

AUTOPSY OF A MICROSECT

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The Editors at

Unity-Struggle-Unity Press

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For all revolutionaries everywhere

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Introduction

Unity–Struggle–Unity Press (USU) was founded by six former members of a failed “party-building” experiment that went by the name of the Party for Reclamation and Survival, or simply RAS. Of those six members, four still work with the press in some capacity; one has taken a long-term hiatus from organizing and the sixth recently departed the press after long-simmering interpersonal issues with several of the Pressworkers finally came to a head.

In order for us to advance with our task — helping to unify the Communist movement in the U.S. and its junior partner, Canada — USU must be free to criticize the currently-existing formations. What good would our criticism be if we could not also criticize ourselves? The current project before you is our effort at analyzing and diagnosing the terminal rot that infected the RAS from its inception to its demise.

The RAS was established in the summer of 2019 and dissolved on February 5, 2023. It was a primarily “online,” nominally Marxist-Leninist micro-sect based in the U.S. Here, by “online,” we don’t mean to suggest that it did no work on the ground (although what it did was limited) but rather that the great majority of meetings, effort, and energy was expended in an online environment, a kind of fish tank of text.

RAS began as a party-building project, but also served as a sort of refuge for individuals who had been failed, in some way or another, by the existing sects, but it degenerated into something between a discussion-group and an abusive micro-cult.

In 2021, a prolonged struggle broke out in RAS over democratization, rationalization of security, and other structural reforms. RAS was always undemocratic in organization, even though its commanders deceptively presented it as “democratic centralist.” Several of those who would later be expelled put forward a plan for

democratization. These proposals provoked an organized reaction from a cult-building faction of the micro-sect's leadership. The democratizers were routed and purged by this faction during Autumn 2021. Following the purge, RAS entered a terminal decline. On February 5, 2023, after months of clinging to its last bits of necrotic tissue, the cult-builders who'd captured the RAS central committee, after suffering a final blow — an exodus of most of their micro-sect's remaining rank-and-file — at last accepted that they had no real prospects and unilaterally dissolved the party.

A handful of us, the would-be "democratizers," regrouped after the Autumn 2021 purge to share and reflect on the experience. The product, by early 2022, was the first version of the present document, then-titled *Errors in Party Construction: Imperial Vanguardism and the RAS*. It contained a rough analysis of the experiment, authored by Cdes. J. Katsfoter, Sylveste, Lyxzen, and Simcha. Its purpose was self-clarification, not polemic, and some in our circle, fearing retribution, were against publishing it; the rest respected these wishes. When Cde. Mazal joined our circle in Spring 2022, her critique of *Errors* prompted a rewrite. However, having achieved clarity, we were then interested in charting a path forward; the time for inert reflection had passed. *Errors* was left to simmer on the backburner. Abandoning the comfort of our circle, we embarked on a new project — building what would become Unity–Struggle–Unity Press.

While we prepared to begin work as USU, the RAS cult-builders, out of spite, spread nefarious rumors to dissuade others from working with us. Eventually, representatives of one of our potential partner organizations, the "Shenandoah Socialist Collective" (which, to our knowledge, has since disbanded), informed us that, after being presented with these rumors as if they were fact, they were "uncertain" about working with us. We were thus forced to unearth our

recently buried controversy with the RAS cult-builders. Cde. Mazal prepared a detailed report, a defense and counter-exposé, which took an enormous amount of work on her part. Our comrades were convinced, but unfortunately, putting out the wreckers' fire delayed our launch by a few weeks.

While intra-movement and inter-organizational criticism is vital, what we were now dealing with was a petty, one-sided feud. In our Prospectus, we reject the literary activities stereotypical of U.S. Marxist circles; we sought to prove that living Marxism breathes not through our narrow intra-movement squabbles, but through its continuous reintegration with the struggling masses, through the merger of Communism and the mass movements. Yet we found ourselves getting dragged down into the swamp of inter-group criticism all the same. Moreover, merely by defending ourselves from the RAS cult-builders' attacks, we feared to inadvertently present USU as a platform for circle "politics," circle controversies, and circle insularity. All we wanted was to get to the real work — and so we did. After deliberating, we decided not to reprioritize a rewrite of Errors, and not to publish our exposé. Instead, for the next year, we dedicated ourselves entirely to building our Press. We developed as agitators and propagandists, took on new members, and organized a free distribution network for our mass political newspaper, The Red Clarion. In May 2023, the Clarion at last went to print.

Early on, we accepted that we would eventually need to finish and publish our rewrite of Errors, as time permitted. Later, when RAS was dissolved, its "central committee" announced a forthcoming "post mortem" — doubtless an attempt to exonerate the guilty and hush up abuses — prompting us to reprioritize Errors.

This document has two purposes: The first is to serve USU as a shield against further wrecking attempts. The second

is to extract what practicable lessons we can from the miserable experience that was RAS. In particular, we hope to inspire disillusionment with what we term the “micro-sect approach” to vanguard organization, and to illustrate the necessity of internal democracy, of a really democratic centralism, in our organizations.

The main body of this document is divided into three parts: First, a list of identifiable organizational errors committed in the construction of RAS. Second, a history of RAS, emphasizing the struggles that carried on within it. Third, brief concluding remarks, outlining the critical lessons we believe that our comrades in North America, and beyond, can learn from our failed experiment.

Included in the appendices to this document are the following: The “democratization” plan (written by Cdes. Mazal and J. Katsfoter in September 2021) that provoked the RAS cult-building faction to purge us; “internal” documents from RAS, including its original constitution and its Points of Unity document, the later constitution it adopted in 2022 (largely consistent with the original), and documents relating to the RAS party school; our aforementioned report to one of USU’s partner organizations, defending ourselves from the RAS cult-builders’ nefarious rumors; and, the transcript of an interview with an anonymous ex-RAS member who kindly shared their experiences with us for this report. The appendices will be significantly longer than the main body of this document.

Primary Error

General Political Underdevelopment

The first great error in the construction of RAS was that it was established in the first place.

The preformation that established RAS, a 15-person informal “committee” of sorts, was characterized by political underdevelopment. Most RAS founders were online hobbyists and former anarchists, motivated by abstract notions of “liberation” and warm feelings toward past and present socialist states, but lacking even an elementary education in Marxism and any practical experience. Some were more developed, some less, but the general level was extremely low. Certainly none were fit to serve as cadres, and much less to lead a “party” — or even a micro-sect. This “preformation” should not have attempted to advance beyond that stage without first developing themselves into capable revolutionaries. This is an all-too-common misstep. The first work any group of Marxists should undertake is setting out on a prolonged course of collective education in Marxism, technical training, and field experience. At the same time, such groups must slowly organize local cells from the ground up.

Shortly after the “party” was founded, a “party school” was constituted in an attempt to overcome underdevelopment. Three founding members were appointed to run it: two who were relatively developed as Marxists, but not trained educators, and one professional educator who lacked any Marxist education. The results, discussed further on, were predictably poor, and the school was never functional. “Action committee” (i.e., branch-level) reading groups were formed, but were ill-attended and directionless. Better-developed founders adopted nonchalant, standoffish attitudes to the problem, believing that the less-developed members would learn “organically” as RAS developed — which they never

did. A common refrain was, "don't worry, you'll get there." But theoretical and practical education is, of course, a conscious process, not a spontaneous phenomenon, so most members never got anywhere.

This "original sin" of underdevelopment generated the twin-pair of secondary errors that plagued the construction of RAS: its anti-democracy and hyper-security. Moreover, nearly every tertiary error in the construction of RAS was in some way generated or exacerbated by the problem of underdevelopment.

Secondary Errors

Hyper-Security and Anti-Democracy

Almost as soon as RAS was established, a twin-pair of fundamental and ultimately fatal errors took hold: On the one hand, hyper-security, by which we mean an attitude and culture of paranoid irrationality in matters of organizational security, which inevitably generated an abusive “security” bureaucracy. On the other hand, anti-democracy, or micro-sect commandism, which was disguised as “democratic centralism,” and likewise became abusive. We shall discuss either error in turn.

