

REPORT

OF

JOHN M. O'NEILL

Editor of the Miners' Magazine

To the Officers and Delegates of the Fifteenth
Annual Convention of the Western
Federation of Miners

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To the Officers and Delegates of the Fifteenth Annual Convention of the Western Federation of Miners:

As the reports of the Acting President, Secretary-Treasurer and members of the Executive Board will be somewhat lengthy, and will naturally take up a great deal of the time of the convention, I shall be as brief as possible in submitting a condensed report, which I trust will cover the ground as fully as though I had exhausted the English language by indulging in minute details.

The Miners' Magazine, under the supervision of your editor, has adhered strictly to the policy as advocated in conventions for the past several years. The editor has recognized the fact, that the Miners' Magazine was, and is, the official organ of the Western Federation of Miners, and is the sole property of that organization, and its mission is to serve faithfully the interests of the membership of the Western Federation of Miners.

The editor feels, and believes, that as the welfare of the Western Federation of Miners is advanced and promoted, the welfare of organized labor in general, is benefited by such advancement and promotion. In other words, as unity, or solidarity, is brought about in the Western Federation of Miners, such unity or solidarity must have the effect of strengthening and making more powerful, the labor movement throughout the country.

The Miners' Magazine has followed the same fearless course of years past, and has only recognized the interest of that class whose labor creates the wealth of the world.

The Miners' Magazine has not pandered to any commercial interests in order to secure advertising patronage. The so-called labor journal that caters to the business element, in order to bring revenue to its coffers, ceases to be a labor journal, and ceases to be loyal to the class whom it pretends to serve. The labor journal that pays tribute, or lauds exploiters in the commercial world, may be successful in accumulating a bank account through advertising patronage, but such a journal in truckling to the class that squeeze dividends from labor must commit treason to the tolling millions, who bear the yoke of wage slavery.

A labor journal, whose editorial columns appeal to the business element in such a manner that it can command patronage, becomes worthless in serving the interests of the working class.

The Miners' Magazine has but little advertising, owing to the fact, that the official organ is as aggressive as the organization which it represents. All the power of corporations and commercial combinations, have been utilized to destroy the Western Federation of Min-

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ers, and the same power has been exercised in endeavoring to crush the organ that speaks for, and defends the character of the Federation.

The revenue of the Miners' Magazine for the past year from all sources, has been \$4,782.37, and the expenditures have been \$9,741.66—leaving a deficit of \$4,959.29.

The revenue for the year before from all sources, was \$3,404.65, and the expenditures were \$8,928.04, leaving a deficit of \$5,524.39.

The increase in revenue of the Miners' Magazine for this year, exceeds last year by \$1,387.72, but the increased cost of issuing the magazine for the past year, has exceeded the cost of the year before by \$813.62, which leaves a net increase of but \$574.10 above the former year.

The increase in the cost of issuing the Magazine, is due to the fact, that the Western Newspaper Union, where the Magazine is published has raised prices. During the month of May the postal authorities gave notice of an increase in the cost of postage on all magazines entering the Dominion of Canada. This increase in postage on each magazine amounts to .52 cents per year, which leaves but 48 cents in payment of the magazine for each subscriber who lives in Canada.

During the early part of the month of January your editor received an invitation to address a Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone mass meeting that was advertised to be held in the Grand Central Palace in New York. After consultation with officers at headquarters, I accepted the invitation, and it was deemed advisable that while I was in the East I should address a number of mass meetings in the large cities, in order that the laboring people might be aroused to the infamy of a conspiracy that snatched men from their homes in the darkness of night, and spirited them away to a prison in another state. I visited New York, Schnectady, Philadelphia, Boston, Pittsburg, New Castle, Chicago, Springfield, and Milwaukee. I likewise addressed mass meetings in Butte, Anaconda, and Great Falls, Montana.

I was received with every courtesy in every city which I visited, and the generous responses that have come from all parts of the country, demonstrate that organized labor is not asleep, while capitalism conspires to murder under forms of law.

I desire to mention particularly the United Mine Workers of Illinois, whose delegates in Annual Convention I addressed, and who at the close of my address, assured me that the United Mine Workers of Illinois would prove their loyalty to the Western Federation of Miners. The appropriation of \$5,000 for the defense fund by a unanimous vote of the delegates in that convention speaks more eloquently than words, of the fraternity of the coal miners of Illinois for the Western Federation of Miners.

During the past year the honor of the editor of the Miners' Magazine has been questioned by a journal that is published in New York.

A man's honor should be considered the most priceless treasure in his keeping, and the man who will not defend his honor from assassination is unworthy of the respect of his fellow men.

