

Speech by Manuel Gomez

TO THE BRUSSELS ANTI-IMPERIALIST CONGRESS

Manuel Gomez represented the United States Section of the All-America Anti-Imperialist League at the Brussels Congress of Oppressed Colonial Peoples and Anti-Imperialists. His speech is an analysis of the present financial imperialism of Wall Street, and shows its roots in the exploitation of American and foreign workers.

PART I.—THE AMERICAN EMPIRE.

Comrades of all nations and races:

Coming from the land of the dollar, and of dollar diplomacy, I present to you the American dollar empire as the common problem of all of us, because it is an empire which takes tribute from the whole world.

This newest imperialism of the United States speaks its own peculiar language, the language of democratic-pacifism, if you please. It is "the friend of China." In contradiction to the British, Japanese and other vulgar imperialists, its policy in China is the "Open Door." "equal opportunity for all."

But my Chinese friends, I want you to bear in mind that our Uncle Sam, who can talk so eloquently on behalf of the "Open Door in China," insists upon a closed door—closed, locked and bolted—in Latin America, whose territory the Monroe Doctrine treats as a special preserve of U. S. finance-capital. The democratic-pacifist method represents only one phase of American imperialist policy. It is inevitably succeeded by the phase of open, brutal aggression, such as the entire Caribbean and Central American populations of the Western Hemisphere are already familiar with.

Modern imperialism has been described here as imperialist capitalism—the present, final stage of that capitalism which now exploits whole populations abroad as well as millions of workers at home. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the United States. Some of you are familiar with the accompanying progressive development of expansionist foreign policy. Concentration and centralization of industry led to monopoly, which means that all the economic—and therefore political—power of the nation was concentrated in the hands of a small group of plutocrats centered in Wall Street.

In 1901 the United States Steel Corporation came into existence, bringing together the most powerful financial groups, such as the hitherto warring Rockefeller and Morgan interests.

At the same time that these developments were taking place the United States made its appearance upon the world imperialist stage. The Spanish-American War, entered into with the characteristic innocent declarations of libertarian purposes, was the initial move in a foreign policy which continues its consistent march to this day. Conquest of Cuba, Porto Rico served as the stepping stones from which American imperialism proceeded to Panama, Haiti and Santo Domingo, Central America—until the whole Caribbean area becomes "an American lake." In the Far East, Guam and the Philippine Islands are the spearhead of U. S. imperialist policy with regard to Asia.

Developments during and since the World War brought the United States into the very front rank of imperialist powers. Industrial capacity was tremendously increased. Wall Street succeeded the City of London as the dominant center of world finance. The United States passed from a debtor to a creditor nation, with huge interests in Europe as well as in Latin America and Asia. Before the war the total foreign investments of American capitalism did not reach

\$2,500,000,000. Now the amount exceeds \$13,000,000,000.

To the lines of imperialist policy represented by the Monroe Doctrine and the "Open Door," was added that of the Dawes Plan. Reaching full consciousness at last, American imperialism became everywhere aggressive. From the four corners of the earth, the super-profits of imperialism began to pour into the United States.

On the basis of the American dollar empire—which, as all Latin Americans know, is cemented not merely by dollars but also by the flesh and blood of human beings slain and tortured—the so-called American standard of living is maintained in the United States.

Even the American working class shares to a certain extent in the profits of imperialism, and as a result is permeated with social-patriotic and imperialist ideology. I speak particularly of the skilled workers and, in general, of the dominant elements making up a large body of the membership of the American Federation of Labor. Recent economic developments in the United States furnishes no more striking phenomenon than the rapid growth of "business unionism" and what, for want of a better term, we call class collaboration.

Without going into detail regarding the rapidly multiplying forms of "class collaboration," I need merely cite labor banking, labor insurance schemes, "company unionism" and the tendencies toward applying "company union" principles through the bona fide trade unions. Outstanding examples of the latter are the so-called "B. & O. Plan" and the machinery established under the recently adopted Watson-Parker Law.

So satisfactory have they been to American capitalism that some of these forms are being transplanted to Europe, as part of the program of "rationalization." Thus we hear that Europe is adopting "class collaboration" from America. We should not forget, however, those features which existed in Germany, for instance, long before the World War, and to which the name of "state socialism" was sometimes given.

"Class collaboration" is no new thing in Europe. It is as old as reformism!

It was not accidental that the reformist leaders of the Second International turned a deaf ear to the appeals of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples for national liberation. And it is not accidental either that the ruling bureaucracy of the American Federation of Labor is a "loyal supporter" of the U. S. State Department in foreign affairs. Criticism of imperialist policy is limited to inessentials, to isolated outrages, to "excesses."

It is suggested that the state department has been inadvised here, that it has been subject to undue influence there. Such criticisms—which are similar to those sometimes indulged in by middle class "liberals" and pacifists—perform a real service to imperialism, because they make it seem that there is nothing fundamentally wrong.

(To Be Continued.)