

SOCIALISTS' VOTE BOOKED FOR HUGE SWELL THIS YEAR

By Robert J. Bender
New York, Oct. 29.—The Socialist party during this campaign has made the most pretentious effort in its history to gain a hold in state and national government.

Behind the noise of the two major party struggles, the Socialist leaders have worked quietly and effectively until one now hears the old party leaders frequently speculating on what the Socialist vote will be next Tuesday. Inquiries made throughout the West and South and observation in the Central West and East lead to the forecast that Eugene Debs will get a vote in this election which will surpass that of any previous vote cast for a Socialist candidate for president—possibly triple or quadruple previous records—and that numbers of Socialists will win in minor state elec-

tion, while a better than ever chance exists for several of their congressional candidates.

PHANTOM CAMPAIGN

It is not generally realized how widespread has been the activity of this party during the campaign. There are, for instance, Socialist candidates for presidential electors in 40 out of the 48 states in the union. In 30 states the party has a state ticket in the field. In 35 states it has congressional candidates.

Its campaign has lacked some of the red fire and sensational features of the Republican and Democratic campaigns. Its presidential candidate being in Atlanta penitentiary, he, obviously, has not been able to cope with the oratorical contests which his major party opponents have enjoyed. But during the campaign the party has distributed over 3,000,000 campaign leaflets, tens of thousands of pamphlets and booklets, and, from figures compiled by political leaders, it would not be surprising if the Socialist vote developed to 2,000,000 or more this fall.

LARGELY PROTEST VOTE

What this may indicate can best be shown by comparing this figure with the Socialist vote in late presidential elections. The high water mark in Socialist voting was reached in 1912, when Debs polled 897,611 votes for the presidency, about a fourth as many votes as Taft polled that year, a fifth of what Roosevelt polled and a seventh of what Wilson polled. The Socialist vote in 1912 showed a gain of about 100 per cent over its vote of 1908.

In 1916 the vote fell away, dropping to

585,115, Oklahoma being the only large state to show a Socialist gain over the previous presidential election. This year, however, there are indications that there will be marked gains in the Socialist vote in every state.

This is due to a number of things, one being that many voters, who wish to vote a protest against the choice by the major parties of both Cox and Harding, will cast their ballots for Debs. A certain sentiment aroused in favor of the Socialists through events such as the postal department exclusion of a number of Socialist newspapers and the ousting of Socialist assemblymen by the New York state legislature also play a part at a time when there is a degree of political unrest anywhere.

1916 AND 1912 STATISTICS

Southern states, with the exception of Oklahoma, have never polled many Socialist votes. There are indications that this year many of the Southern states, however, will give Debs three or four times as many votes as they have ever given a Socialist presidential candidate.

The states in the past which have developed the greater Socialist strength have been California, Illinois, Indiana, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Washington and Wisconsin. These states, for example, in 1912 and 1916 gave Socialist returns as follows:

State	1912	1916
New York	62,381	45,944
Ohio	30,144	38,092
Pennsylvania	80,915	42,637
Illinois	81,278	26,047
Oklahoma	41,874	65,190
Washington	40,134	22,800

Wisconsin 32,481 27,546
California 79,201 43,259
Indiana 98,921 31,855

In other states the Socialist vote was less than 30,000 in 1912 and less than 25,000 in 1916.

HILQUIST MAY WIN

In most states the Socialist party is working as a separate entity, but in a number of instances it is cooperating with the Non-partisan league, the Farmer-Labor party, and in Oklahoma, on the senatorship, the Socialists will cast a heavy vote to the Republican candidate opposing Scott Ferris.

In New York there is little doubt that the ousted Socialist state assemblymen will be reelected, with the chance of the party adding from three to six more to its present strength in the legislature from New York city. In New York, Morris Hilquit and Meyer London are candidates for congress with a strong chance of success.

BERGER FORSAKEN

In Wisconsin, Congressman Berger appears to have been deserted by his former supporter, Senator La Follette, who has gone over to the Non-partisan league with the apparent intention of trying to draw Socialist strength into the Non-partisan league ranks.

La Follette and Berger in the past have materially aided each other in carrying Milwaukee, and La Follette's defection will be responsible for Berger's defeat next Tuesday, if he is defeated, which is by no means certain. Not only does it seem that Berger will be reelected, but the Socialists will poll a very heavy, if not a winning vote for their congress-

ional candidates in the second, fourth, and eighth Wisconsin districts.

The triple alliance in the state of Washington and the Non-partisan league members in North Dakota, Minnesota and Nebraska will cast many votes for Debs. These are not Socialist organizations exactly, but they are designed to wrest power from the two old parties.

NEVADA AND OKLAHOMA

In California the Socialists have Maynard Shipley of San Francisco and Upton Sinclair of Los Angeles as candidates for congress. These two are making a strong effort, but with small likelihood of election. These two districts poll the heaviest Socialist vote of any districts in California, but the Socialist vote in 1916 was only 8000 in Los Angeles county and 6358 in San Francisco county, a trifling figure as compared with the Republican and Democratic totals in these communities.

In Nevada and Oklahoma the Socialist sentiment has developed surprisingly during the last few years. Debs will get a big vote in both states, the election of a large number of minor officials on the Socialist ticket is assured, and there is a possibility, though small, of Socialist success in a congressional election or so in the states.

There is little indication that the Socialist vote this year will to any degree affect the major contests. It will show a gain, however, that may prove surprising, and, coupled with other returns that go into the general category of "votes of protest against the major parties," make a showing sufficient to cause old party chieftains some deliberate thought.

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