

DIALOGUE

UNCLE SAM AND BROTHER JONATHAN. {351}

By DANIEL DE LEON

BROTHER JONATHAN—Oh, what a catastrophe that Tarrant fire explosion of last Monday was!

UNCLE SAM—Catastrophe is no name for it. And yet, ten to one, you will look in the wrong direction for redress.

B.J.—I really don't know in what direction to look for redress.

U.S.—Did you ever hear of factory laws?

B.J.—Why, yes! They must have been violated.

U.S.—Of what political complexion is the dominant party of the New York city?

B.J.—Democratic.

U.S.—Bryan-Democratic, not so?

B.J.—Yes.

U.S.—Could these factory laws be violated by the capitalists, and cause such a catastrophe to the working class, if the Democratic administration of New York city enforced the laws?

B.J.—Certainly not! Down with this criminally negligent Bryan-Democratic party.

U.S.—How you trot! Not so fast!

B.J.—Why not?

U.S.—Of what political complexion is the dominant party in the State administration?

B.J. (holds his breath a minute)—Why, it is Republican.



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U.S.—McKinley-Republican, not so?

B.J.—Yes.

U.S.—And could these factory laws be violated by the capitalists, and cause such a catastrophe to the working class, if the Republican administration of the State of New York enforced the law?

B.J.—I must admit, not!

U.S.—Which of the two parties is responsible?

B.J.—Which of the two? Why, both! They are equally guilty.

U.S.—Now, look at it from another side. Say that “Expansion” wins, in what way would it affect the Republican disregard for the welfare of the working class that causes such catastrophes as this Tarrant fire and explosion.

B.J.—In no way, that I can see!

U.S.—And suppose that “Anti-Expansion” carries the election, in what way will that prevent the recurrence of such catastrophes?

B.J.—Surely, in no way!

U.S.—Now, why, do you imagine, is this thus? Why do both the Democratic and the Republican administrations wink at laws that would protect the limbs and lives of workingmen, while they are alert to enforce everything gotten up in the benefit of the capitalist class? What is it that neither “Expansion” nor “Anti-Expansion,” the only “burning issues” of the campaign, will not affect such truly “burning issues” as the exposed condition of working people to be blown up and burnt up in factories? Why, do you imagine, is this thus?

B.J.—I’ll be blown if I can tell! It does seem strange!

U.S.—And yet it is as easy as rolling off a log. The Democratic and the Republican parties are adversaries only in appearance; at least, only in non-essentials. They are absolutely one in essentials. The essentials consist in the system of production. This system is built upon exploitation, the exploitation of the working class. The social system upon which both Democrats and Republicans root is the social system under which the workingman is an economic slave. He is there to be fleeced, no thought is to be taken of his life, he is stalled like cattle, and whenever the conveniences of his capitalist masters require, his own convenience must yield. This explains why the old parties fret over “Expansion” and “Anti-Expansion,” while the one thing that concerns

the overwhelming majority of the people, the welfare of the workers, is wholly ignored.

B.J.—Hang these deceivers.

U.S.—In the midst of the din raised by these deceivers and their decoy “Socialist” parties, is heard the clear ring of the Socialist Labor Party. It holds up unflinching the ONLY ISSUE. It calls attention to the fact that the barometer of freedom is the freedom of man to earn his living without having to ask any other for the privilege of doing so;—

B.J.—That’s right!

U.S.—That such a state of things will last until the working class comes into possession of the tools of production;—

B.J.—That’s right, too.

U.S.—And that the only way to come into the possession of the tool of production is for the working class to conquer the public powers, and legislate the Socialist Republic into force.

B.J.—That’s so.

U.S.—And to do that the workers must resist and resent all attempts to divide their vote. They must unite upon the only platform that labor can unite on,—the Socialist Labor Party platform, and vote straight the ticket headed Malloney and Remmel.

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