Nearly a year ago the editor of the Miners' Magazine was charged with holding a secret conference with Victor Berger, James Kirwan and Chas. O. Sherman in the city of Denver. An affidavit was published in the New York Daily People (bearing the name of one Lillian Forberg) to the effect, that Victor Berger had come all the way from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and while the Fourteenth Annual Convention of the Western Federation of Miners was in session, this Victor Berger held a conference with O'Neill, Kirwan and Sherman, in which conference, Berger agreed to have the Socialist party endorse the Industrial Workers of the World, providing, that O'Neill, Kirwan and Sherman would use their influence in having the DeLeonites deported from the Second Annual Convention of the I. W. W.

The truth of this affidavit was vouched for in the editorial columns of the New York Daily People. The editor of the Miners' Magazine through the columns of the official organ, offered to place \$500 in any bank in the city of Denver, payable to the National Secretary of the Socialist Labor party, whenever any evidence was produced to show that Berger had visited Denver, or that the editor of the Miners' Magazine had met Berger at any time, or place, during his life.

The editor of the Miners' Magazine has the \$500 still in his possession, as no one who charged him with being in such a conference seemed to manifest the slightest disposition to furnish the proofs and capture the money.

In a few months afterwards, this same New York Daily People, admitted that Berger was not the man that came to Denver, but that Barney Berlyn of Chicago, was the gentleman who had held the conference with O'Neill, Kirwan and Sherman. As Barney Berlyn did not come to Denver until after the adjournment of the Second Annual Convention of the Industrial Workers of the World, I am at a loss to know, how Berlyn can be held responsible for any scheme, that had for its object, the expulsion of the DeLeon element from the convention, when said convention had adjourned before Berlyn had placed his pedal extremities on the streets of the "Queen City of the Plains." As Berlyn did not arrive in Denver until October, and as Sherman was not in Denver at that time, I am at a loss to know how Berlyn could have held a conference with Sherman. Your editor brands the charge as an infamous and malicious falsehood, and insists that this convention shall probe this matter clean to the marrow, and place the falsehood at the door of the party whose debauched brain gave it birth.

The editor of the Miners' Magazine has again been charged by the same element with being in league with the conspirators that are responsible for the kidnapping and imprisonment of Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone. This is a serious charge, and must not be passed over or swept aside, without the fullest inquiry and investigation. As a member of the Western Federation of Miners, I demand that this convention shall turn on the searchlight. DeLeon has made the charge, and as this jawsmith has apostles of his faith in this convention, it is only reasonable to presume, that the man who makes this infamous accusation, has placed in the custody of his disciples, the necessary

evidence to convict the editor of the Miners' Magazine. If he has failed to furnish the proofs to the men in this convention who believe in the honesty of DeLeon, then I demand that they shall immediately communicate with him, and tell this slimy serpent, that O'Neill has deposited in the hands of the Secretary-Treasurer of the Western Federation of Miners, the sum of \$500 as a reward to be paid to DeLeon, in payment of the evidence that proves the treason of the editor of the Miners' Magazine.

It is up to the defenders of DeLeon to get busy and capture this money in order that the veteran in the work of character assassination may be able to annex this \$500 to the "Moving Fund" of the New York Daily People. If he fails to make good his charge, and I challenge him to do so, then I demand that the convention shall brand DeLeon as a liar and unworthy of the respect and confidence of honest men.

Again, I am charged by the same element with attending a Mine Owners' banquet in the city of Springfield, Illinois, while I was there to address the delegates of the United Mine Workers. This is another falsehood and I have letters in my possession which brand the slanderer as an infamous liar.

Because the editor of the Miners' Magazine has been able to discover the treachery and duplicity of a certain element, that has hooked on to the labor movement, he has been selected as a target for calumination, and even members of the Western Federation of Miners have been swept off their feet by the fanaticism of mouth-revolutionists who are now planning methods by which the Western Federation of Miners may be annexed to the S. L. P. and made a pasture upon which hungry warriors may appease their ravenous appetites.

In the document which emanated from Jerome Miners' Union, the plot is unmasked, when that local union goes on record with a declaration opposing departmental autonomy. If there is to be no autonomy conceded to an industrial department by the Industrial Workers of the World, then will the delegate from Jerome Miners' Union tell us why the necessity exists for a Mining Department?

When a member of the Western Federation of Miners and a delegate to this convention, attempts to deny the Western Federation of Miners the autonomy that is due to it, as an industrial department, then I can arrive at no other conclusion but that his object is to destroy it as an industrial department, and attach the local unions of the Federation direct to the I. W. W. I am opposed to the Western Federation of Miners surrendering its autonomy to the I. W. W. child, that is now in the hospital, battered and scarred from dissension and disruption.

The McCabe Miners' Union of McCabe, Arizona, has charged your editor with "incompetency," with being "well fed," and with being a "mercenary parasite."

