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DIALOGUE

UNCLE SAM AND BROTHER JONATHAN. {347}

By DANIEL DE LEON

BROTHER JONATHAN—The further on in the campaign I get, all the more mixed up do I become.

UNCLE SAM—I should think just the other way: the further on we get in the campaign the clearer things become.

B.J.—Well, they do, in some respects, but in others they don't.

U.S.—In what do things seem to become clearer?

B.J.—Well, it becomes ever clearer in the course of the campaign that there is no real difference between the Bryan party and the McKinley party.

UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN

U.S.—In what way?

B.J.—Well, the McKinley party set up the howl that the Bryan party was an Ice Trust party;—and thereupon the Bryan party shows that the Republican party is as deep in the Ice Trust mire as Tammany Hall. So honors are easy on the Trust question.

U.S.—Bully for you!

B.J.—On the other hand, the Bryan party charges the McKinley party with Militarism and the purpose of raising armies to brow-beat the workingman on strike;—and thereupon the McKinley party promptly shows, by the record of the Bryan Governor of Idaho, who brow-beat the striking miners into a Bull Pen by means of the militia and the federal troops, that the Bryan party is as deep in the Militarism mire as the McKinley party. So honors are easy on the Militarism question also.

U.S.—You are doing first rate! In what other respect is the course of the campaign clearing up the dust?

B.J.—Take, for instance, the Cheap Labor and Expansion issue. The Bryan party charges the McKinley party with a purpose to acquire cheap labor, and shows quite conclusively that the Expansion policy is merely intended to give to the capitalist the benefit of Tagal and Cooly {Cooley?} cheap labor, so as to lower the wages of the workingmen in America;—and thereupon the McKinley party promptly turns the tables on the Bryan party, by showing that the Bryan Democrats are after the identical thing, seeing that the Bryan capitalists are among the first to close their shops in America, transplant their machinery to Japan and there produce goods with cheap labor. So it is proved that the only difference between the two is that the one frankly looks for cheap labor and the other does so covertly, and honors are again easy, both are straining to reduce the American workingman down to the pauper labor level.

U.S.—First rate! You got it down fine.

B.J.—Each of the points that I have mentioned, and many others of the same stamp, go to prove the correctness of the Socialist Labor Party contention that all these other parties are parties of the Capitalist Class, with one interest only—the fleecing of the workers.

U.S.—There are no flies on that view of the case. Malloney and Remmel alone represent the working class.

B.J.—But—

U.S.—Now, let's hear!

B.J.—But there's one thing happening that spoils my reckoning.

U.S.—What is it? I'm curious to know.

B.J.—It is this: The large number of workingmen that are candidates, along with McKinley and Bryan, or that stump for the Republican and Democratic parties. Is not their support of the old parties an evidence that the old parties are not so entirely capitalist parties, but are, to a very large degree at least, workingmen's parties?

U.S. (holding both sides)—Oh, my buttons!

B.J.—Did I say something ridiculous?

U.S.—Supremely ridiculous. See here. Did you ever hear of the American Revolution?

B.J.—Yes.

U.S.—What was it all about?

B.J.—Very simple. King George and his Parliament wanted to subjugate the people of these colonies and reduce them to the condition of Eastern ryots; the people of these colonies refused to be subjugated, they voted George and his pack out of power; then George and his pack sent red-coats over to conquer the patriots, but the patriots mopped the floor with George's red-coats. That was it in a nut-shell.

U.S.—Correct. According to that the American Revolution presented the issue of Freedom vs. Slavery: King George's side stood for the slavery of the colonists; the Patriots' side stood for the freedom of the colonists, eh?

B.J.—Sure!

U.S.—Was that issue clear as a pike?

B.J.—Perfectly so.

U.S.—Now, then, did you ever hear of a man called Benedict Arnold?

B.J.—I should smile I did! The damned traitor!

U.S. (looking very innocent)—And why do you call him traitor?

B.J.—Why?!?!

U.S. (blandly)—Yes; why?

B.J.—Because he was an American, and yet, instead of standing by the patriots, he went over to King George.

U.S.—Now, I should think that Benedict Arnold's conduct complicated the issue.

B.J.—What issue?

U.S.—The issue of Freedom vs. Slavery. I thought that issue was quite clear; but when I find an American standing by King George's red-coats, it does begin to look as tho' King George's side was not entirely an anti-Patriot side, but, to a very large degree at least, was a Patriot or American side.

B.J. (clear out of patience)—Not at all! Just the other way! The action of Benedict Arnold, the American, in going over to King George's {side}, does not turn King George's side into an American side; what it does is turn Benedict Arnold into a traitor to his country.

U.S.—Now, Jonathan, apply that reasoning to the "labor men" who are standing by the old parties, and what do you get?

B.J. (knocked on his beam ends)—Hem.

U.S.—You get this: That the workingman who can stand with the political parties that have clubbed, bayoneted and shot the working class, as the Republican and the Democratic parties have done, is a traitor, a Benedict Arnold to his class. The conduct of such a workingman does not make the capitalist parties workingmen parties; it brands such a workingman a scab, an ulcerous scab on the body of the working class. And that's all there is of it. It does not confuse anybody, it makes things clearer.

B.J.—Then Sam Prince, Marouchek, and all these other labor men are a lot of Benedict Arnolds?

U.S.—Just that. They are no more labor men than Benedict Arnold was a Patriot. As he was a deserter from the Patriot ranks, so are these Princes, Maroucheks, etc., deserters from the ranks of the working class and scamps who are trying to betray them.

B.J.—That must be why I notice in the ranks of the workingmen a growing hatred for these fellows.

U.S.—Yes, indeed; and the day will come when they will have to make tracks to escape the wrath of the awakened Working Class, just the same as Benedict Arnold had to make tracks to escape the wrath of the Patriots.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
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slpns@slp.org