

# The People.

VOL. V, NO. 39.

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1895.

PRICE 3 CENTS.

DIALOGUE

## UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN. {139}

By DANIEL DE LEON

**B**ROTHER JONATHAN—I wish you would join the Sons of Freedom Club.

UNCLE SAM—What do they propose?

B.J.—The greatest thing out yet.

U.S. (looks incredulous)—And that is?

B.J.—To cause an amendment to be adopted to the Federal Constitution providing for the abolition of lawyers.

U.S.—I thought it would be some such reform lisp.

B.J.—Don't you admit lawyers are a pest?

U.S.—I does.

B.J.—Then why do you throw cold water upon a plan to do away with them by calling the plan a “lisp”?

U.S.—Because it is foolish. Lawyers are an evil; but that evil is the result of the existing social system, where the livelihood of the people depends upon the whim of individuals. Under such a system you cannot escape conflict of interests; on the contrary, such conflicts are bred by it. Again, under a social scheme that day by day bars more people from the natural and social opportunities needed to earn a living, it is inevitable that more and more people will seek to live by their wits. The result of all this is the pestiferousness of lawyerdom, and other such mischief, and the increase of the pest.

B.J.—Accordingly, you would let the pest alone, and not abolish it?

U.S.—That's not my position. I am working with might and main to abolish it. But I



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don't propose to go to work to abolish a result and leave the cause standing. The evil result would go on cropping up, if not in one way, then in another. I am laboring with the axe at the trunk and root of the tree.

B.J.—What tree? What root?

U.S.—Capitalism.

B.J.—Then you are not satisfied unless you overthrow the whole capitalist system?

U.S.—Exactly; that are {or?} nothing.

B.J.—That's just like the rest of you Socialists. You want everything and won't be pleased with half a loaf.

U.S.—Nay, nay; we would gladly take half a loaf in instalment for the whole. The real difference between us and you lies in that you think you CAN get the half-loaf and will spend your efforts in that endeavor, and will fail; whereas we know that the nature of the loaf in question is such that with the same effort that you seek to get the half-loaf, and fail, you can seek to get the whole loaf, and win. We know that this is a case of "whole hog, or none."

B.J.—That's the way all of you talk. You lose yourselves in space.

U.S.—We are too "broad," eh?

B.J.—Yes; altogether too broad.

U.S.—Then you won't join us?

B.J.—No; one has to do just as you say if one joins the S.L.P. I don't believe in such narrowness.

U.S.—Narrowness!

B.J. (with enraged eyes)—Yes; narrowness. You Socialists are narrow-minded fanatics.

U.S.—Oh, my buttons!

B.J.—What ails them?

U.S.—They are about to fly off.

B.J.—Why?

U.S.—Because I am ready to explode and am swelling with laughter.

B.J.—At whom?

U.S.—Why, at you, you mutton-head!

B.J.—I am not a mutton-head.

U.S.—Excuse me, you are not ONE, you are TWO mutton-heads.

B.J.—Two?

U.S.—Yes, two. You first mutton-headedly say, we Socialists are too “broad”; and then, your second mutton-head says we are too “narrow.” See?

B.J. scratches himself behind the ear with his left hand, and strokes his chin with his right.

U.S.—See? If you only held one of these views, it would be excusable. When, however, a man manages to hold both—to say we are too “broad,” and right away we are too “narrow”—then anyone with eyes can clearly see two heads on such a fellow’s shoulders, and each more sheepish than the other.

B.J. still scratches and strokes.

U.S.—But let me console you. You are not the only double-headed mutton-head in this “great and trimenjeous lan.” There are not a few more. And every time I come across them an awful strain is laid upon my buttons and my fingers. My buttons feel like flying off in a roar at seeing the two heads bumping each other; my fingers feel like taking hold of the two heads and aiding the bumping.

B.J. dodges and ducks his head thinking U.S. is going to aid the bumping.

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

Uploaded November 2007

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