Hyper-security took hold during the preformation stage. Most of the founders believed they were building an “underground” party. Some truly believed that RAS would eventually have a military wing, and that they were somehow laying the groundwork for terrorist tactics — the destruction of state property, etc. — even though RAS always had, by design, a tiny membership body, even by micro-sect standards, and even though a membership that was largely unwilling to regularly attend even study groups and food distributions could never be fit to serve in a military organization. All but a few founders were convinced that any organization would need an impenetrable digital infrastructure — wrongly assuming this was possible.

Of course, operational security is a necessity. But any revolutionary with any sense (not to mention practical experience) knows that “impenetrability” is a fool’s errand. We do not possess the means to outmaneuver and obstruct the enemy state; the correct procedure is not only to anticipate infiltration, but to assume it has already occurred, and act with the appropriate caution.

Even when practice demonstrated that in-person recruitment was the best way to build regional “action committee” units — indeed, the only way to build solid,

functional units — and even when it became clear that, in the course of in-person work, members would unavoidably see each others faces, learn each other's first names, and exchange further personal information, most of the RAS leadership refused to learn from the organization's experience, and continued to cling to their hyper-security fixation in the face of evidence.

A small "rationalizing" tendency — the few individuals who were both familiar with the security apparatus and capable of soberly evaluating the security question — objected to hyper-security, but these comrades were consistently rebuffed.

As for anti-democracy: the RAS preformation organized on a consensus basis, lacking official means of making decisions. Although, typical of such modes, an informal leadership stepped up to make decisions, merely due to their higher activity, while the passive remainder stood by with a rubber-stamp. Upon its formal establishment, RAS shed its semi-anarchistic skin. Unfortunately, what replaced it was not democratic centralism, of which most of the founders, lacking any Marxist education, had no concept. One founder (known as Erik) easily convinced the others that "security" necessitated undemocratic, even cultish, structure, while successfully branding the alternative "ultra-democracy." And so, just after officially establishing it, the founders renovated RAS along anti-democratic lines and obliterated the possibility of engaging most of the membership by restricting them behind "security" barriers.

We will quickly sketch the micro-sect's structure following this hyper-securitization and anti-democratic renovation — the structure that characterized RAS for the remainder of its brief life.

The founding members (i.e., the preformation, minus several individuals who abandoned RAS shortly after founding it), plus the earliest few recruits, instituted what

we've termed the micro-sect's command apparatus — an unelected, unrecallable, unaccountable "inner-club" of petty tyrants who exercised absolute control over the organization and lorded over and habitually abused the excluded general membership. The new inner-club deceptively christened the command apparatus the "Party Congress," despite the fact that it was an unelected, permanently standing, permanently "in-session" body; in fact, RAS never held a congress (regular, special, or otherwise) in its few years of existence.

Thus, rather than the membership electing its leaders, the leaders — the commanders — selected at their own discretion the few "full" members to be privileged with what was termed "elevation to Congress." This created three membership tiers in RAS: so-called "full" and "provisional" members together constituted the "rank-and-file," which lacked any and all membership rights and were systematically excluded from participation in "party" decision-making, activities, etc., while the "inner-club" in the command apparatus constituted the "real" membership, and reserved all membership rights, any semblance of "party" democracy, and all "party" activities as their exclusive privilege.

On the warped logic that it would be impermissibly permeable to state actors to allow "full" membership to participate in "sensitive" (read: any) work or decision-making, these privileges were entirely reserved for group 3, the "Congress," that is, the command apparatus. Membership in this apparatus was not applied for — rather, rank 2, "full," members were selected secretly by the command apparatus itself and then inducted (and indoctrinated) into the highest level of the cult — erm, "party."

This internal segregation was purposefully kept from the members. It was the policy of the inner circle not to reveal its structure. Moreover, the command apparatus

was tightly barricaded. Information on its activities was normally inaccessible to the general membership — any such “leak” was a punishable offense. Tidbits of information, usually in the form of declarations, dictates, and other pronouncements, would only rarely, and at the leadership’s discretion, be circulated to the general membership.

The command apparatus was internally differentiated into a system of so-called “control committees.” These were as follows:

- The Committee on Party Security (SecuCom)
- The Committee on Oppressed Genders (GenCom)
- The Committee on Disability (DisCom)

SecuCom was by far the most powerful control committee. Hyper-securitization concentrated enormous duties and powers in its hands — to summarily discipline (up to expulsion) members, deny applications, craft its own policies and procedures, shut down the communications server, veto the central committee (that is, the formal party leadership), etc. Actually, SecuCom was in some ways more powerful than the central committee; it certainly exercised more authority over the general membership, often in the form of outright abuses, on a day-to-day basis. It effectively stood as a sort of mock-NKVD, if the NKVD was not merely an arm of the state (or, in our case, the command apparatus of a micro-sect), but also a substantial portion of its frontal lobe. SecuCom would ultimately be one of two bastions of the cult-building faction.

The remaining two control committees were officially described as follows:

In RAS, oppressed nations, genders, sexualities, and our disabled members hold powerful tools to investigate, hold accountable, and demand more from their comrades.

Of course, one could only wield those “powerful tools” if one was a command apparatus member, and, even then,

only if the inner-club member had considerable clout within the command apparatus; all other members had no means of redressing their grievances or combating chauvinism, other than begging for support from a sympathetic command apparatus member who happened to hold sway.

Listing "oppressed nations" was a blatant lie. Plans for a "Committee on Oppressed Nations" (NatCom) were in fact put forward, but were ultimately rejected by the (n.b., overwhelmingly white) command apparatus. There was no committee or other body tasked with investigating and combating racism, settler chauvinism, national chauvinism, and other discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, nation, etc. within RAS.

GenCom was the only functional oppression-specific control committee, but it was far from a "powerful tool" for combating misogyny, transphobia, and other gender-based chauvinism. GenCom was instead a tool of the cult-building faction. It mainly existed to enforce the inner-club commanders' rule through selective witch-hunting campaigns that often targeted "problem" gender-oppressed comrades. It just as often immunized "favored" cisgender men. GenCom would subject members who posed threats to the cult-building project to abusive interrogations, either to be coerced and bludgeoned into submission, or unceremoniously and quietly purged. Some interrogations were even carried out by the "trusted few" cisgender men who, despite not suffering gendered oppression, were somehow allowed to sit on a committee ostensibly of and for gender-oppressed comrades. GenCom utilized these cisgender men to enact male chauvinism as a weapon, often against women and trans comrades. A typical GenCom interrogation involved isolating the "suspect" in a channel on the RAS comms server, overwhelming them with ten-on-one abuse (viz. demeaning and humiliating them, while also gaslighting and love-bombing them), and then giving them

the “chance” to confess their sins and repent. If this reminds the reader of a cult’s brainwashing tactics, the association is not accidental. The cult-builders knew what they were doing.

The GenCom inquisitors never considered that, if there were any “patriarchal” dynamics in RAS, they might be rooted in its undemocratic structure. Consider an organization in which a special caste of petty-autocrats lords over the “household,” in which the great majority of the “community,” arbitrarily deemed incapable of agency at the former’s discretion, are disenfranchised, subjected to an abusive and arbitrary “disciplinary” regime, excluded from participation in the democratic process, and relegated to performing menial tasks to keep themselves occupied. That, in a nutshell, was the structure of RAS. Regardless of gender-identity composition of the organization — is this structure not clearly, qualitatively analogous to a patriarchal social formation? Can we not find “social” relations in such an organization clearly analogous to patriarchal relations?

GenCom, like the rest of the command apparatus, had no legitimacy whatsoever, and represented only the cult-building faction. GenCom might have aspired to “look after” gender-oppressed comrades, in the way that some autocrats — whether they rule over a country, a prison, a hospital ward, a family household, or a cult — might imagine themselves benevolent rulers, good “fathers” (or, “mothers,” as it were) of the people. But we know better. As Cde. Mazal stated in our July 2022 Report on Allegations of Gender Chauvinism (see appendices),

Just because six women and one man [i.e., the real composition of GenCom], all unelected, present themselves as a “Committee on Oppressed Genders,” and present their systemic terror campaign as a feminist crusade, that doesn’t mean they should be taken at face-value as the collective authority on gender chauvinism, or as defenders of gender-

oppressed comrades...

