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DIALOGUE

UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN. {276}

By DANIEL DE LEON

UNCLE SAM (much astonished)—What is that red button you got there? Is it the S.L.P. button? The last I heard of you, you were declaiming against the S.L.P., and trying to get “one thing at a time,” that first thing being free beer through the Tammany Hall Van Wyck.

BROTHER JONATHAN—So I was; and so I’m yet. This button is no S.L.P. button.

U.S.—Oh, I see now; it isn’t.

B.J.—Indeed it isn’t. You Socialists are not people to get along with. You are a lot of Popes, Bosses and Dictators. That’s what you are.

U.S.—We are, are we? Let me see. We have an opinion; have you none?

B.J.—’Course I have.

U.S.—We believe our opinion is right; do you think yours is wrong?

B.J.—’Course I don’t!

U.S.—We agitate for our opinion; don’t you for yours?

B.J.—’Course I do!

U.S.—We believe and say that all others are mistaken; do you claim others are right?

B.J.—’Course I don’t.

U.S.—We try to bring others to our way of thinking; do you try to keep them away from yours?

B.J.—’Course I don’t.



UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN

U.S.—To sum up. We do in all these things just what you do. If to do that is to be a “Pope,” a “Boss,” a “Dictator,” then you must be all these things yourself, and as you say you are not, it follows that neither are we Socialists “Popes,” “Bosses” or “Dictators.” But you insist we are different—

B.J.—So I do.

U.S.—Then it must be that there are other things that we both do not do, eh?

B.J. (with a where-is-this-man-going-to-land-me look)—Y-e-s—

U.S.—And so there are. Now let me tell you. The principal thing that we do not both do is say just what we mean. When we Socialists speak we DO say just what we mean; when you and “anti-Popes,” “anti-Bosses,” “anti-Dictators” like you speak, you DON’T say what you mean. We have nothing to hide because all that we are after we demand over and above board; you and such as you have everything to hide, because what you really are after you don’t want others to know—

B.J.—What am I after?

U.S.—That “one thing at a time.” When you people say that “labor must get one thing at a time” and you stand, as you did at the last election, on the Tammany platform and demand “free beer,” you are not stupid enough to imagine that “free beer” is really a step. You say so; but what you really mean is that if the party you are spouting for wins then YOU will get something, to wit, a job.

B.J.—H — — —

U.S.—Don’t get excited, that’s all there is of it. You want a job as a “first thing,” that is your “one thing at a time”; and so it is with all of you. We are not looking for jobs, and, consequently, we openly attack the capitalist parties. This is the distinction between us two, and your whole cry of “Popes,” “Bosses,” “Dictators” means nothing else than that we see through you and know you people to be corrupt at heart. Your outcry against us is but a confession of your corruption; and your trying to give us names is but an additional evidence of your dishonesty.

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

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