

The People.

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DIALOGUE

UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN. {240}

By DANIEL DE LEON

BROTHER JONATHAN—Such nonsense as these Socialists do talk!

UNCLE SAM—Awful, isn't it?

B.J.—And what notions they have of the Government!

U.S.—Shocking, isn't it?

B.J.—Do you know what they are after?

U.S.—No; some frightfully bad thing, I suppose, to judge from the way your eyes are bulging out.

B.J.—They would have the Government take every one under the arm and start him in business!

U.S.—From what I have learned of their writings, that is not what they are after. But, now, let me understand where you stand. Suppose that what you say they want is what actually they do want. Now, let me understand you. Do you mean that the Government, as it now is, "takes no one under the arm to start him in business," and that that is the way things should be; or do you hold that the Government should "take under the arm and start in business" only some citizens, but should not extend similar aid to all alike?

B.J.—How can you talk that way? How can you imagine that I would favor such discrimination?

U.S.—Then, what do you favor?

B.J.—That the Government should have nothing to do with private business.

U.S.—And do you hold that that is the way things are run now?

B.J.—Exactly. Each man starts upon his own bottom, without Government aid.



UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN

U.S.—Do you read the papers?

B.J.—I do.

U.S.—Then you must be feeding on Lotus, because you forget what you read as fast as you read it.

B.J.—What have I read and forgotten?

U.S.—The numerous instances recorded in the papers of concerns that get their start from the Government in the shape of “appropriations.”

B.J.—Never! There are none such! Our Government is not a Socialist or paternal government! There are no such cases.

U.S.—No longer ago than to-day, this news comes from Washington: “D.O. Mills, Whitelaw Reid and Milholland have got an appropriation of \$165,000 for their Tubular Dispatch Co. This company proposes to carry the mails in cities through pneumatic tubes. The company was organized some time ago, but needed funds to be set in motion. This first appropriation is only a starter. The Congress Committee has already a proposition for an appropriation of \$250,000, and that is to be followed by one of \$1,500,000.” What of that?

B.J.—It seems to me I did read something of that sort.

U.S.—And just as soon as the Government “took these worthies under the arm and set them up in business,” did you notice what took place?

B.J.—Can’t say I did.

U.S.—Immediately they started to “do business”: they began selling stock of the corporation, and dining and wining and carousing. So there you are, together with your theory about the present conduct of the government, in the soupee.

B.J. looks perplexed.

U.S.—Now, the long and short of the story is this: The capitalist class which stuffs you with nonsense wants to hold control of the Government so that this may regularly “take that class under the arm and start it in business” at the expense of the working class; on the other hand, the working class, or the Socialists, want to put an end to a system of society that can breed so perverse a sort of “Government.” The capitalists fight for their hides in trying to keep up such sort of “Government,” and to do so need noodles like you whom they can stuff with lies about what Socialists want, and about what they

themselves are now doing. The Socialists are fighting for freedom and civilization to pull down such a monstrosity as the present system of “Government”; and (putting his mouth to B.J.’s ear) they are going to pull down that system and “Government” over the ears of the capitalist class. Get away from under!

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