in order to guarantee the victories, which were achieved at the cost of the sacrifices and blood of millions of fighters.

This new period of peaceful development finds the Communist Party fighting legally for national unity and for the further democratization of the country.

The National Committee of the Communist Party of Brazil which recognizes the responsibility that the Brazilian people has before the other peoples of the Americas, as a factor of peace and progress, will make all efforts against the attempts of dividing the

American nations, which are being made by the fifth column, the agents of American isolationism and English colonialism, supporters of fascism over the world.

In greeting the brother Parties, the National Committee of the Communist Party of Brazil assumes the task of continuing the glorious traditions of struggle of the champions of liberty in America, as Tiradentes, O'Higgins, San Martin, Bolivar, and many other heroes.

Long live the United Nations!

Long live the Unity of the Peoples of the Americas!

Signed: LUIS CARLOS PRESTES,
General Secretary,
Communist Party of Brazil.

New York,
September 19, 1945.

Luis Carlos Prestes,
General Secretary,
Communist Party of Brazil.

Dear Comrade Prestes:

The National Board of the Communist Party of the U.S.A. is happy to express our Party's pleasure at the receipt of your letter, written upon the occasion of the first public meeting of the Communist Party of Brazil. We hail this event as a most important phase of the widespread democratic awakening which is now getting under way in Brazil, and which includes such significant developments as the all-out participation of Brazil in the war against the fascist Axis powers, the

establishment of diplomatic relations between Brazil and the U.S.S.R., the growth of the great new Brazilian trade union movement, the rapid upsurge of democratic sentiments among the masses of the people, the gradual restoration of civil liberties, the release of yourself after many long years of unjust imprisonment, and now the legalization of the Communist Party—all of which developments are taking place upon the background of the considerable expansion of Brazilian industry that was achieved during the war. Without attempting to minimize the still great strength of fascist-minded reaction in Brazil, we realize that the present democratic progress of the Brazilian people is bound to have wide repercussions in strengthening the struggle for democracy throughout the Western Hemisphere.

While congratulating the Brazilian Communist Party for the splendid progress it is making under your capable leadership, we also desire to make a few general remarks about the relations between the United States and Latin America. We especially wish to do this in order to try to correct various illusions enunciated by our former General Secretary, Comrade Earl Browder, relative to United States policy in Latin America. These false notions, circulated widely through many countries of Latin America by means of Browder's writings, are part and parcel of his general opportunist policy, which was recently so sharply criticized by Comrade Jacques Duclos, Secretary of the French Communist Party, as "a notorious revision of Marxism," and which we are now proceeding to eradicate from our Party.

Comrade Browder's systematic re-

visionism was most sharply expressed in the distorted interpretation which he made of the decisions of the conference of President Roosevelt, Prime Minister Churchill and Marshal Stalin at Teheran in December, 1943. Among his wrong conclusions, Browder argued to the effect that world capitalism, through its alliance with the U.S.S.R., had acquired a new lease of life. He believed it had overcome its general crisis, had become progressive again, and was about to enter into the greatest period of expansion in its history. Browder's ideas, contradicting Lenin's basic theories, held that imperialism was dead, or dying. He painted an idyllic picture of world capitalists spontaneously living in harmony with each other and with the U.S.S.R. and pursuing policies calculated to promote the well-being and freedom of the various peoples. He particularly stressed the beneficent role that United States capitalism was supposed to play in the postwar period. Led by "enlightened" capitalists acting in their "true class interests," the United States was to carry on vast programs of industrialization and democratization in all the more undeveloped sections of the globe. Living standards in the United States were to be greatly raised and a new prosperity would reign throughout the world. It all summed up to a bourgeois liberal capitalist Utopia, which had nothing in common with Socialism.

At our convention in May, 1944, the convention which dissolved the Communist Party and reformed our forces into the Communist Political Association, Comrade Browder enthusiastically applied his revisionist theory to U.S.-Latin American relations. The general thesis which he then outlined was that

the old-time Yankee imperialism, which had wrought such havoc in Latin America, was dying out and that the great monopolists of the United States were launching policies that were bound to enhance greatly the freedom and prosperity generally of the peoples of Latin America. Speaking of American imperialists, Browder went on:

Their day is finished, because they can no longer answer even the problems of the American capitalist class. With their methods they cannot produce markets big enough for American industry, and therefore more enlightened men have to come into the direction of American capitalism. Such enlightened men are beginning to appear, and they are going to become strong because the forces of history are with them. . . . These are the kind of American capitalists to whom the future belongs in this country, because they are the only kind of men who can go out and get a market. . . .

