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EDITORIAL

HAS BELL CHANGED HIS JOB?

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE Indianapolis, Ind., *News* comes out with a lurid editorial against the Western Federation of Miners. It is the wildest, the most reckless of any that has yet run into this office. The paper declares that “many of the crimes committed by the Western Federation of Miners have been avowed by leaders of the organization and avowed with pride.” The rest of the article is of the stamp of that sentence. Its tenor suggests the question, Has the redoubtable “Gen.” Sherman Bell been engaged by the *News* as Editor? The article forcibly reminds one of the delirium tremens rhapsodies of the “Gen.” at the time that he was running the State of Colorado in 1904.

On June 11, 1904, five days after the Independence, Colo., explosion, the “Gen.” announced to an enraptured gathering of members of the Mine Owners’ Association, and the capitalist press of the land echoed the announcement far and wide:

“I have indisputable evidence in my possession which will lead to the conviction of a number of union men for the murder of the non-union miners who were killed in the Independence depot explosion. We have between thirty-five and forty of them in the bull pen who will swing for this crime. We are only awaiting to capture two or three more men before we will tell what our evidence is.”

Needless to say that not a single conviction resulted, “notwithstanding the fact,” as the *Miners’ Magazine* justly states, “the official machinery of the State was in the hands of the Mine Owners’ Association and the corporations of Colorado.” Moreover, as “Chapter XX” proved, the boosters over crime are the Mine Owners’ Association members.

The “Gen.” was in one of his delirium tremens fits—that worst sort of delirium tremens that comes from drinking in of imaginary fumes of blood. The friends of the

“Gen.”—even such a reptile has his friends—declare he is not responsible. That must be the case with the Editor of the Indianapolis *News*. A person must be irresponsibly drunk—whether with whiskey or the imaginary fumes of blood—to utter such monstrous calumnies and so recklessly to lie.

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

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