Absolutely anyone, of any background, provided with motive and opportunity, i.e., with authority over an antidemocratic structure and a desire for power, including within a purportedly "revolutionary" organization, has the potential to abuse and terrorize those over whom they hold and wield power.

Last and not least, DisCom was more or less dormant from the beginning — not because RAS lacked disabled members, but because none of the commanders appointed to DisCom had studied any Marxist (or other) theory on disability, and thus none had any idea how to identify (let alone combat) ableism, craft coherent "lines," and so on. When DisCom was finally constituted, it was chaired and controlled by the leading members of GenCom — and thus, served merely as a duplicate committee to give illusory weight to GenCom decisions.

Subservient to the command apparatus were regional "action committees" (ACs). The command structure was such that the various ACs could not communicate with each other; there was a closely SecuCom-monitored general forum for all members, but no so-called "horizontal" coordination between ACs. Instead, the command apparatus directly administered the ACs. Naturally, an AC's rank-and-file members had no right to elect their own leaders. Instead, AC leadership would be selected by the command apparatus, usually from among its own inner-club members, rather than from the AC itself.

Anti-democracy, as a secondary error, was rooted in the primary error of general political underdevelopment. This is certainly not to say that anti-democracy was a good-faith error; the anti-democratic and later cult-building RAS commanders were certainly as malicious as they were ignorant. Their ignorance is glaringly illustrated by the command apparatus' own "official" — remarkably

incorrect — definition of democratic centralism. It was not only wrong, but nearly devoid of content, and reads as though formulated by someone who was guessing at what “democratic centralism” might mean. In the RAS Points of Unity document, democratic centralism is described as follows:

We adhere to the strict practice of Democratic Centralism. By Democratic we mean the deliberative body of the Party must engage in a thorough, searching, and complete investigation on every topic before coming to a decision — it must contact every organ of the Party from top to bottom and solicit opinions from all Members before adopting a political line. By Centralism we mean that the deliberative body of the Party and that body alone has the final word on all issues.

The “deliberative body” referred to was, of course, the command apparatus. In truth, the “rank-and-file” membership (usually around four-fifths of the total, while the command apparatus was one-fifth) was excluded altogether from internal democracy. As per the quoted passage, the command apparatus was supposed to “contact” the action committees to “solicit opinions” from the general membership. However, in practice, decisions were usually made within the command apparatus and dictated to the general membership. Even when the general membership was consulted, it had only a voice, but no vote — and even this right was frequently abrogated, as the cult-builders never missed an opportunity to bully dissenters. Thus, all decisions were made by an unelected minority — typically a minority of that minority.

The blurb on democratic centralism in the Points of Unity continues as follows:

Once an issue has been thoroughly, fully, and completely debated before the deliberative body [i.e., within the command apparatus — Ed.], that issue shall thereafter be

considered closed and decided unless a two-thirds majority of that body determine that it is ripe for re-examination. All Members must abide by the decisions of the Party organs [i.e., subcommittees of the command apparatus. — Ed.]

This passage is a distortion of the principles of freedom in criticism and unity in action. It is only reasonable for an organization to consider a matter "closed," for practical purposes, if and only if, the matter is a definite course of action, and only for so long as the action lasts, and only to the extent that further discussion does not compromise the action.

On the other hand, in RAS, these principles were interpreted as applying to "lines" (the micro-sect's "official" positions). To "close" an issue not only meant to retire the debate around it, but to prohibit any member of the micro-sect from discussing it at all. That means those who attempted to garner the necessary two-thirds vote to re-open a debate were often subject to sanction — just like other "democratic centralist" abominations like the CPUSA. When the command apparatus "closed and decided" an issue, that became the party's "line" indefinitely. Merely discussing a closed matter was prohibited; merely disagreeing with decrees and dictates handed down from the command apparatus was punishable.

In fairness to RAS, exactly this anti-democratic deviation pervades all existing "Marxist" sects in the U.S., from the biggest (e.g., CPUSA and PSL) to the smallest; it is a toxic miasma, enveloping and suffocating our movement. The commanders of RAS inhaled this anti-democratic miasma, purified it, and extracted the essence of a cult.

The blurb on democratic centralism concludes as follows:

All Members must immediately and thoroughly submit themselves to censure and self-criticism when a censoring organ so demands it. Only through the willing subordination of the individual ego to the Party can the

Party properly engage in the necessary struggle to advance its line, establish discipline, and act in a fashion best fit to serve the people.

If there had been a genuine democratic centralist party-framework, then it would be correct to say that "party" members must "subordinate the individual ego" to the collective's will, i.e., the majority that emerges via the democratic process. But when there is no party democracy, except for a small clique of petty tyrants, then subordination is not a party duty, but a cultish ritual. The demand that members "must immediately and thoroughly submit themselves to censure and self-criticism when a censoring organ so demands it" meant, in practice, that members were, from time to time, compelled to submit themselves to abuse from the cult-building commanders. A "party school" class on democratic centralism, which took the form of a workshop, similarly taught that the duty of "self-criticism" meant that "non-congressional" members were required to submit to abusive interrogations from the micro-sect commanders. In practice, "self-criticism" amounted to a hazing ritual. This is why we insist that RAS, from the moment of its formal establishment, was always on an interminable course of degeneration into the cult-form of organization.

Hyper-security and anti-democracy were twin errors, not only because they took hold in RAS simultaneously, but also because they generated a whole host of mutually reinforcing tertiary errors.

Tertiary Errors

3.1 Artificial Labor Shortage

RAS was plagued by a perennial, seemingly interminable crisis that would “burn out” most of the inner-club commanders, alienate most of the “line” membership, and result in systemic organ failure. This was termed the “labor crisis.” It took hold soon after formal establishment, and would ultimately prove fatal.

What must be understood, first, is that “labor crisis” is a misnomer. The crisis was not caused by a labor-power shortage. The “shortage” was instead artificially manufactured by the micro-sect’s anti-democracy and hyper-security.

In RAS, all membership rights, including the right to participate, i.e., to work, were denied to “line” members, and reserved as the commanders’ exclusive privilege. Disenfranchising the general membership rendered them inactive. Thus, while the micro-sect had, at its height, around 120–150 members, the command apparatus could only ever access its “internal” labor-power, i.e., that of around 30 individuals, of whom only 10–20 were usually active. The command apparatus petty tyrants deprived themselves of four-fifths, and at times even nine-tenths, of total human resources. Soon, burnout among the commanders became rampant, and they desperately sought a solution — other than democratization. But so long as the cult-builders maintained hegemony and forestalled democratization, the “labor crisis” only worsened.

The cult-building majority in the command apparatus could have ended the “labor crisis” at any time, had they been willing to relinquish their petty autocracy. We predicted in an earlier draft of this document, written before RAS dissolved, that what were then the last delusional holdouts of the cult-building faction would keep their claws dug

into the necrotic tissue of their micro-cult until its last sputtering breaths, and would be dragged kicking and screaming through its muted demise. We were right. The question is whether the cult-builders, for their part, will admit that they were the cause of their own burn-out, grief, and demise.

3.2 Opportunist Recruitment and Membership Policies

RAS never escaped its "online communist" infancy. It always recruited primarily from Twitter, and, to a lesser degree, from other social media. While social media is not an inherently "bad" way to attract potential recruits, and should be utilized, most who joined were the same type of "online communist" hobbyists as the majority of the RAS founders.

Due to membership's general political underdevelopment, existing liberal attitudes among RAS leadership were never challenged, and were often justified with "radical" sophistry. One such case was the debate over work requirements for members. Very early on, the "radical liberal" notion took hold that establishing minimum requirements for members, and even "leaders," was in some way "ableist." The idea that members should be required to work and work consistently, and that certain qualitative and quantitative standards should be maintained (e.g., in the operation of food distribution work, in the micro-sect's literature and social media presence, etc.), was denounced as "capitalist ideology" and "ableism." The common-sense fact that leaders would need to work, if not full-time, then at least considerable hours per week, was denounced as "ableist." Even the idea that members should be required to learn Marxism was denounced as "ableist."

