



DIALOGUE

UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN. {46-48}

By DANIEL DE LEON

BROTHER JONATHAN—Now we shall have a pure ballot; at last we shall have fair elections!

UNCLE SAM—I fear me you shout before you are out of the woods.

B.J.—Before I am out of the woods? Nay, nay, I am, you are, we all are entirely out of the woods. McKane and that whole pack of fraudulent election officers are cashiered. Henceforth the ballot-box will not be tampered with.

U.S.—You talk as tho' you thought these fellows were the sole corruptionists.

B.J.—So I do.

U.S.—You are off. The gang that sent them to jail is no better than they.

B.J.—Why then did they send them to jail, and work so industriously to get them there?

U.S.—Because McKane did not cheat on their side.

B.J.—And do you believe they will now cheat as hard, themselves?

U.S.—Every bit; only they, being more refined rascals, will do the trick less brutally. That is some check, I admit. But as far as the intent to cheat and defraud the voters is concerned, one set of capitalists is just as bad as the other.

B.J.—Do you really think so?

U.S.—I do. One set is as bad as the other.



UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN

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BROTHER JONATHAN—Governor Frederick T. Greenhalge of Massachusetts did nobly!

UNCLE SAM—Inasmuch as to which?

B.J.—He told the crowd that went to the State House: “The first duty of every citizen is obedience to the law.”

U.S.—That was just what the predecessor of his Queen said to the ancestors of the men who went 3 weeks ago to the State House, when the tea was dumped into Boston Harbor.

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BROTHER JONATHAN—Which do you think is the most commanding place or city in the United States?

UNCLE SAM—Its most central place or city.

B.J.—And what city would that be?

U.S.—The most central place or city in a country is that city or place from which its government radiates. Under the feudal and kindred social systems the city or place most strategically situated, that which was least accessible to the enemy and from which the enemy was most easily reached, became the “central” city, and seeing that in those days the political and the economic rulers were one and the same, such a strategic spot became also the seat of the Government—government radiated from there. Under the capitalist social system, especially in a country like the United States, where the stinkweed of Capitalism blossoms to its fullest extent, “government” branches off into its two component parts—the political and the economic. Every Socialist knows that, important and essential though the “political” branch is, under capitalism, that branch is only of incidental value; the branch that is of continuous value, that from which at all times “government” radiates, is the economic one; and that branch of government has its seat there where the economic interests of the capitalists center. In the United States, New York City is the spot where those interests center. For that reason it is no accident that the leading capitalist publications issue from New York; that all the capitalist parties have their national executive seat here; that the Socialist Labor Party, the party that alone does, can or will grapple with the monster of Capitalism, deliberately seated its

National Executive and its National Organ in this spot; and that, while this is so, the middle class party of Populism, with its middle class interests centering in the West, is the only one whose National Executive is located in the Mississippi Valley. From New York City the economic government, together with all the forces that that implies, truly radiates; it consequently is the country's central place.

B.J.—But is not St. Louis at least our “geographical” center?

U.S.—St. Louis?!?! How do you come to that?

B.J.—Isn't its location our “geographic” center?

U.S.—Why, Brother Jonathan, you must have stopped studying the geography of the country since 1867, when Alaska was annexed.

B.J.—By Jericho! Alaska is part of our territory!

U.S.—Now, then, if you draw a line from the easternmost cape (remember we are now talking “geography”), from the easternmost cape of the country in Maine to the westernmost cape of the country in Alaska, and divide that line in two by another line running due north and south, you will strike, not St. Louis by a long shot, but—

B.J.—I would strike San Francisco!

U.S.—Exactly. If you talk about a “geographic” center, San Francisco is your town.

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