

The People.

VOL. VII, NO. 49

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, MARCH 6, 1898

PRICE 3 CENTS

SECOND EDITORIAL

The Case of Rudolf Modest.

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Careful readers of THE PEOPLE will have read the documents recently published in the matter of Section New York and the Socialist Publishing Association. From them it appeared that one Rudolf Modest, once a member of the party but subsequently an Anarchist and Labor Fakir friend, was elected by the Association into its Board of Directors; the Section promptly passed a vote of lack of confidence upon the Association, holding that the latter was nothing but a Publishing Committee of the party, required by the exigencies of the law of the land; the Association, in answer, adopted resolutions recognizing the justice of the position taken by Section New York, and promptly calling a special session of the Association, under the law, to consider Modest's withdrawal; this special session was held, and after full debate Modest was withdrawn by a vote of 38 against 11; the Section was notified of this action at its last meeting, and amidst applause caused the notification to be spread upon its minutes.

It is evident that the election of Modest was an accident; otherwise the issue would have taken other turn. Nevertheless, the issue and its wind-up marks an epoch in the character of the party organization.

Not a few are the men whose viciousness, crookedness or injured self-conceit cause them to fall out with and withdraw from the party. All such can do no greater service to the S.L.P. than not to stand upon the order of their going. But such there are, who, while leaving, and, thereby, withdrawing themselves from the party discipline, like to remain where they may do mischief. Of these Modest is a type. While the Publishing Association will consider no application for membership that comes not from a party member, it is an open question whether, after a member has been admitted and then leaves the party, he can be put out of the Association. This advantage Modest and others took. They withdrew from the party and yet keep their membership in the Publishing Association, from which point of vantage they watch their opportunity to stab the party in the back, and, as in Modest's case, managed to get into office one of their gang, who, clad in such office, has the opportunity of doing what this identical

Modest did before, go around traducing the party and its press, giving weight to his false statements in the ears of the unguarded by the office he held.

It is in view of all these facts that the Modest incident derives significance. The attitude taken by Section New York is a notice to all concerned (whether crook or otherwise), that the party will not allow itself to be trifled with; that it will not allow any organization connected with it to be turned into a place of shelter for foes from whence it is to be assailed; that it will extend its jurisdiction to the full logical extent and pursue its foes wherever they may hide;—until these are forced to drop the mask; be honorable, despite themselves; and openly join the capitalist enemy.

The Modest incident reveals the fact that the party has entered upon its manhood.

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

Uploaded November 2003