RAS-brand radical liberalism is too foolish to warrant a counterargument. Communist organization membership requires, at minimum, consistent work — end of story.

Ironically, those who denounced basic membership requirements as “ableist” were the same hyper-securitizers who insisted on forcing members to endure psychologically crushing, irrational security strictures, all for the purpose of preparing for some vaguely imagined (actually nonexistent) “underground” future. The hyper-securitizers believed that RAS would boast ample military cadres... any day now... but also that requiring people to consistently work was “ableist” and “capitalist.”

Lacking standards, discipline was a non-starter. Nor were there clear procedures for expelling the many inactive and unreachable members (including inner-club members); such expulsions took months upon months to carry out.

The flipside of their anti-work opportunism was the leadership’s self-imposed burnout. Whenever utility is generated (beyond the spontaneous produce of nature), whether that utility is embodied in a commodity or in a functional organization, someone is working to generate it; “anti-work” is utopian (and, if interrogated for more than a few seconds, obviously dystopian), whether our subject is society as a whole or a microscopic sect. A lack of definite labor requirements, combined with an undemocratic structure that disallowed four-fifths from working in the first place, meant that the entire organization’s workload was shouldered by a few highly active and capable inner-club members. Some of these individuals would work 60-hour weeks for RAS, on top of their full-time waged jobs — simply because, if they didn’t, no one would. The result was industrial burnout on a handicraft scale. The most dedicated, optimistic, committed members were squeezed to the last drop, then discarded.

3.3 Alienation of Membership

Naturally, their mass disenfranchisement and exclusion from the command apparatus alienated general membership. A typical member joined RAS eager to participate, but would

then be relegated to a “daycare” purgatory for months on end (some for years). Most members understandably became disinvested and drifted away.

The leadership would on occasion ask the general membership to contribute, or even just give input, typically in the form of a sudden announcement or dictate about a change in direction or policy, followed by a plea for engagement. Attempting to suddenly spark engagement among the “rank-and-file” this way, with an HR Department-style memo, after keeping those same members forcibly disengaged and in the dark for months on end, predictably never worked: The response would always be one of apathy and sloth, as well as confusion — “Why do the commanders above suddenly want us to do something?” For example, if the command apparatus solicited criticism on a new document, it would at most receive a few superficial responses, e.g., “I dislike the formatting” or “I don’t know what that word means.” The general repression of criticism caused the membership’s capacity to engage in it to atrophy.

Another cause of the general membership’s alienation was the opaque recruitment process. Initially, the recruitment process kept applicants in limbo for months. Once prospective provisionals were admitted, they were, without their knowledge or consent, subjected to months of monitoring and background checks by SecuCom. At last, some of the provisionals would be elevated to “full” membership but not, of course, to real, inner-club membership. This opaqueness created an atmosphere of distrust and anxiety, and led to alienation. It is unsurprising that most provisionals exited RAS before getting elevated to “full membership.” In early 2021, the application process became somewhat more standardized, and new provisionals were brought in. But by then, the alienated mood had become entrenched.

Elevation to “Congress” (i.e., the command apparatus) was

a similarly opaque process, involving months of interviews that often became interrogations, in which the potential “congressional” would be drilled with increasingly personal questions. For example, a standard elevation interview conducted by the “Committee on Oppressed Genders” would require the potential “congressional” to disclose whether they had ever suffered sexual violence or been the victim of an anti-LGBT hate crime. This was not only invasive, but in hindsight, also cultish — not unlike a hazing ritual. On the other hand, when the “labor crisis” grew particularly intense and acute, the command apparatus adopted a no less opaque “rapid promotions” policy, in which “congressionals” were inducted in a more or less random, “vibes-based” fashion, in a failed attempt to alleviate the inner-club membership’s self-imposed workload burdens. This naturally alienated long-time “full” members who had never been inducted.

3.4 Bureaucratization

The RAS command apparatus was, from the outset, bloated with an absolutely baroque bureaucracy — a terribly disorganized and constantly malfunctioning system of all manner of “committees” and other bodies. This machinery went through renovations as the micro-sect formally “progressed,” but the bureaucratizing logic underlying its schematics never changed. Worse, there was never any procedural form adopted to follow this bureaucratization. Indeed, founding members of USU attempted to codify procedures again and again and were rebuffed in the same radical liberal vein; procedures, it seems, were “liberalism” and, worse, “petit-bourgeois legalism.”

Almost any identifiable task, however minuscule, was liable to be addressed — or not — by the creation of a new special committee. Whenever faced with an unavoidable problem (most avoidable problems were, indeed, avoided), the commanders would confront it by expanding the command apparatus bureaucracy. If something “broke,” the answer

would be to establish a new committee to investigate the matter. Such committees were naturally staffed by the same commanders who ordered their formation. Committees on committees on committees; a bloat that took on a life of its own; new bodies generated to investigate malfunctioning bodies generated to investigate malfunctioning bodies... and so on. A glaring instance of this was how the command apparatus attempted to fix the labor crisis. A 30-person (realistically, 15-person) command apparatus had reserved as its exclusive privilege, the work of at least 100 people. Its bodies inevitably ground to a halt but, rather than step back for a bit of perspective, the commanders generated a series of new committees tasked with circular investigations into why the existing committees were unequal to their tasks — the sort of incomprehensible, upside-down “solution” that might be invented by denizens of Alice’s Wonderland.

We emphasize to the reader that the whole command apparatus numbered, at its peak, around 30 inner-club members, of whom often only one-half or one-third were active. The result was that, at certain points, there were more committees, all equally pointless and wasteful, than there were people to staff them.

How do we explain bureaucratization? Charitably, we might guess that the error was one of formalistic thinking. The RAS leadership might have believed that more structure, even absent commensurately more labor-power, more practical training, greater political development, etc., would generate more capacity to handle more tasks — and not merely generate more tasks. But while formalistic thinking undoubtedly played a role, it served only to bury beneath shallow illogicality the underlying problems of anti-democracy and hyper-security — it allowed the petty-tyrant commanders to imagine that their woes were not self-imposed, and that their problems could be overcome with means other than a dreaded democratization and

rationalization.

3.5 Anti-Theory Liberalism

Related to the error of opportunist membership requirements was the error of an "anti-reading," "anti-theory" liberalism. RAS-brand anti-reading, anti-theory "radical" liberalism originated in general political underdevelopment, and served to entrench it, creating something of a feedback loop.

The anti-reading, anti-theory liberals characterized a requirement to learn Marxism as "ableist." But they were not only against educational requirements; they were against education itself. Any discussion of theoretical topics was liable to be forcibly shut down by the cult-building faction commanders. Indeed, some members were punished for what was derided as "academic" talk. The cult-builders justified this censorship with the guise of combating "ableism" — the less developed members needed to be "protected" from discussions that they might not yet fully understand.

In truth, the cult-builders' hostility to theory (even to mere reading and discussion) owed to their well-founded fear that a politically developed "rank-and-file" would challenge their hegemony. No so-called "Communist" who discourages or abridges education, who denies the vital necessity of theory, does so out of the goodness of their heart. Such people always have ulterior motives. In RAS, those motives were profoundly sinister.

3.6 Capitulationism

Related to the anti-reading, anti-theory tendency, and overlapping with it, was the capitulationist tendency. It not only repressed education in the micro-sect, but also any attempts to formulate a program and strategy. The command group regarded any and all planning as basically impossible. Capitulationism became the dominant tendency

in the command apparatus.

The capitulationists believed that RAS should purposefully limit all “planning” to doomsday prepping for a preordained failure. They insisted that Communists in the U.S. have no prospects for a victorious revolution, and no “right” to organize the revolution; that climate change amounts to an irreversible and imminent apocalypse; and that the best we can hope for is to survive, and the only duty of Communists is to help as much of “the masses” survive as possible, via red charity — and nothing else. The capitulationists also denied that the class struggle must be a political struggle (indeed, some American exceptionalists denied that class struggles exist in the U.S.), denied that the role of the vanguard is to organize the revolution, and denied the very possibility of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The proletariat’s leading role in the class struggle, its singular revolutionary character, a Marxist axiom, was cast as “white chauvinist,” despite the North American proletariat’s disproportionately nationally and racially oppressed composition. Moreover, Marxism was cast as a “white” and “European” ideology — a favorite radical liberal refrain.

