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DIALOGUE

UNCLE SAM AND BROTHER JONATHAN. {341}

By DANIEL DE LEON

BROTHER JONATHAN—There is a point I'd like you to make clear for me.

UNCLE SAM—With pleasure. What is it?

B.J.—You see, that is the only point that still puzzles me.

U.S.—Out with it! What point is that?

B.J.—You don't need go write explanations about the Socialist Labor {Party}. I know that is the only party that can be said to be right throughout. I have no fault to find with any one who votes for Malloney and Remmel. It is the right thing to build up that party, so that when the whole people get ready to act, there be a good strong nucleus of clear-headed policy that they can flock to and join with. Isn't that right?

U.S.—So far, you are right!

B.J.—But—

U.S.—Oh, yes, "but!"

B.J.—Now, listen! But should that, under the banner of the Socialist Labor Party, perform a very valuable and necessary work, there is also work of less importance, it is true, but likewise valuable, that some others may perform who are not yet fit to perform the sturdy work of the Socialists.

U.S.—And what may that "less important and yet valuable work" be?

B.J.—It is upon that point that I would like to have some information from you.

U.S.—Man, how long-winded you are! You have been beating around the bush for



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the last ten minutes. Come to the point!

B.J.—Yes, I shall. My point is this: McKinley represents Capitalism outright; that means his party stands for all the horrors that Capitalism entails. Bryan, I know, does not stand for Socialism.—

U.S.—Right you are.

B.J.—Nor for anything like Socialism.—

U.S.—Correct again!

B.J.—He stands for Capitalism,—

U.S.—Thou art a sage!

B.J.—Don't mock me. I'm trying to do the best I can,—

U.S. (thrusts his tongue into his cheek and looks demure)—Go on!

B.J.—Bryan stands for Capitalism. I know that. But he stands for restricted capitalism;—

U.S.—Oh, my buttons! I catch on!

B.J.—What do you catch on?

U.S.—To what you mean. Your reasoning is this: “Both McKinley and Bryan stand for Capitalism. But McKinley stands for stronger capitalism, and that means horror; Bryan, on the other hand, stands for restricted capitalism, and that means restricted horror. Therefore,” you argue, “let all who are not yet ripe for Socialism rally around Bryan, and in that way restrict the horror of capitalism, and give time for the stalwarts, who will vote for Malloney and Rimmel, to drill and bring up the Socialist infantry that will demolish capitalism.” Isn't that your argument?

B.J. (who all this time was looking up to U.S. with open-mouthed admiration)—That's it. You put it well. Isn't that correct reasoning?

U.S.—It would be if your premises were right. Restricted Capitalism at this stage of the game, does mean restricted capitalist horrors, but it does not mean an absolute restriction of horrors; it simply substitutes one set of horrors for another.

B.J.—How is that?

U.S.—If your child has the scarlet fever and some one proposes to inoculate it with more scarlet fever microbes, would not that intensify the scarlet fever disease?

B.J.—Why, of course.

U.S.—That's what the McKinley doctors want to do with our sick country. It is

suffering from the scarlet fever of capitalism, and they want to inject into its veins some more scarlet fever microbes.

B.J.—That’s just it!

U.S.—And if your child has scarlet fever, and some one proposes to drive the microbes back into the body, do you imagine that would bring relief?

B.J. looks stumped.

U.S.—It would surely bring on convulsions and agonies of another sort.

B.J.—I must admit that’s so.

U.S.—The sensible physician would say both propositions were bad. Now, that’s the situation.

The McKinley doctors claim that relief will come by more capitalism: what their treatment will do is to intensify the disease, and convulse the nation still more.

The Bryan doctors claim that relief will come by keeping the capitalist microbe from appearing in sight. What that treatment will do is to convulse the nation with the agonies of a suppressed malady.

The Socialist Labor Party says: “No more capitalist injection, and no suppressing of the disease; let it come to the surface, and secrete it out of the system.”

Whether you turn to McKinley or Bryan, you only aggravate the agony. There is but one course: Roll up the vote for Malloney and Rummel! Roll up the straight Socialist Labor Party vote!

B.J.—I am surely knocked into a cocked hat with my scheme!

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