

Renegade Makes "Progress"

By A. B. MAGIL.

The New York Volkszeitung has been having its hands full of late trying to reconcile the mass of contradictions and hypocrisies that constitute its policy. Its editor, the renegade, Ludwig Lore, who was expelled from the Workers (Communist) Party at the fourth national convention of the Party in August, 1925, for his virulent reformism and opportunism, has been doing some remarkable balancing stunts. In the field of international politics his opportunist task is comparatively easy. Since no action by Lore himself is involved, he can sling "revolutionary" phrases with impunity, tho, of course, he never loses an opportunity to slander the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the German Communist Party and (with discretion since it is fashionable for even liberals nowadays to purr sweet words about "the Russian experiment") the Soviet Union itself. And it is not remarkable that this thoroughgoing reformist and renegade should be one of the most voluble American champions of Trotsky and Trotskyism.

But in the American scene Lore's job is not quite so easy. He is for the policies of the American Federation of Labor and against them; he is "for" the Communists and the left wing and against them; for the yellow socialist party and "against" it, and so on. Aloof from the fray, viewing its petty turmoil with an "impartial" eye, Ludwig Lore, super-"revolutionist," carefully weighs the merits of each side and hands down the law. A pleasant and highly flattering role. But like all such "impartial," "detached" observers, when the test comes, this super-revolutionist is always against revolution and for betrayal.

This sort of intellectual charlatantry seems to have landed "Comrade" Lore with one foot at least (if not with both) in the socialist party swamp, a fact which has become increasingly apparent during the last few weeks. In an editorial

Lore, Editor of "Volkszeitung," Going Fast Towards Socialist Party

on Oct. 28 he praises the election campaign of the socialist party as having been in welcome contradistinction to the campaigns of the "other working class parties." He speaks of the S.P.'s "earnest efforts...to deal with the campaign issues without shooting its 'brother parties' in the back."

The fact that this gentleman, who still pretends to be a follower of Marx and Lenin, invariably speaks of the socialist party as a working-class party, is sufficient revelation of the depths to which the lofty Olympian has sunk. Probably no party in the Second International has gone further to the right, has become more openly a petty-bourgeois organization than the American socialist party. In this the S. P. has the advantage over most of its brother parties of the yellow international, since it no longer has even a small proletarian following to compel it to maintain some pseudo-socialistic window dressing.

But Lore chooses to ignore all this. In an editorial on Nov. 8 he deplores the "division among the working-class parties" (including in this category the socialist and socialist labor parties), and suggests a "united front" during the elections. (Of course there exists no such division as Lore professes to deplore since there is only one workingclass party, the Workers (Communist) Party, which is divided from all parties of the bourgeoisie, whether they appear openly as such or under various "socialist" guises.)

Lore's friendliness to the socialist party is further evidenced in his official regrets over the defeat of Victor Berger, the wealthy S. P. bureaucrat and publisher of the Milwaukee Leader, the yellow "socialist" sheet which accepts scab advertisements, apes the Hearst papers

and cannot in appearance or policy be distinguished from any other capitalist newspaper. An editorial note in the Volkszeitung of Nov. 8 states:

"The re-election of Victor Berger, which we announced yesterday after we had received a report from the national campaign bureau of the socialist party, has unfortunately not been confirmed. With his defeat the socialist party loses its only congressman and the American workingclass its only spokesman in the national house of representatives."

American workers will be surprised to learn that they had a spokesman in the house of representatives.

Lore knows the true character of the socialist party; despite his reformism, he is not quite so naive. But Lore has a purpose. It is not for nothing that this professed "Communist" lets pass no opportunity to throw mud at the Workers (Communist) Party. And it is not for nothing that he speaks with such sympathetic understanding of the socialist party. Lore is isolated and it isn't pleasant for a man of his stripe to be isolated. And since the Communists will have none of him, he finds the feeble fires of the socialist party very comforting to his soul. Despite his political sophistication, it is easy—and quite convenient—for him to grow ideologically towards the socialist party. And so Lore, who at first pretended to be sympathetic to the left wing in the cloakmakers' union, is now supporting the president of the scab international, Benjamin Schlesinger, the tool of the yellow Forward and friend of Tammany Hall. Incidentally, the Volkszeitung took special pains to "clear" Schlesinger of the charges made in the Daily Worker and the Freiheit of Oct. 27 that this

socialist party elector had received \$50,000 from Col. Herbert Lehman, Tammany candidate for lieutenant-governor, to carry on his campaign against the rank and file.

When police and right wing thugs attack a meeting of the Retail Grocers, Dairy and Fruit Clerks Union (Oct. 30), Lore doesn't trouble himself to find out the facts. He merely has one of his flunkies rewrite the capitalist press. Unfortunately for Lore and the Volkszeitung, the capitalist press outdid itself in the reporting of this story. Such idiocies, such wholesale fabrications are more brazen than is usual even for the prostitute sheets. But Lore, the detached, "impartial" observer, rehashed most of them.

So lofty has Lore become that he is contemptuous even of those in whose name he professes to speak. The results of the elections show "the utter stupidity of the American voters" (editorial of Nov. 9). The triumph of Hoover is the triumph of Wall Street "over the stupid masses" (the same).

These are the terms of cynical aristocratic hopelessness in which this "workingclass leader" reacts to the present victory of American imperialist reaction.

Perhaps it was only one of those coincidences that on the same day (Oct. 28) that Lore praised the election campaign of the socialist party a tricky and treacherous article on Tom Mooney appeared in the English department of the Volkszeitung's magazine section, written by the Rev. Norman Thomas. (Incidentally, this article was also printed by Industrial Solidarity, organ of the I. W. W.!) and on Nov. 4 Lore published in the same English department an ecstatic blurb for the British Labor Party and an article by Oscar Ameringer, the "socialist" who helped shield Frank Farrington, former president of District 12, United Mine Workers, while the latter was acting as a stoolpigeon for the Peabody Coal Company at a salary of \$25,000 a year.

Did I say one foot in the S. P. swamp?