In sum, capitulationism was the result of an ultra-leftist and anarchistic anti-theory, anti-reading, and anti-programmatic tendency bending back around, as “left-wing” childishness always does, to right-opportunism.

3.7 Liberalism in the Party School

The “party school” was conceived as the proving grounds for a “dialectical,” “communal” (in a utopian “prefigurative” sense) never-formulated “theory” of education. This “new theory” was actually an uninspired emulation of the Socratic method practiced in U.S. schools: the teacher poses a question, but withholds the answer, ostensibly to encourage critical thinking; then, a few students are called on to guess (this is called “dialogue”); finally, after this has gone on for a while, the teacher refers the students to the

textbook for the actual answer, sparing everyone involved further headaches.

Why did the “party school” adopt a failed bourgeois method? First, one of its initial three managers was a schoolteacher who refused to criticize their bourgeois training. Second, to beginners, the Socratic method sounds vaguely dialectical. Third, when answering students’ questions is discouraged, a teacher can get away with ignorance. This was crucial, as most “party school” facilitators lacked any education in Marxism. The teachers were expected to know nothing, the students to learn nothing, under the sonorous excuse that teachers should “learn more from students than they teach.” That our “educators” were useless was thereby elevated to a virtue.

Pedagogical liberalism was not merely ineffective, but even proved retraumatizing for some autistic members with preexisting educational trauma.

Pedagogical liberalism was obviously rooted in general political underdevelopment. RAS was incapable of correcting it due to anti-democracy. Under democratic centralism, struggle is constant, incorrect practices are ruthlessly criticized until abolished, and replacement of incompetent leaders is normal. But under our undemocratic structure, “party school” facilitators enjoyed immunity that a tenured professor would envy, and pedagogical liberalism, upheld as the “party line,” was immune to criticism.

3.8 Failure to Develop a Central Communications Organ

[The] starting-point of our activities, the first step toward creating the desired organization, or, let us say, the main thread which, if followed, would enable us steadily to develop, deepen, and extend that organization, should be the founding of an All-Russia political newspaper. A newspaper is what we most of all need; without it we

cannot conduct that systematic, all-round propaganda and agitation, consistent in principle, which is the chief and permanent task of Social-Democracy [i.e., later, of Communism] in general and, in particular, the pressing task of the moment, when interest in politics and in questions of socialism has been aroused among the broadest strata of the population. Never has the need been felt so acutely as today for reinforcing dispersed agitation in the form of individual action, local leaflets, pamphlets, etc., by means of generalized and systematic agitation that can only be conducted with the aid of the periodical press. It may be said without exaggeration that the frequency and regularity with which a newspaper is printed (and distributed) can serve as a precise criterion of how well this cardinal and most essential sector of our militant activities is built up.

— Lenin

A newspaper is the voice of the Party; the voice of the Panther must be heard throughout the land.

— Huey P. Newton

RAS never developed an adequate central organ. Realistically, it never could have, given its general political underdevelopment. Still, a few attempts were made at propaganda.

The first was The Plough and Stars podcast, the closest thing RAS ever had to a central organ. Along with its name (apparently a shuffling of the Irish Citizen Army's "Starry Plough" banner), the podcast adopted various Irish socialist republican aesthetics, though it had little to do with Ireland. In its early run, episodes aired more or less regularly, about once or twice per month. Perhaps a few hundred listeners — RAS members and orbiters — tuned in. Some episodes were topical; others covered an area of theory or history; still others involved cultural criticism. By podcast standards,

some episodes were impressive. Quality declined after one of the founding hosts, by far the most politically developed and liveliest, Cde. Katsfoter, was censured by GenCom and SecuCom for an unrelated offense and barred from representing RAS.

RAS also had a newsletter, *The RAS Report*, later converted into a "newspaper," *Rise!*, a quarterly carrying a few propagandistic articles per issue, on a few stapled A4 pages. It ran for three or four issues before it was retired for a lack of articles, owing to general political underdevelopment (i.e., that few members were capable of expressing Marxist ideas), as well as to the membership's previously discussed widespread alienation and exclusion from activities, combined with the opportunist anti-work membership policy. Most *Rise!* articles were, at best, quite weak; some were blatantly plagiarized from liberal academics; others were what I've taken to calling "shower thoughts theory," that is, downright unreadable pseudo-Marxist babblings and gibberish. None of the commanders appointed to manage *Rise!* knew what a Leninist mass political newspaper is, while the few rank-and-file members who could have turned *Rise!* into a functional organ were barred from it by the command apparatus. To its credit, *Rise!* was mainly handed out to houseless communities served by RAS Red Aid, and in this capacity introduced maybe a few hundred working-poor people to Marxism.

Finally, there were the official Twitter and Instagram accounts, managed by PropCom, which was responsible for writing Twitter threads — more shower thoughts theory — and creating little graphics for Twitter and Instagram. These proved important, because Twitter was the primary avenue for recruiting new members.

History of the “Party for Reclamation and Survival”

Preformation, Establishment, and Renovation: January–August 2019

Before RAS was officially established, it existed as a 15-member preformation, roughly from January to May 2019. The preformation, in turn, began as a discussion circle for so-called “online communists” — as discussed in § Primary Error: General Political Underdevelopment. This circle’s modus operandi was rambling, hours-long conference calls about the state of our movement; its members shared a disdain for existing U.S. sects, agreed that joining and attempting to revolutionize any of these from the inside would be a dead-end, and concluded that someone would need to build a party with none of the existing field’s fatal defects. The circle soon began to consider itself a preformation with the goal of establishing a new party.

The preformation was organized by “unanimous consensus,” whereby all members had to agree on essentially everything of substance, or nothing could be done. However, the onus was on dissent, and “consensus” was usually reached by passive assent. This is, for instance, how the constitution was ratified.

In the meantime, three founders launched The Plough and Stars. The podcast first aired on January 14, 2019, predating the formal establishment of RAS, and ran until a few months before the micro-sect’s sudden dissolution.

RAS was formally established around April 2019 by its 15 founders. Several were quickly shed due to their hobbyist unwillingness to work.

Unanimous consensus decision-making continued to weigh down the new organization. Optimization was attempted by means of specialization. A system of committees was instituted to differentiate functions,

each reporting to the general membership, which ratified critical decisions by consensus. But form far outstripped content. Under the new scheme, every committee featured "crossovers," i.e., individuals sitting on multiple other committees; some committees had identical memberships. The result was the first instance of the error discussed above. Further reorganization instituted a "central committee," tasked with crafting resolutions to be approved by the passive "consensus" of the membership. This merely formalized existing problems.

A total renovation became urgent. Unfortunately, rather than democratic centralism, extreme anti-democracy (and the seeds of cult-building) prevailed, under the guise of "security." The final result was the undemocratic structure that thereafter characterized RAS, as described above. A new central committee and the system of "control committees," beginning with SecuCom and GenCom, were instituted during this process.

First Educational Ventures: 2019

The "party school" was established shortly after the renovation phase. It was originally hosted in a Discord server and open to non-members, which served to attract recruits. However, as discussed above, the school failed in its stated purpose, viz. to educate members in Marxism. Moreover, its original lead administrator, the aforementioned Erik, was expelled from RAS during its first "semester." A suitable replacement was not located in time for the school's next "semester," which was therefore aborted. Eventually, a replacement was appointed. They reopened the "school," but carried forward its policy of pedagogical liberalism. Under this new administrator's abysmal leadership, the "school" became increasingly dysfunctional; tasks as simple as registering provisional members for classes and keeping records of attendance became insurmountable challenges. The "school" also became an extreme drain on the young

organization's very limited human resources.

In the meantime, a study group — a first foray into practical, on-the-ground work — was established by New England members, quickly attracting several recruits.

Internal Segregation, Recruitment Troubles, Onset of the "Labor Crisis," and Alienation of New Members: 2019–2020

By June 2019, RAS consisted of two bodies: the remaining founders and earliest "online" recruits, on the one hand, and the budding Northeast Action Committee (NEAC), on the other. The former had made itself the "central party," or command apparatus, and would soon deceptively christen itself the "Party Congress." In doing so, the command apparatus erected barriers between itself and the NEAC. This internal segregation immediately alienated the NEAC "rank-and-file."

