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EDITORIAL

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By DANIEL DE LEON

ON August 18, 1903, Clayton C. Dorsey, a member of the firm of Teller & Dorsey, Denver attorneys and lobbyists for railroads, mining companies, etc., located in the West, wrote a letter to his dear father S.W. Dorsey, then recuperating in Los Angeles from the arduous toil of doing nothing. In the course of that letter, after informing Papa Dorsey that “another strike is on in Cripple Creek”, Son Dorsey drops the following astonishing statement:

“Little instances of this kind serve to attract the attention of the country to Colorado and ARE, OF COURSE GREATLY BENEFICIAL TO THE MINING INDUSTRY OF THIS STATE.”

This off-hand statement, made by a son to his father, both of whom are up to the eyebrows in the secrets of the large Western capitalists, certainly casts a side-light upon the recent performances of the Governors of Colorado and Idaho in the matter of the felonious conspiracy the two have gone into to assassinate Moyer and Haywood.

The capitalist is such a paragon of individualism that he simply can not stand upon his own legs. For him to keep his piratical craft afloat and adoring, raking in plentiful wealth by making the Working Class walk the plank, he needs money, plenty of money, more money. He must interest bankers and investors. He must lure them, generally from a great distance. The luring is often done through flaming prospectuses, and generally through highly paid newspaper write-ups. Clayton C. Dorsey reveals another means of luring. It is the egging on of strikes. But strikes, in and of themselves, are more likely to prove deterrents than lures. Can it be that the corporation lawyer Clayton C. Dorsey was mistaken in his theory concerning the usefulness of strikes to his clients? The savagery that characterized the conduct of “Gen.” Sherman Bell in the late Colorado miners’ strike, capped by the present

high-handed joint proceedings of the Governors of Colorado and Idaho, answer the question by supplementing it. What lawyer Dorsey meant to say in full, and stated only in part was that “strikes serve to attract attention to Colorado, and can be made greatly beneficial by the application of such ruthless measures against the workingmen that the confidence of investors will be gained.” Thus the Dorsey plan is to advertise the State to investors by a series of Labor massacres and other lawless procedures against workingmen. Capital is thereby expected to feel the cockles of its heart warm up, and flow to Colorado as a safe place.

This theory does not run counter to the one that the rifle-diet-to-workingmen *Evening Post* incautiously betrayed when, at the head of the list of crimes, which it charges the Western Federation of Miners with, it placed the fact that the W.F. of M. had “become so strong . . . FINALLY TO STAND ALONE WHENEVER THE SUPPORT OF MR. MITCHELL’S UNITED MINE WORKERS OR MR. GOMPERS’S AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR HAS BEEN WITHDRAWN”, On the contrary, the two, the Denver Dorsey theory and the New York *Evening Post* theory, square admirably with each other. The point is to make Capital feel safe. Two things are prerequisite to capitalist safety:—

One is the presence of a dumb driven Working Class, led to slaughter by a bell-wether. The Gompers-Mitchell bell-wether has played out: the *Evening Post* tearfully makes the admission. Consequently, the men held responsible for the intellectual emancipation of the workingmen must be assassinated, even if it take a “thirty-third degree” performance to give a color of justice to the misdeed;

The other is the certainty that no such little things as the Constitution will lame the arm of the capitalist government, if at any time the workingman rears and interferes with the peaceful flow of dividends into the pockets of the Schiff-Depew-Hyde-Alexander class. The certainty that at such times, “Gen.” Sherman Bell’s motto “To hell with the Constitution!” and obedient to which he acted, will be the device of the political lackeys of the capitalist class, unrestrained by any law of God or man.

The *Evening Post*’s admission was made in its issue of the 24th of last February. The Dorsey admission will be found on page 49 of the pamphlet *Behind*

the Scenes,¹ which contains a collection of letters, most of them photographically reproduced, in which, from Colorado Governors, and Judges, and United States Senators, down to small fry politicians, these worthies are grouped around the law firm of Teller & Dorsey at their favorite occupation of law-breaking—in that particular instance soliciting and receiving railroad passes for services done and to be done.

Page 49 is a good beacon by which the Working Class—“finally able to stand alone” even when “the support of Mr. Mitchell’s United Mine Workers or Mr. Gompers’s American Federation of Labor has been withdrawn” at the command of the Mitchell-Gompers labor-lieutenants of the capitalist class—will be able to understand the present Colorado-Idaho phenomenon, and by which they will be able to pick their way to their emancipation.

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

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¹ [To be uploaded at a later date.—R.B.]