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EDITORIAL

WATCH 'EM!

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE news from the headquarters of the United Mine Workers in Pennsylvania is hair-raising. No less than 20,000 miners, "each a voter" runs the tale, are to be called upon to march to Harrisburg, and Pat Dolan, President of District No. 1, is among those to issue the call. Mr. Dolan, together with his fellow "callers," is a bright particular star in the dark firmament that is made up of the theory: "No politics in Unions; the economic organization is all-sufficient for the workingmen." In view thereof the question comes, What can the march be for? Do the Dolans propose to treat the rank and file to an excursion to Harrisburg? What is up? The answer is enough to set one's hair on end. The march to Harrisburg is to exercise pressure upon the politicians in favor of certain bills in which the miners are interested. It is said that when some people are about to die, they get a sudden liking for things they never liked before. The Dolans, the preachers of "no politics in unions," suddenly proposing a 20,000 tramp to the State Legislature?! Can it be that these gentlemen are about to die? No; just the reverse.

The Labor Lieutenants of the capitalist class are there for the express purpose of running into the ground every revolutionary and class-conscious throb of the working class. A first thing to do is to steer the workers from striking at the ballot box, where they are all-powerful and where they could knock out their fleecers from the public power needed to fleece the workers, and to steer them into striking at the mines and shops where the fleecers are all-powerful, and where the fleeced can be knocked down. But this thing is not quite enough. Times come when not the most brutal of the Labor Lieutenants of capital, when not even the Dolans can withstand the force of the class-conscious instinct of the workers that these fakirs seek to repress. At such times the instinct that the wages question is essentially a political question asserts itself powerfully among the rank and file: they demand a certain legislation: they insist upon it. What to do then?

The second thing to do turns up. It is to run that instinct into the ground. If left to itself, like water finding its level, the instinct would direct the rank and file to

strike at the ballot box; once on that path, it would be certain that the miners would join the Socialist Labor Party and forthwith mop the floor with the combined Democratic and Republican parties of their fleecers. At this second stage that consummation is devoutly to be prevented by the fakirs. And how do they go about it? Watch the Dolans.

A march of 10,000 men to Harrisburg would mean, in the first place, an expenditure of \$70,000. One-half, one-quarter that amount of money applied to proper agitation and education in Pennsylvania would, within two years, wrench the public powers of the state from the political lackeys of the capitalist class and place courts, militias, police, executive and legislative branches,—all in the hands of the working class of the Keystone State. That, of course, must not be,—if the Dolans can prevent it.

Secondly, a march of the 20,000 would mean the exposure of the men to be shut down in a lump. Half that many miners were meeting all over in their various localities for the manly and intelligent purpose of training their fellow wage workers in independent and class-conscious political action, would not only secure the safety of the men, but would inspire them with that moral courage and dignity that renders people unconquerable. That, of course, must not be. Accordingly, the Dolans are seeking to bring about such an action as will certainly expose the miners to be scattered like sheep by the militia, the survivors returning home humiliated, disheartened, demoralized, unfit to continue the struggle.

Look at 'em! The Labor Lieutenant Dolans are receiving and carrying on orders from their Captains, the mine Barons.

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