There is no basis whatever for Browder's rosy notions to the effect that the monopolists of the United States are abandoning imperialism and that, under "enlightened" leadership they are going to build up the industries and democracy of Latin America. In the United States itself the great monopolists of the North and East are trying to prevent the full industrialization of the South and West, why, then, should we expect them to encourage a full industrialization of Latin America? Actually American imperialism, although it is working with new methods, is now stronger and more active and ruthless than ever. The United States is coming out of this war the most powerful nation in the world; militarily, economically, and financially. Within the United States the great trusts and monopolies have enormously enriched themselves during the war and, with all other capitalist countries sorely weakened by the

struggle against Germany and Japan, these big combinations of capital are definitely nursing ambitions to achieve American imperialist world domination. They are pressing the Truman Administration, which endorsed the Roosevelt liberal traditions, to adopt an aggressive imperialist policy everywhere. There are evidences throughout the world of this new surge forward of American imperialism, as, of course, you have noted. We may be sure, therefore, that Latin America, which the imperialists consider to be their special preserve, will not escape this imperialist drive. What with the influence of Germany smashed in Latin America and with that of Great Britain seriously weakened, the influence of the United States is greater than ever before, and the reactionary forces in our country will seek ruthlessly to intensify this influence for their own profit and at the expense of the Latin-American peoples. A striking example of this influence was the way the Latin American delegates followed the United States' lead at the San Francisco conference of the United Nations. In our judgment, Lombardo Toledano, President of the Latin American Federation of Labor (C.T.A.L.), in his speech on August 5, 1945, in Mexico City, gave a much more realistic picture of the Latin-American and U.S.A. relations than Browder has done. Said Toledano:

They (the American imperialists—W.Z.F.) will try to put into effect plans for economic domination of Latin America and the world, such as the Clayton Plan, which they presented at the Inter-American Conference in Mexico City this spring. And I think that this pressure of United States imperialism will grow proportionately stronger as the popular forces of Europe move ahead and Governments adopt new and progressive economic and political forms."

The Clayton Plan, known as "The Economic Charter of the Americas," which was introduced into the Mexico City Conference by the United States delegation, is a far cry indeed from the "enlightened" economic policies of American Big Business in Latin America prophesied by Earl Browder. The great stress placed upon "free trade" in this document definitely favors the powerful industries in the United States as against their very much weaker competitors in Latin America; the emphasis upon "free enterprise" and against government intervention in industry also puts Latin-American industries at a disadvantage as against the great industries in the United States; the provision for "the free movement and investment of capital giving equal treatment to national and foreign capital," while appearing on the surface to be liberal, actually greatly favors the multi-billionaire bankers of the United States. Lombardo Toledano said on this general point: "The establishment of legal requisites for such investments should be an essential part of the defense of Latin America's political independence and of the struggles to obtain her economic independence. . . ." Small wonder, therefore, that this "Economic Charter" has evoked widespread criticism and opposition among business and labor circles in the various countries of Latin America.

Not only is American Big Business not cultivating an all-round industrialization of Latin America, but it is also not championing democracy in the lands to the south of us. Even under the liberal Roosevelt regime, when the Latin-American republics were accorded more democratic treatment by the United States Government than

ever before, the agents of the great American trusts, most of which were in violent opposition to Roosevelt, busily cultivated fascist-minded reaction throughout Latin America. Their most recent blows against democracy (struck by two big businessmen holding office in the State Department, Rockefeller and Stettinius) were to maneuver fascist Argentina into the Pan-American Union and also into the United Nations, during the closing days of the Roosevelt Administration and in the opening period of the Truman regime. The way, too, the United States stubbornly refuses to grant national independence to Puerto Rico is no stimulation to Latin-American confidence in the democratic intentions of the United States. Although the liberalism of Roosevelt has exerted a very considerable progressive influence throughout Latin America, the important democratic progress made by the peoples in the twenty Republics is their own work.

The master-key to the general economic, political and social advance of the Latin-American peoples is, of course, the all-round industrialization of their respective countries. At the present time, for the most part, these countries are economic dependencies of the United States. This economic dependence is a grave hindrance to the well-being of the peoples of Latin America. It is also a danger to the people of the United States; for, unless the United States, with its gigantic industries, can find big markets in Latin America and in other undeveloped sections of the world, which can only come from the industrialization of these areas, it will face unprecedented economic crises in the near future.

We are not going to try to advise you in detail as to how Latin America can be industrialized. You need no advice from us on these things. It seems to us, too, that the progress of the Latin-American Federation of Labor answers that problem thoroughly. Two things are quite clear to us, however, in this general respect. The first is that the peoples of Latin America should nourish no illusions, such as those cultivated by Browder, to the effect that the great monopolies of the United States are adopting "enlightened" policies leading to the industrialization and democratization of Latin America, since this could only lead the Latin-American countries into still deeper economic dependency upon the United States. Secondly, these peoples should realize, however, that they do have powerful allies in the trade unions and other democratic mass movements in the United States, and they should work in even closer collaboration with them against the common enemy of the peoples of both Latin America and the United States, namely, the great imperialist American trusts and monopolies. Such collaboration is the path along which to realize

a democratic application of the Good Neighbor policy and to achieve a genuine cooperation of the nations throughout our great Hemisphere. It is also the way for the peoples of the new world to play their proper democratic role in the United Nations in maintaining world peace and in bringing about the material betterment of the world's peoples.

In the crucial days now dawning after the final defeat of fascist Germany and Japan the nations of Latin America are certain to play a most important part in combating fascism in this Hemisphere and throughout the world. Especially will this be the case with your vast country, which is larger than the United States and which is one of the lands most richly endowed with natural resources in all the world. We are sure, too, that your Communist Party will play a fitting vanguard role in these great developments.

With all best wishes for your personal welfare,

Comradely yours,
WILLIAM Z. FOSTER
National Chairman
Communist Party, U.S.A.