Willing and highly capable comrades were relegated to the aforementioned "daycare purgatory," disenfranchised, excluded from activities, and kept in the dark about the organization's direction. Incoming "provisionals" suffered increasingly harsh, invasive, and eventually abusive interrogations before they were granted "elevation" to "full" membership, and "full" members were similarly interrogated when considered for "elevation" to "Congress." Applicants were kept waiting as entry requirements changed, then changed again, and changed a third time. Most applicants and provisionals during this period quite understandably ditched.

As the Discord "party school" attracted new members all over the U.S., and new ACs formed, this alienation would become a generalized problem.

The so-called "labor crisis" began to take hold in the "central party" during this period, and quickly became severe. Soon, the command apparatus found itself incapable of bare-minimum coordination. At the regional level, the "central party's" failures were deleterious. The Southeast

AC never advanced beyond a “planning” stage. Development in the Northeast AC, which had at first gotten off to a good start, stalled out. The other ACs followed suit. Worse still, even when an AC had a sufficient concentration of members in one locality, such that the AC could meet in-person and carry out on-the-ground work, most ACs were prohibited from doing most normal legal activities by SecuCom’s enforcement of hyper-security. Most AC “rank-and-file” members were instructed to do nothing, even when they had the numbers, drive, and means; most justifiably felt that there was no point to remaining RAS members, prompting many early departures.

Eventually, reality imposed itself on the commanders, and inflicted small cracks in its hyper-securitized regime. SecuCom eased some restrictions, allowing AC members to meet each other, learn each other’s names, visit each other’s homes, and carry out local work. Membership in some ACs again picked up, and some, including the NEAC, Bay Area AC, and Pacific Northwest AC, gained a small degree of traction. Unfortunately, the commanders refused to learn from experience; they refused to realize that rationalizing the micro-sect’s security apparatus and democratizing it might allow it to flourish. Thus, any gains made by the ACs were ephemeral, because the general “line” membership would continue to suffer disenfranchisement, exclusion, and alienation.

Meanwhile, the horribly named “On-Line Action Committee” (OLAC), the committee for members abroad and those in particularly sparse areas of the U.S., continued to grow. OLAC applicants were mostly drawn from the same pool of badly underdeveloped “online communists” that founded RAS.

Struggle against Capitulationism: Late 2019–July 2021

During 2019, a capitulationist tendency coalesced. It expanded throughout 2020, and was bolstered by an overlapping and closely related “radical liberal” anti-reading, anti-theory tendency.

The capitulationists openly struggled for hegemony in 2020–2021, but were routed in what was called a “two-line struggle,” resulting in a minor purge of the leading and most vocal capitulationists in June–July 2021. The “defeat of the capitulationist tendency” was announced by Cde. Katsfoter in a special episode of *The Plough and Stars*. In fact, Katsfoter spoke too soon, as the “two-line struggle” proved more show than substance. Although it was formally defeated, capitulationism lived on by dissolving back into the broader anti-reading, anti-theory tendency. Failing to address and overcome the underlying cause of both tendencies, i.e., general political underdevelopment, allowed opportunism to regroup and fester.

Acceleration of the “Labor Crisis,” Mass Burnout, Refusal to Retreat, and the “Rapid Promotions” Phase: May 2020–August 2021

The “labor crisis” accelerated around May 2020, and was first openly acknowledged in June 2020, when it had already become severe. In their desperation, the commanders attempted to alleviate it by identifying select “full” members for “rapid promotion” to the command apparatus and assigning them to positions on the various control committees. The only criteria were whether enough inner-club members personally liked the selectee, and whether they got significant pushback from other inner-club members. Those promoted tended to be “more of the same,” anti-democratic, hyper-securitizing, anti-theory, capitulationist type. Extreme burn-out among the few well-developed members, who generally aligned with the

minority democratizer, rationalizer, and pro-theory trends, and who were almost always among the first to willingly relinquish power, effectively removed opposition to, and further solidified the position of, what became the cult-building tendency.

This phase lasted until around January 2021, when the rate of promotions slowed. Rapid promotions made almost no difference with regard to the "labor crisis," because even then, only a fraction of the general membership (around one-fifth or one-fourth, by Cde. Sylveste's recollection) had been elevated; the vast majority were still disenfranchised and excluded. The command apparatus continued spiraling.

Concurrent with the "rapid promotion" phase was an attempt to ameliorate the "labor crisis" by expanding the Central Command Apparatus bureaucracy — a seemingly endless bloat of new committees, subcommittees, working groups, etc. to handle new tasks that seemed to generate themselves (but which were, of course, generated by this very same bureaucratic bloat).

Throughout this period, a minority in the command apparatus, including Cde. Katsfoter, implored their fellow commanders to "retreat." The only way out of the "labor crisis," they argued, was to curtail their tasks and workload to what could reasonably be managed by the 10–20 active command apparatus members, allowing for short-term stabilization, after which activities would resume one-by-one, in a careful fashion. Advocates of this "retreat and regroup" approach still failed to advocate, at the same time, for a general democratization and rationalization. Thus, while the "retreat and regroup" approach was objectively correct insofar as it was the least-bad within the micro-sect's existing organizational framework, even this failed to address the root-cause of the "labor crisis." But to accept a retreat would mean acknowledging what, in hindsight, was unavoidably true: first, that RAS should never have advanced

beyond the “preformation” stage. Most commanders could not bear such a blow to their egos. Delusions of grandeur prevailed, and a slogan took hold that “the party must not relinquish any of its responsibilities.” Rather than accept a setback, the majority of the commanders insisted that they would “push through” the “labor crisis” until a solution revealed itself. All “retreat and regroup” proposals were consistently defeated, and the “labor crisis” spiraled.

As the crisis progressed, more and more founding and long-time inner-club members began “burning out” from their self-imposed workloads. It became common for inner-club members — exhausted, depressed, and disenchanted — to request months-long leaves of absence; others simply ghosted.

Capitulationist Reaction: August 2021

During Summer 2021, Cdes. Katsfoter and Mazal began collaborating on what would become a wide-ranging theoretical project. Katsfoter authored a document titled Strategy for the Liberation of North America (LONA), mainly occupied with class analysis, with the aim of laying the groundwork for a program and strategy for RAS, and circulated it to the “line” membership. The first draft, while severely flawed, held promise.

The general membership was apathetic and only two substantive criticisms were written. The first was written by a capitulationist with openly fascist views, who, influenced by the economist Michael Hudson, argued for an alliance between the proletariat and “industrial capital” against “finance capital.” This member, Jeff, was consequently expelled. The other criticism was written by Cde. Mazal, whose RAS cadre name was Cat. Cde. Katsfoter believed this critique contained major breakthroughs, and invited Mazal to collaborate long-term on a new version of LONA, rewritten from the ground up, with the same aims. Our goal was, to be sure, extremely ambitious, and we

expected it would take, at the very least, several months of dedicated study and work — more likely a few years — not least because we considered ourselves, far from great theoreticians, closer to avid, but at best intermediate, students of Marxism, stepping into our movement's void of theoreticians and leaders, and attempting to succeed where our predecessors failed.

Before the project could get off the ground, Cde. Mazal was incapacitated by a sudden personal emergency, and took a two-month leave of absence. Upon her return, she was informed that J. Katsfoter was now under censure, and that she was prohibited from collaborating with him and working on LONA. That leadership had the authority to bar two comrades from voluntarily working together, and even from speaking, was bizarre. This move effectively ended the development of LONA. What's more, because J. Katsfoter and Mazal were among the very few ideologically developed members of RAS, and the only members willing to take on "ideological" tasks, this move effectively ended, once and for all, any theoretical and programmatic development whatsoever in RAS.

What had actually happened? Why had the Central Command Apparatus taken this "extraordinary" measure? A penultimate struggle had broken out — the rupture that put the micro-sect on its path to micro-cult degeneration, and the necrotic beginning of its necrotic end.