It is somewhat singular, that this local union has kept this information locked in its breast for five long years, without disclosing until a few weeks ago the frailties and imperfections of the editor.

The editorial work upon the Magazine will speak for itself, and if it is unsatisfactory, the delegates in this convention have the power in their own hands to select an editor, whose literary genius will meet with the sanction and approval of the critics, who have only recently discovered the "incompetency" of the editor.

We do not hesitate in declaring, that the statements contained in the communication from McCabe Miners' Union have not been made in good faith. Had the editor worshipped at the shrine of the New York revolutionist, and permitted every S. L. P. slanderer to use the Magazine as a swill barrel into which verbal slop might be emptied to smirch the linen of men who do their own thinking, he would be lauded as a Dana in journalism, and worthy of bouquets from the choicest flowers in the garden of rhetoric. The editor of the Miners' Magazine does not claim to be infallible, nor does he claim to be above criticism. He may err in his judgment like all other men, but he demands at all times the right to do his own thinking and to give free expression to his honest convictions.

I feel that it is especially necessary at this time, that the editor of the Miners' Magazine shall make known his position as to where he stands relative to the Industrial Workers of the World. I am unalterably opposed to the Western Federation of Miners becoming an ally of either faction of the I. W. W. I am first, last and all the time, standing for a course of action that will preserve the unity and solidarity of the Western Federation of Miners. I am opposed to the peculiar brand of industrial unionism that bears the "arm and hammer" label, because the lessons that I have gathered from careful observation, have convinced me that the aggregation that has made an infamous record as slanderers and disrupters, have no place in a real genuine labor movement.

I am opposed to the Western Federation of Miners surrendering its autonomy to a mushroom combination of revolutionary shouters, who in a convention dares to wrest the legislative power from the hands of the membership and openly make the declaration, that the convention is the supreme legislative body. I contend that the membership of the organization shall ever hold in their hands the legislative power, and I deny the right of any convention to usurp that power which belongs to the membership.

I am opposed to any convention assuming the power to amend the constitution and putting such amendment in operation and full force, until the membership of the whole organization shall be given the opportunity to exercise their right of suffrage.

I am unwilling to be governed by constitutional amendments, or legislative enactments, that have not been adopted by the sovereign voice of the membership of the organization.

I want democracy in the labor organization, and I shall fight with all the power and ability of which I am possessed, any autocracy that dares to invade a domain that belongs to the rank and file of organized labor.

I know the history of the Western Federation of Miners. The battles, that it has fought in the Rocky Mountains and on the Pacific

Slope, are indelibly engraved upon my memory. I have watched its onward march for fourteen years, and beheld its brave and courageous membership, grappling with the brutal despotism of corporate might. I have seen the organization meet unflinchingly the injunction from the judiciary, brave the bristling bayonet of the militia, and bear the outrage and barbarism of the bull-pen, to keep aloft the flag of true unionism, and I am not willing now that this matchless organization that has met the withering fire of persecution and borne the brutal blows of the mailed hand of capitalism shall surrender its autonomy to a coterie, that knows as little about the labor movement as the demented canine that barks at the brilliancy of the moon.

The declaration, "I am a revolutionist" will not cause capitalism to seek shelter in a cyclone cellar, nor take its exit from the earth in an airship.

The wearing of red neckties will never place the banner of industrial freedom on the shattered ruins of the profit system.

The man who is continually shouting "I am a revolutionist," will never do any real fighting for the emancipation of humanity.

The patriots of '76 who drove regal imperialism from the soil of thirteen colonies, did not label themselves "revolutionists," but waited for posterity to write their names upon the pages of history as the "revolutionary fathers!"

It is my firm conviction that the Western Federation of Miners cannot afford to recognize either faction of the Industrial Workers of the World. It is my opinion that the time is drawing nigh when several aggressive national and international labor organizations, whose membership, realizing that craft and trade organizations can no longer grapple successfully with employers' associations, will select representatives to meet with representatives of the Western Federation of Miners, for the purpose of laying the solid foundation of a labor movement, upon which the structure of industrial unionism can be built that will challenge the admiration of men and women whose hearts are earnestly beating for the downfall of capitalism and the "Brotherhood of Man."

As the position of editor of the Miners' Magazine is one of the most important in the gift of the Western Federation of Miners, I would suggest that the delegates in convention express their choice in the selection of a man, who will be deemed most competent in wielding the editorial pen. I make this suggestion, without in any way, casting a reflection upon the ability of the Executive Board, in the selection of an editor. The editor is probably as close to the membership of the organization as any official in the organization. He is speaking every week to the membership of the Federation, and he should be selected solely upon the grounds that he is loyal to the organization, and competent to serve its best interests.

JOHN M. O'NEILL,

Editor Miners' Magazine.