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DIALOGUE

UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN. {253}

By DANIEL DE LEON

BROTHER JONATHAN (with exaltation)—These are really days worth living! Think of the noble attitude of our Government! Well may we be proud of it—

UNCLE SAM—Of it for its attitude in appointing as chief of the invading forces General Miles who invaded Chicago in '94, restored the compulsory labor statutes of Edward II., broke the backbone of the Pullman strike—

B.J.—You must always come out with some such sally. Can't you think of anybody or anything except in connection with Labor troubles? Never mind Miles and the Pullman strike in this affair that I am now talking about. I am now thinking of the noble attitude of our Government—

U.S.—Inasmuch?

B.J.—Inasmuch as, differently from all others, it is not bent upon thinking of itself alone, and the country alone; it rises above, it soars like the eagle above our own selfish concerns; it lets its eyes wander over the whole broad field of humanity; it takes in the whole of mankind; and like a noble hero of legendary lore it takes up the cause of the oppressed—

U.S. (struggles hard to repress an explosion of laughter which causes, nevertheless, some broken sounds to break forth.)

B.J.—Did you say anything?

U.S.—No; not yet; go ahead; I'm listening.



UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN

B.J.—Well, as I am saying, our Government, moved, no longer by narrow exclusion sentiments, now is animated by a broad humanitarian spirit. Like the heroes we read about in mythology, wherever it sees oppression, it rushes to the rescue. Oh, that is fine!

U.S.—Man, what are you talking about? You talk and look as tho' you had just come from a Prohibition convention, and the fumes of surreptitious whiskey were yet hovering over your intellect.

B.J. (pompously)—I'm talking of what I am talking. I'm talking of what I see, and know; and what everybody else sees and knows. I am talking of the conduct of our Government towards the oppressed Cubeeans—

U.S.—The what?

B.J.—The oppressed Cubeeans.

U.S.—Call them Cubans, man; you might at least get their name right, even if you get everything else mixed up.

B.J.—Let it be Cubans! Aren't they oppressed; ground down; tyrannized; martyred;—

U.S.—Weylerized; Smitherized; Queen-Regentized—

B.J.—You may joke about it but it IS so. Well, our noble Government does not purpose to let humanity suffer any longer. For a long time we had to tolerate that sort of thing because we did not yet have our growth; but now we have it; and now we shall use our growth, and our strength, and our might. Our Government now rushes to Cuba to redress wrong, alleviate suffering, establish freedom. Henceforth, wherever a wrong exists—

U.S.—That noble capitalist Government you are boasting of will rush to its redress?

B.J.—Yes. And wherever suffering is—

U.S.—That noble capitalist Government will rush to its alleviation?

B.J.—Yes. And wherever freedom is menaced—

U.S.—That same noble Government will rush to its aid?

B.J.—Exactly.

U.S.—Even uninvited, I suppose?

B.J.—No invitation needed. The existence of wrong, of suffering, of slavery is in itself an ample invitation. If invited, however, this noble Government will rush to the

rescue all the quicker.

U.S.—Well, now, I'm puzzled. I read that the Government is just now concerned about Cuba only, and yet it has a special invitation from famishing and tyrannized Ireland to intervene in its aid. On the 8th instant, a mass meeting of Irish people, held in County Mayo, one of the famine-stricken districts, denounced the brutality of the English Police and English rule; and it appealed to the President of the United States to intervene in behalf of the Irish people, secure autonomy to the island and bring food to its people as he claims he is trying to do to the Cuban reconcentrados. This happened a week ago. I've not yet heard that that "noble Government" you were speaking about responded to the call, or took any notice of it. Have you?

B.J.—I can't say I did.

U.S.—And why is that thus?

B.J.—Well—

U.S.—Do you know?

B.J.—Well—

U.S.—I'll tell you. All this pretence of "flying to Cuba to redress wrong, alleviate suffering, establish freedom" is stuff for the marines. The British Grandees who profit by Irish oppression own more wealth in America than they do in England, consequently have everything to say in what direction this present Government at Washington shall "fly to redress." Mark my word, Ireland's appeal will remain unheeded. Ireland will never be aided until the Socialist Labor Party will hold the reins of Government. In other words, you have been stuffed like a goose upon the motives of this capitalist Government's acts.

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

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