

UNTITLED EDITORIAL

{SENATOR GOFF AND GOVERNOR HATFIELD.}

By DANIEL DE LEON

SAID the Republican Senator Goff of West Virginia, in his speech opposing the investigation of the conduct of Gov. Hatfield in steam-rolling the striking miners with martial law:

“It is the right of self-defence that belongs to a man when driven to the wall.”

Did not the Senator’s excitement betray him into making an unguarded, a damaging admission?

“Self-defence” is a natural right, too well established to need defending, or to need defining. It is a right, the exercise of which implies that its exerciser takes the law in his own hands, no man-made law being available. How does the plea of “self-defence” in behalf of Gov. Hatfield, comport with the Governor’s claim that he resorted to the law, the statute law, the man-made law?

If Senator Goff is right that the Governor acted in “self-defence,” then the Governor was at a par with the “rioting miners,” who also claim to have acted in “self-defence,” being “driven to the wall.”

The Senator’s explanation may be good, bad, or indifferent; but, whether indifferent, bad, or good, the explanation raises an issue that pre-eminently demands investigation: Which of the two sides acted in “self-defence,” which of the two sides was justified to take the law into its own hands?

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