

The People.

VOL. VI, NO. 50.

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, MARCH 14, 1897.

PRICE 3 CENTS.

DIALOGUE

UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN. {193}

By DANIEL DE LEON

BROTHER JONATHAN—There are several questions I'd like to ask you about Socialism and the Socialist Labor party.

UNCLE SAM—Give us the first.

B.J.—How will you remove the prejudice there is to-day against the Socialist Labor party?

U.S.—There is no prejudice to remove.

B.J.—There isn't? Why, lots of it; I could mention to you a dozen or more men who are full of prejudice against it.

U.S.—Did you ever read Artemus Ward's account of his wife's prejudice against getting up on cold mornings and building the fire?

B.J.—I don't call that a prejudice.

U.S.—What do you call it?

B.J.—I call that a dislike for a certain thing.

U.S.—Ditto, ditto with the alleged "prejudice" of some people against the Socialist Labor party.

B.J.—But—

U.S.—These people don't entertain a prejudice against the S.L.P. any more than Artemus Ward's Betsy Jane had a prejudice against getting up first and warming the house. The groundwork of "prejudice" is a mistaken belief. She had no mistaken belief in the matter, she knew exactly what she meant, and did not want it. These people, who, you say, have a prejudice against the S.L.P., entertain no mistaken notions about the party; they know just what it stands for; and they, consistently enough, don't want it.



UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN

B.J.—Then they are right?

U.S.—From their standpoint, yes. I'll tell you who they are. One set consists of the moral and intellectual flotsam and jetsam of society: a lot of crooks and lightweights full of conceit; their aim is to fish in troubled waters, to “get there” at the expense and sacrifice of everything. These worthies have for the S.L.P. the “prejudice” of the mouse for the cat. They know that they are thoroughly known. Some have been in the party before, and have been kicked out; others know they would have to join the kickees if they did get in. To all of them the S.L.P. is a nuisance, and I can't blame them.

B.J.—But there are—

U.S.—Another set consists of the “pure and simple” labor fakirs. So long as the S.L.P., as yet too weak to assert itself, used to play the despicably poltroon role of a “complaisant husband,” it was dearly loved by them, and they had a free field for their iniquitous conduct against the rank and file. Now that's changed. The S.L.P. has drawn the sword against all plunderers of the working class. These labor fakirs have felt our blows. They have no prejudice against us, they hate us, they know that the S.L.P. has rung the knell of their doom.

B.J.—Yes; but there are people who fall under neither of these categories and who oppose the S.L.P.

U.S.—All others oppose the S.L.P. honestly—

B.J.—Well, what will you do to gain their support?

U.S.—They are divisible into two classes: Capitalists and such whose interests are dead set against us, and bona fide workers, whose interests are with us, and don't yet see it—

B.J.—And how will you go about it to make them see their interests?

U.S.—By carrying on the warfare against capitalist rascality and all its outposts with ever increasing relentlessness. Only such a course will make us understood by the class that belongs to us. Only that will bring victory. The “prejudices” against us are a reliable barometer of our progress.

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

Uploaded January 2008

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