Control Committees Go Rogue: June–September 2021

The "labor crisis" became absolutely debilitating by early 2021. Desperation gave way to unresolved frustrations among the petty-tyrant commanders, who still refused to accept that the only way out of their misery was democratization and rationalization, still refused retreat, and still insisted on endless "investigation" committees. Frustration, in turn, boiled into rage, and "investigations" gave way to a witch-hunting campaign. The petty tyrants

knew that someone must be to blame, and was determined to make that someone pay.

The “investigations” were carried out by GenCom, which was entirely captured by the cult-building faction. GenCom’s foregone conclusion was that men within the command apparatus were doing “high-status,” intellectual work, which displaced “reproductive labor” (which really meant managerial and bureaucratic tasks) onto “non-men.” Vague “rectification” resolutions were drawn up. But as these diagnoses were made without evidence, these resolutions could not be formulated into definite plans, and nothing was actually done. The “investigation” cycle then began all over again, and unresolved frustrations simmered. GenCom’s impotence engendered rage — gender rage, in fact.

The first signs that a witch-hunt was in the works were isolated instances of what can only be called very odd, controlling behavior. These first appeared in 2020, but intensified in 2021. A particularly silly example was an unwritten rule prohibiting men from sending multiple messages in a row in the command apparatus discussion channels of the comms server; another was an informal “pause” command that allowed GenCom to order (some) cisgender men to stop chatting.

Finally, the witch-hunting campaign and purge arrived. GenCom circulated its NOTICE OF INCOMING GENDER RAGE within the command apparatus channels on the RAS comms server.

The reader will think we’re poking fun. We are not. “Gender rage” may sound like a disparaging joke, but that’s what GenCom itself officially named its Summer–Autumn 2021 witch-hunting campaign and purge. No explanation was given. Our guess is that some gender happened, and GenCom was enraged about it. It seems that GenCom’s impotence, coupled with the sheer amount of gender happening in RAS, had caused them to snap.

Now, some readers may be tempted by GenCom's branding to suppose, well, maybe they had a point. A lot of gender happens in daily life, and if you're a woman (or even a "non-man"), most day-to-day genderings are quite enraging, so maybe the "Committee on Oppressed Genders" had a good reason to go "gender rage" all over everybody's ass. GenCom, like the rest of the command apparatus, was a totally illegitimate body; it never truly spoke for gender-oppressed comrades.

The NOTICE OF INCOMING GENDER RAGE asserted GenCom's belief, still unevidenced after months of circular "investigations," that there were gender-unequal labor dynamics in RAS. Soon, warned GenCom, certain yet-to-be-named men in leadership would be subject to interrogation and punishment. One of the main culprits (unidentified, but obvious from GenCom's previous punitive measures) was Cde. Katsfoter, who was guilty of so much gender that he was censured, disallowed from representing RAS or carrying out theoretical, programmatic, and strategic work, barred from communicating with Cde. Mazal (who evidently needed to be protected from the pure, unfiltered gender, lest she herself get gender enraged), and, as the most extreme measure, prohibited from seeking leadership positions for five years — a period twice as long as RAS had then existed, and longer than its full lifespan.

The NOTICE was never circulated beyond the command apparatus, i.e., to the general membership. The GenCom clique, true to their anti-patriarchy mission, evidently didn't want to scare the rank-and-file children with parental infighting. The command apparatus never informed the excluded general membership of the "gender rage" campaign, and most ex-RAS members likely still don't know why so many people exited RAS during these months.

At first, nothing happened, and nothing continued happening — other than gender, of course — for six weeks.

Presumably, GenCom was charging up their gender rage.

Finally, in August, GenCom unleashed its gender rage. The witch-hunting inquisition commenced with a series of interrogations that lasted the next few months. The typical interrogation started with a panel consisting of GenCom, sometimes joined by SecuCom, "investigating" (inventing spurious charges against) a single target "suspect." Once the initial "investigation" concluded, the suspect would be isolated in a closed interrogation "channel" on the party's online server, where GenCom, sometimes joined by SecuCom, would force them to join a group-chat or conference call. During the interrogation itself, the interrogators would subject the suspect to personal "round-robin" bullying and humiliation (e.g., for their appearance, mannerisms, etc.) and to selective chauvinism (especially ableism), until the suspect was emotionally "broken," and then gaslight them, and, in true cultish form, offer them "comradely love" if they confessed their sins and showed obeisance. Sometimes multiple sessions were needed. To avoid exposure of its abuses, GenCom allowed no minutes, vote tallies, or other records of its interrogations to be taken. Most people who were targeted made the right call and abandoned RAS, in one way or another, before suffering the worst of the abuse.

Full accounts of some of GenCom's interrogations — those we personally went through — are provided in our Report on Allegations of Gender Chauvinism, in the appendices.

Anyone who openly questioned GenCom's crusade, or who spoke out against the abuses involved, including women, would be accused of obstructionism and threatened with an "investigation." GenCom's crusade was self-evidently not about eliminating gender chauvinism and inequalities in party work. Some of its interrogations targeted women who aligned with democratization and rationalization. Moreover, GenCom conspicuously didn't target chauvinist men aligned with the cult-building faction; in fact, whenever

men aligned with the cult-building faction were accused of gendered chauvinism, and even sexual abuse, GenCom would invariably absolve them of guilt, and instead harass the complainant. The “gender rage” witch-hunt allowed GenCom to replace men aligned with democratization and rationalization with men aligned with the cult-building faction. This was the means by which the cult-building faction captured SecuCom: In August, its chair, Cde. Sylveste, was interrogated, demoted (though he remained on the committee), and replaced with the aforementioned Manu.

In sum, the real purpose of “gender rage” was the systematic elimination of individuals deemed enemies of or threats to the cult-building faction — regardless of gender.

Last-Ditch Democratization Efforts Fail: September–October 2021

In mid-September 2021, Cdes. Katsfoter and Mazal worked with a third comrade, sitting on the central committee, whose cadre name was Nadezhda, on a democratization, rationalization, and general reform plan, in the form of a letter addressed to the central committee. A first draft was written by Katsfoter, then revised by Mazal, who pushed for a more “extreme” democratization and for reform of the “party school.” This was all illicit, as Katsfoter and Mazal were still barred from speaking. The letter was submitted around September 21.

By this stage in GenCom’s purge, the central committee had already been captured by the cult-building faction. The letter provoked the central committee’s outrage, gave it an excuse to expel Katsfoter once and for all, and painted a target on Mazal’s back. Nadezhda, in fear, immediately distanced herself from the plan and its other two authors.

Mazal was soon summoned to a GenCom interrogation, predicated on false charges of ableism (she was later absolved by DisCom), during which she was subjected to

misogyny and ableism from the GenCom inquisitors. When she refused to confess her sins and beg forgiveness, she was expelled by Manu, then chair of SecuCom.

Following Mazal's expulsion, Cde. Sylveste, who was still sitting on SecuCom, challenged her expulsion on the grounds that Manu did not have the right to act unilaterally, in the middle of the night, when no one else on SecuCom could object. A retroactive vote of SecuCom found that Mazal should not have been expelled by (according to Sylveste's memory) either 4-2 or 5-1, with one abstention. The central committee promised to inform Mazal and restore her membership, but this was a lie, as it never did so.

When Sylveste criticized Manu for unilaterally and underhandedly expelling a member, Manu flew into a racist tirade against Sylveste, then disappeared for a few days. When they returned, they blamed their actions on Sylveste. A fuller account of this exchange is given by Cde. Sylveste in our Report on Allegations of Gender Chauvinism, in the appendices. In a subsequent vote, the cult-builder central committee, which happened to be all-white, cleared Manu of wrongdoing. Sylveste, in disgust, resigned from RAS.

