

The People.

VOL. VIII, NO. 6.

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, MAY 8, 1898.

PRICE 3 CENTS.

DIALOGUE

UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN. {252}

By DANIEL DE LEON

BROTHER JONATHAN (with a face wreathed in smiles)—Well, at last we are going too see good times!

UNCLE SAM—’Tis about time we did. But I fear you are no better a prophet now, than you were the night of the election of your “Advance Agent of Prosperity.” You said the same thing then.

B.J.—I missed it then; but this war, a good{,} strong, vigorous—

U.S.—bloody—

B.J.—Yes, bloody, too, if you like, war is just what we needed.

U.S.—You puzzle me, man. You don’t look like a rowdy, nor yet like a beast of prey. I have known you long, and, during that time, I never yet found you to be cruel.

B.J.—Well, really, I don’t think I am.

U.S.—And, what is more, I don’t think you are; well then, that a man who is not cruel should revel in a misfortune—

B.J.—But I don’t revel in the misfortune. I regret that, I do really. What I revel in is the good times it will bring on. There will be suffering, and death, and all that, but out of that bath of blood we shall—

U.S.—We? You mean the survivors, and then only those of the survivors who have not been thrown into mourning for a father, a son, a husband, a brother, a friend—

B.J.—Well, yes. But these survivors will be numerous enough, and they will then flourish in the good times, while now they languish in bad times. Just think of the



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amount of money that a war sets in circulation, and just think of the higher wages that the workers will get when their numbers have become fewer through the accidents of war!

U.S.—Horrible! Even if it were so, what a commentary on a social system that can not keep itself agoing without periodical massacres! What a commentary on the morality of such a civilization that, calling itself Christian, has for its basic necessity the perpetuation of hatred between nation and nation!

B.J.—But don't you see?—

U.S.—No, I don't. But worse yet, you are wholly wrong. Not if a million workers were killed off would that do any good now: there are now more than double the number out of work. And, again, that increased expenditure of money will now have for its only effect to throw more of it into already bursting purses. No, no; from the sufferings of the war we shall drop into still greater misery. Mark my word! The disease of Capitalism has become too desperate to be relieved by even such methods. Shame, Jonathan, upon your social system, that it not only makes you ignorant, but makes massacre acceptable to one otherwise not a fiend!

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

Uploaded February 2008

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