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DIALOGUE

UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN. {151}

By DANIEL DE LEON

BROTHER JONATHAN—I've got you Socialists at last!

UNCLE SAM—You might have got us at first, perhaps—perhaps—if you had tried it sooner.

B.J.—No joking, I have got ye.

U.S.—How?

B.J.—I'll tell ye. And I'll also tell ye how at one fell swoop I'm going to get even with you. You have been calling me all manner of names—"noodle," "lunkead"—

U.S.—"Donkey"—

B.J.—Yes, "donkey" too, and heaven only knows what else. Now I'm going to soak all that back to ye.

U.S.—I'm ready. If you are right I'll cry, "Hold!"

B.J.—Didn't you say the other day at a meeting that in the Indian communities property was held in common?

U.S.—I did.

B.J.—And didn't you say that Socialism aimed at the same thing?

U.S.—I did, in so far as the land and the tools of production are concerned.

B.J.—Even so. Common property in tools of production and land.

U.S. (with a wink)—Yep!

B.J.—And there's where I got you. You want to bring us back to the condition of the Indian. Your Socialism is nothing but reaction, barbarism, savagery, death to civilization, and you are a "noodle," a—



UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN

U.S.—Was that your grind?

B.J.—Yes. Get out of it, if you can!

U.S.—According to your reasoning a change that adopts anything that once was and ceased to be is reaction and contrary to civilization; is that it?

B.J.—Yes; and seeing that the Indian—

U.S.—Never mind the Indian just now; stick to my line of argument. To-day, under capitalism, we have the individual system of ownership of the tool; haven't we?

B.J.—Exactly.

U.S.—And is Your Noodleship aware of the fact that that was exactly the system of ownership that prevailed under SAVAGERY, that is to say, a stage of human progress that PRECEDED that of the Indian?

B.J.—Wh-wh-what!

U.S.—Yes, sir. It would follow, from your way of reasoning, that Capitalism, being with its system of private ownership akin to savagery, is not “civilization,” and that, even if it were true, which it is not, that Socialism walked back to the status of the Indian, Socialism would be progress compared with Capitalism, which stands on the savage plane, the pre-Indian plane, of private ownership. Eh?! (Poking B.J. in the ribs.)

B.J. takes out a square yard of handkerchief, takes off his hat, mops the perspiration off his head and face, and wrings out the water, which runs off in a stream.

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

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