

EDITORIAL

BERGER'S ELECTION.

By DANIEL DE LEON

WISCONSIN despatches announce that Victor L. Berger of the Social Democratic party is probably elected to Congress from the 5th (Milwaukee) District, and possibly also Gaylord of the 4th.

There is one thing that the Socialist respects above all things, and to which he bows submissively—Facts.

The election in America of a candidate to Congress upon a ticket that, whatever its otherwise shortcomings, vagaries and even defects, demands the overthrow of the capitalist system, is a Fact that deserves respect.

At the same time no one Fact may ever be seized upon, wrenched from its setting, and weighed to the exclusion of other and connected Facts. Properly to appreciate any one Fact all the other Facts connected therewith must be considered. Respect for one Fact does not imply disrespect for all others. There are other and huge facts to consider in connection with Berger's election. What these other facts are, a certain humorous Fact helps materially to determine.

That element, which, affiliated with Berger's party, is located mainly in the East, mainly here in the city, and which is most hysterically exultant over Berger's election, is an element that hates him thoroughly by reason of the deserved contempt that he has repeatedly expressed for it. That element, centered in the *New Yorker Volkszeitung* with its Schleuters, its Jonases and its Hillquits, not only hates but envies Berger. That element, so far from feeling happy, feels thoroughly wretched over Berger's victory: the victory places these folks in the worst of lights towards the comrades in Germany before whom they seek "to cut a figure." If the German Berger can lead a victorious Socialist Movement in Milwaukee, why can not they, here in New York, with a vastly larger German workingmen's population, fully 50,000 of them former German Social Democrats, at that? Why is their vote

struck with paralysis, if it does not actually decline? The hosannas of affected joy sung by this element is the humorous Fact which aids to size up the Facts that constitute the setting to Berger's victory.

Despite the appearances to the contrary that obtrude themselves here in the East, this year's elections have turned out to be less of a Democratic landslide than was expected. Colossal is the Fact that in the West, where Insurgentism among the Republicans is at home, the Insurgent Republicans swept the field everywhere. Where the Democracy won here in the East it was on account of its Republican Insurgent posture against Standpat Republicanism. The elections of 1910 spell a Nation-wide Insurgent triumph. Of all the Insurgent States Wisconsin is the foremost: it is the head and front of Insurgentism. It is in Wisconsin that Berger succeeded.

Considering all the Facts herein rapidly sketched, then, what is termed the shortcomings, vagaries and even defects of Berger's platform settle down in their right place.

Berger's Movement has risen on the crest of the Insurgent wave. In that lies the doubtfulness of its future. Whether it will be swallowed up in Insurgentism, or whether its Socialism will leaven Insurgentism depends upon Victor L. Berger.

With its eyes upon the word Socialism in the platform of the Wisconsin Social Democratic party, the Socialist Labor Party pledges to the Milwaukee Social Democratic Congressman or Congressmen support and encouragement in all his or their Socialist endeavors.

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