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DIALOGUE

UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN. {59–61}

By DANIEL DE LEON

BROTHER JONATHAN—I see this quaint little item in the *Minneapolis Union*: “A remarkable labor-saving invention is now in operation in Cleveland. It is known as the Lindsley Traction Unloading Machine. With six men it can unload 100 cars of coal or iron ore per day, thereby displacing over 100 men. Each machine is able to do as much work as 125 men formerly did. Boys, do you see any lesson in that foregoing? Can’t you see that collective ownership of the machines is what you want? Can’t you see that under our present system that all labor-saving



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machinery only saves labor for the owner of the machine; and that those who are permitted to operate the machines, work harder than before? Collective ownership of all private monopolies, is the only solution of the problem of labor!”

UNCLE SAM—Why, this is as true as steel; and sound as an apple. Why do you call it “quaint?”

B.J.—I admit its soundness. Improved machinery held by private hands displaces labor, and there is no solution to the labor movement other than collective ownership of the machinery of production.

U.S.—Why, then, “quaint?”

B.J.—Because this very paper is talking populism all the time, and populism—

U.S.—O, I catch your drift. Your surprise arises from the belief that people who talk populism uphold populism.

B.J.—Don't they?

U.S.—Many surely do; but others, and not a few, have graduated beyond that; what these mean by populism is a very different thing; they will soon realize that they mean Socialism; and then they will call the thing by its true name.

B.J.—Well, that explains it. But it is to be hoped they may soon drop a false name and take up the right.

U.S.—No doubt they will. The Socialist tidal wave is forming. Get ready for it.

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BROTHER JONATHAN—I feel like kicking that Mayor Gilroy into kingdom come.

UNCLE SAM—Now, keep cool; what is the matter?

B.J.—Why, the fellow has the cheek of a cross between Grover Cleveland and McKinley.

U.S.—I would not waste my kicks on him for that; I would bestow them on Grover and Mac.

B.J.—You don't seem to know what the fellow has said—

U.S.—He is so blatant and insignificant a political puppet that I can't say I mind much, or care to know what he says.

B.J.—But you should know.

U.S.—Let us have it.

B.J.—Here it is; he condemns a certain proposition as “smacking of Socialism;” the insolence—

U.S.—Why, Brother Jonathan, if that is all he said, I can't blame him, nay I must praise him. Would you have an Anarchist praise Socialism?

B.J.—No, indeed!

U.S.—So say I; Socialism is too great, too clean a thing to be soiled by the breath of praise of Anarchists; we must encourage them to denounce it; the more they do, the clearer the contrast between us and them. This Gilroy is an Anarchist; which capitalist politician is not? He is now violating laws he swore to uphold. By all means let him bring out clearly the fact that there is no Socialism in him.

B.J.—By Jericho, guess you are right again.

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BROTHER JONATHAN—This Milholland Republican enrollment is making great headway.

UNCLE SAM—And in no time will be making great tail way.

B.J.—Do you really think so?

U.S.—Certainly. It is a scheme to rope in the labor vote for the benefit of thumb-screw protection. Some workingmen, professionals, think they will get some pie by it. Well, perhaps they will, for a little while. But the bulk of the workingmen voters won't be bunco-steered. Mind my words, if they are not yet ready to join the Socialist Labor Party on next election day, the workingmen will in large numbers stay at home; but a goodly number will come over next November, and they will beat down the path for the others to follow. The working class is coming over to Socialism.

B.J.—Then these Milholland workingmen are frauds?

U.S.—There are dupes among them; but those who are not dupes are frauds.

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

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