

APPEAL TO LATIN AMERICA

By EARL BROWDER

The following is an address made by Mr. Browder at a session of the first convention of the Communist Political Association in response to the greetings of distinguished guests from the labor movements of Latin America. The convention was greeted in person by Sen. Elias Lafferte, chairman of the Communist party of Chile, Sen. Augusto Duran, secretary of the Communist party of Colombia, Congressman Juan Lima, secretary of the Committee for Labor Unity of Peru, Juan Antonio Corretjer, Puerto Rican leader now editing "Pueblos Hispanos" in New York, and Rep. Salvador Ocampo, secretary of the Chilean Confederation of Workers.

I AM very happy to respond to the important messages we have received tonight from our neighbors in the South. We note with great regret the absence of many of our friends from Latin America who would have liked to have been here, but who were prevented from arriving by the difficulties of wartime travel. I refer particularly to our old and beloved friends from Mexico and Cuba.

We know that in every Latin American country we have friends and co-workers. We also know that they are doing a magnificent work in their own countries. We know that they are holding up their end in this war, something that many of us tend to forget because our eyes are largely fastened upon the great tasks on the battlefields in Europe. We do not always realize what a difficult part in this war is being played by the democratic forces in Latin America. Against greater difficulties than we can conceive of, and with only a little fraction of the resources which we have at our disposal, they have been holding that great territory against the assaults of fascism over a long period—and too much of that time with very little help from the United States.

We saw this dramatically expressed in the recent meeting of the International Labor Organization in Philadelphia. One would have expected that the labor representative of the United States in that organization would have been in the forefront in protecting and advancing the policy of the United Nations and the policy of our own country in resisting the encroachments of the Axis in our hemisphere. But we saw that this task had to be taken up by the Latin American labor delegates, under the able and brilliant leadership of Vicente Lombardo Toledano. And we saw, to our great shame, that the Latin American delegates who were fighting for the interests of the policies of our country, the United States, had to overcome the resistance of

the American labor delegate, Mr. Robert Watt.

So we know that our Latin American brothers and sisters are really carrying on the war and in many cases doing it with greater efficiency and greater honor than some of the representatives of our own country. We thank our Latin American comrades for the services that they have rendered.

Not only in the war do we understand the great services that they have rendered to us. We know in the postwar world they are going to play a role of tremendous importance, and tremendous importance to us in the United States. I want to say a few words about just one aspect of the postwar problem of Latin America in relation to the United States.

We need Latin America very much in the postwar world. We need Latin America especially because our whole system of civilization in this country, the whole continued operation of our economy on which we depend for our daily bread, depends upon finding other lands that will relieve us of the tremendous production of our factories that we don't know how to consume ourselves. And we are depending upon Latin America to help us out in this respect. Please, Latin America, take a lot of our goods off our hands in the postwar world.

SOME people think the Latin Americans need us. In a way, yes, they do. But they don't need us nearly as badly as we need them. Even if they don't get our goods after the war, they can at least continue



"Producing for Resistance," woodcut by Chang Hui.

along as they have for hundreds of years. But if they don't take our goods, we are going to have a catastrophe in this country such as we won't know how to solve. We cannot continue without their countries as markets. So we turn to Latin America, as we are turning to Africa and to Asia. We are saying: "Please, you other countries in the world, we are producing machines; we are going to produce more and more of them after the war. When the war market is gone, we are not going to be able to use these machines ourselves. We must find customers. Please be our customers and help us keep our factories going."

We hope the Latin American countries will be gracious enough to listen to our request—"Please be our customers."

We are learning also that it is no good for us to have Latin America as customers in the same way as we had them in the past—that is, under the terms laid down by short-sighted and greedy monopolists, with the imperialist mentality, who went into Latin America as conquerors, using commodities in the place of the sword and bank credits in the place of guns. They want to enslave the Latin American economies and to subvert their democratic structures, to distort their industrial development so as to transform those countries into appendages, colonial appendages of the North American metropolis.

