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DIALOGUE

UNCLE SAM AND BROTHER JONATHAN. {374}

By DANIEL DE LEON

BROTHER JONATHAN—I must say the Socialist Labor Party is a very admirable organization.

UNCLE SAM—It does you credit to say so.

B.J.—And that the S.L.P. men are untiring, enthusiastic, self-sacrificing—

U.S.—And sound as a die—

B.J.—Yes, and sound as a die, too, cannot be denied.

U.S.—So much the better for you that you realize that.

B.J.—And that the work of education—

U.S.—And organization—

B.J.—Yes, of organization, too, that they are doing is invaluable; I am ready to admit it entitles them to greatest respect and admiration.

U.S.—Jonathan, you are exceptionally clearheaded, to-day. For once, I incline to the belief that there is “intellect into you.”

B.J.—For all these reasons I think it is a pity that they carry their principles to a point that is excessive, so excessive that they make themselves ridiculous, even put themselves in the light of insinuating what is not true,—

U.S.—Make it short! What are you driving at?

B.J.—I’ll tell you. The S.L.P. has been making a great noise about the circumstance that a Social Democratic candidate for Justice of the Peace was endorsed, in last week’s municipal election in West Hoboken by the old capitalist parties and by the “Citizens” party, which I admit is also capitalist. How can a man



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help it if others choose to endorse him?

U.S.—Well, Jonathan, I must right here take back all the compliments I have just been bestowing on your intellect. You are the same old stuffed goose.

B.J. (angrily)—Could you prevent being endorsed by other people?

U.S.—The first stuffing you are stuffed with is as to this “endorsing.” The S.L.P. has said not a word about “endorsing.” What it has branded that Social Democratic candidate and his party for allowing, is the appearance of his name on the official ballots of the Republican, of the Democratic and of the Citizens’ party.

B.J.—What is the difference?

U.S.—Is there any law that can compel a man to take a certain public office?

B.J.—No.

U.S.—That being so, no man is compelled to allow his name to appear on an official ballot. Any man whose name does so appear has the right to order it taken off; if he does not so order, it means that he is willing to run on that ticket. One thing is to be “endorsed.” That no one can prevent; a simple repudiation is all that one can do in such a case. Another thing, however, is to allow your name to appear on an official ballot. He who does that allows a thing to be done that he can prevent. If he don’t prevent it, he endorses the platform of that party. And that’s what that Social Democrat did and his party allowed him to do in West Hoboken. He pretended to represent the working class, and yet stood upon the blood-stained platforms of the three capitalist parties!

B.J.—But—

U.S.—No “buts;” keep your “buts” for when you are among the Kangaroo noodles. No “buts” until you answer “yes” or “no” to the question: “Is endorsement the same as standing on the official ballot of a party?”

B.J.—No; it is not the same. But—

U.S.—Now, you may go ahead with your “but.”

B.J.—Don’t you know that that candidate of the Social Democracy issued a handbill saying he was the candidate of the Social Democracy only?

U.S.—I know that. And that makes his case all the more rotten. Such conduct fits in exactly with the S.L.P. theory that the capitalists use such people and parties for decoy ducks. If the man said he was the candidate of parties that are publicly

known to be capitalist, then he or his party could not do the dirty work of decoy. By claiming that he was the candidate of the Social Democracy, which he represented as a workingman's party, and yet being in full sympathy with the capitalist Labor-fleecers by allowing his name to stand on their official ballots,—by doing that he can serve as the decoy that he is and that this whole affair brands both him and his Kangaroo set with being.

B.J.—Well, you men are right.

U.S.—The S.L.P. is right every time. And you should not need my help to escape being gulled. The West Hoboken episode is not the only one. It is but a link in the corrupt Kangaroo chain of which armory-building, voting franchises for capitalists, and taking political jobs and moneys from capitalists and their political henchmen, are so many other links.

B.J. scratches his head.

U.S.—Kangarooism is an outpost of Capitalism. Crack its skull wide open.

B.J.—It should be cracked. I'll help!

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