That kind of market is no good to us any more because that kind of market is too limited. It simply will not solve our problems. The only kind of market in Latin America that really responds to our need is that provided by Latin American peoples who are modernizing their countries in every respect, industrializing them. And that means a different kind of customer from the old colonial customer. All the old colonial features of our economic relations must be wiped out because otherwise the market is going to be too small. We have to have a huge and growing market, and the only nations that can give us a huge and growing market are nations which buy not only the chief consumption commodities, but our most expensive machines. We want Latin America to take locomotives in large numbers, rails, heavy machinery. We want them to buy from us the means of production so that they can go into business for themselves in a modern way.

So we want a new relationship with Latin America. We want strong Latin American democracies standing on their own feet, nobody able to give them orders of any kind, because that is the only kind of customers that can buy the goods in the volume that we must sell and that is the only kind of customers that can pay. Eventually, of course, Latin America is going to pay us for everything we send them. And they are going to find it easy to pay because they will not pay by the intensified exploitation of their own people.

They will be able to pay because their own people will be becoming more wealthy all the time, with rising living standards and rising demands. They will be able to pay because through an all-around modern in-



To Anna Damon

Let the grass grow over the flat grave—
Let the wind blow through the long
grass—

Do not carve a name. Do not engrave

A date on a stone. Let it pass

Completed and fruitful. But do not forget
The tireless courage, the steel will, the
gray keen eye,

The mouth full of wisdom, the strong
hand stretched out,

The heart beating, the mind laboring for
comrades—

These are the things to remember.

These are the things that do not die.

L.G.



dustrialization, they will be able to produce wealth as we produce it in the United States. We hope they will be able to produce it even more efficiently than we have so far.

WE HAVE great hopes for the future relations between the United States and Latin America—and I must say that we are not expressing merely our own point of view on this point. We have a growing degree of agreement with capitalists in the United States who are more and more awakening to the fact that the old type of colonial profits has no future for them, capitalists who are more and more prepared to do business with the Latin American peoples who are sensible to the need to organize themselves democratically, with strong governments, and to make plans for their own national industrial modernization. And a growing number of American big businessmen would like to do business with strong Latin American governments on that basis and to do business much more reasonably than they ever did before. They are beginning to feel a growing strength in Latin America and they have respect for strength. So we have great hopes for the future of our continental relationships.

Even though we have strong and stubborn reactionary and imperialist, blindly imperialist, forces in the United States, and

though we warn our Latin American neighbors they must beware of these forces and they must be prepared to defeat them when they come down to their countries—nevertheless we must also say that the future does not belong to these blind and greedy and shortsighted imperialist forces in our country. Their day is finished, although they will not depart from the historical scene until they are licked and removed. Their day is finished because they can no longer answer even the problems of the American capitalist class. With their methods they can't 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. They are the only men who know how and have sense enough to begin to cooperate with the labor movement, to find common policy with the labor movement of this country and of Latin America. They are the only ones who can sit down and talk with such men as Lombardo Toledano about the plans of Latin America. These are the kinds of American capitalists to whom the future belongs in this country because these are the only kinds of men who can go out and get a market—who can get the only kind of market that is not going to choke us after the war because we don't find customers. The men who can find the market for America's surplus products in the postwar world are the men who are going to shape our western hemisphere, if not a large part of the western world.

And in this question of finding the markets that they must have if our industries are to continue to operate—in this task we expect tremendous cooperation from our Latin American friends. We promise them our full collaboration in seeing that those relationships are placed on the basis of complete equality and common interest between the Latin American countries and our country. We promise them that we are going to be working here to remove the last traces of colonialism from the policy of the United States towards Latin America. And we want to see, and we expect to see, the Good Neighbor policy so deepened that it will find expression in the exchange of goods between this country and Latin America—an exchange which North American capital will find it profitable to finance from this country for a whole period of years with long-term credits. We expect it to be an exchange in which Latin America will become rich enough to pay off all the bills in the course of industrialization and stand on a firm basis of equality with us. Together we will fight for that kind of extension of the Good Neighbor policy. Not only must it completely express itself in our economic relationships, but it must expand those economic relations tenfold in the next few years.