Manu would later worm their way onto the central committee, which in turn would appoint them "general secretary." It is the view of some, but not all, of the present authors that Manu is most likely a state agent. Our reasoning, as given in our Report on Allegations of Gender Chauvinism, is as follows:

[That] Manu is most likely a cop, or otherwise an agent of the enemy State... is the most convincing explanation of their actions. Someone who simply wanted to control a cult, for instance, wouldn't spend years infiltrating a very small, mostly online-based party, removing or forcing out all but a few dozen of its members, thus rendering it what amounts to a moribund, decaying online club. A would-be cult leader

has any number of less effortful, more effective ways of amassing followers. Moreover, throughout their tenure, Manu consistently advocated that RAS take up illegal activities that would have undoubtedly gotten everyone involved sent to prison. For example, they proposed a plan for RAS to buy land and use it to start a psychedelic mushroom plantation, to which most party members would then relocate for work — a plan that would easily get most of us incarcerated. Another of their plans was to set up a fake NGO, solicit charitable donations from wealthy individuals, and then funnel the money into RAS activities — a plan that amounts to committing fraud, which, again, would almost certainly end with all of us arrested by the next tax filing season. This is classic cop behavior. On the other hand, whenever Manu was given the responsibility of handling a local militant action, they'd "forget" to do anything or casually shrug it off as "too late." For example, at one point, Manu received a directive to carry out a specific action involving a housing crisis and tenant organizing in their locality; when Katsfoter checked up on their progress, they casually said the situation had already "blown over," without further explanation as to their failure to do anything. Cde. Simcha said of Manu, "After meeting them in person I can honestly say they are one of the least trustworthy people I've ever met. Which is sad because a lot of promising Bay Area organizers are caught up in their web of lies and manipulation." From my brief interactions with Manu, this isn't hard to believe. As a final bit of evidence, there's the fact, previously mentioned, that Manu encouraged fascist infiltration, both by inviting Jeff and by defending him after he'd been exposed as a fascist. All of this evidence points, in my view, to only one sensible conclusion: that Manu is, and was from the beginning, an agent of the enemy state.

Cde. Sylveste's departure marked the end of the struggle

against the cult-building faction and for democratization and rationalization. The cult-builders, now led by a likely cop, had permanently captured RAS. The micro-sect was primed for conversion into a micro-cult.

Terminal Decline: Late 2021–February 2023

What happened in RAS after the present authors were purged is, of course, murky, but we have been fortunate enough to conduct interviews with comrades who joined after the cult-building faction took power.

Our main source of information, until she herself resigned, was Nadezhda, who kept us apprised during 2022 of the organization's precipitous decline. By her estimate, there may have been fewer than 10 active command apparatus members by mid-2022. Ironically, in early 2022, after all of the democratizers and rationalizers had been purged, what remained of the command apparatus, i.e., the cult-builders, caved and finally accepted the need for a mass shut-down, which it instituted as a failed last-resort to save their cult-building project. However, by that stage, burnout had irreparably scorched what was left of the command apparatus, and people continued dropping out. Likewise, alienation among the long-standing excluded general membership caused it to rapidly filter out; most people dropped off and ghosted after a few months. New recruits would temporarily replenish membership numbers, but the long-term decline would prove irreversible.

In early 2022, the cult-builders initiated a revision of the constitution. Presenting this process as a "democratization," their goal, transparently, was to reassert "congressional" legitimacy. However, the drafting and ratification was anything but democratic. It proceeded as follows: The central committee drafted a constitution, most of which was plagiarized from the Communist Party of China's constitution — as if the constitution of a 90-million member governing Party could apply to a micro-cult. This

was circulated to the general membership, who were asked for feedback. Most of this feedback was ignored by the central committee, who more or less retained their original draft. This process repeated a few times, before the central committee decided "enough is enough" and unilaterally ratified the new constitution.

Under the new constitution, the ACs ostensibly had the right to elect representatives to the command apparatus, making it something more like the "congress" it claimed to be. However, this right was illusory. In fact, the central committee would draw up a list of nominees, and the AC members would only have the "right" to vote "yes" or "no" to the central committee's selections; the nominees would invariably be elevated regardless. This effectively split the micro-cult's previously three-tiered membership into four tiers: provisionals, "full" members, "elected" "congressional," and the central committee, which, having since been captured by the cult-building faction, monopolized all real power.

The central committee kept the rest of the command apparatus in the dark about most topics, and shared almost no information whatsoever with the excluded general membership. For example, in 2022, we received reports from then-provisional members that the "party school" was non-functional. Only the "democratic centralism" indoctrination workshop continued to run. Otherwise, classes were simply not scheduled. The command apparatus barely acknowledged the shut-down, offering only the cryptic slogan, "we're working to fix it," without further explanation, when provisionals asked about its status.

Around this time, *The Plough and Stars* stalled out. Two episodes aired in March 2022, followed by a few months of silence; two aired in July, followed by a few months of silence; one episode aired in November 2022, followed by a few months of silence.

At some point in 2022, an organization called “Warm Up Boston” (WUB) joined RAS. Its Boston membership rapidly grew, and became the outright majority of the micro-cult’s general membership. However, WUB members were entirely disenfranchised within RAS. This naturally created friction. Eventually, in late January 2023, feeling their hegemony threatened, the RAS central committee cult-builders demanded that WUB’s leaders hand over the organization’s social media accounts to the central committee, and submit to its orders. This demand was rightly refused, and WUB instead exited RAS en bloc. It now exists as an independent local organization, and continues its “survival program” work in Boston.

The shock of this loss was evidently enough to convince the RAS central committee, at last, that its cult-building project was a dead-end. On February 5, 2023, not four years after its formal establishment, the central committee unilaterally dissolved RAS.

The excluded general membership was kept completely in the dark about the central committee’s final act, right up until the end. Indeed, the central committee never announced the organization’s dissolution to the membership. Instead, the members learned of their organization’s death at the same time as the general public: the following day, February 6, when the central committee announced it on Twitter. This final tweet was followed by a final episode of *The Plough and Stars*, a brief recording, uploaded on February 26, 2023, to announce the podcast’s cessation, along with that of RAS.

The former RAS central committee promised, in their final announcement, that they would write a “post mortem” “analysis” — no doubt an attempt to present themselves favorably, to absolve themselves of wrongdoing, to hush up the many abuses they committed, and to obscure the micro-cult character of the organization they built. That is, of course, if any “post mortem” is ever published; it has

yet to be seen whether the last few cult-builder holdouts are capable of writing it.

Conclusion

What can we learn from the construction and degeneration of the "Party for Reclamation and Survival"? We would not pretend to have discovered anything, let alone something profound, by examining the pitiful experience of one isolated micro-sect; what lessons may be gleaned from our reflections are simple and elementary. Yet our movement, being woefully fragmented and consisting mainly of beginner and amateur Communists, is struggling to progress through a very elementary stage in its development, and therefore elementary lessons are now most needed and potentially instructive.

We have said that the first error committed by the founders (and subsequent petty-tyrant commanders) of RAS, both chronologically and consequentially, was that it was founded in the first place. What do we mean by this, really?

Let us first "state the obvious," so as to establish our premises. Historical experience has demonstrated irrefutably that only in the form of the Party, and only, moreover, once the Party is closely integrated with the struggling masses, only once it has earned, in the course of struggle, the trust and militant support of the advanced masses — that is, only as it successfully merges Communism with the mass movement, can the Communist vanguard organize the socialist revolution. Anyone who denies this is not a Marxist; moreover, anyone who pleads that the U.S. Empire will be an exception to this rule — as many of our present-day "Marxists" do — has come down with a very old strain of American exceptionalism.

Our duty as Communists, then, is to get organized, to join and help build our Party. But once again, we must state the obvious. Novitiate Communists in the U.S., when first getting organized, soon encounter the central problem of our day: We have no Party. Or, more precisely, our Party has

long been fragmented into a "system of socialist sects" and other formations, each suffering from vital (in some cases quite horrific) defects.

The "official" Communist Party U.S.A. has been captured for decades, at least since the 1950's, by extreme-right opportunists. Today, despite professing a (pacifist) "Communism" and "Marxism-Leninism," it has, in actual program, strategy, and tactics, converted itself into a benign tumor on the Democratic Party's side, ostensibly for with the aim of building a "united front against fascism." The marginally less-opportunist (to damn with faint praise) Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) and the (now mostly defunct) Workers' World Party (WWP) have repeatedly closed ranks around chauvinists of various types (most often misogynists and transphobes) and sexual and domestic abusers. Most of the various Trotskyite sects have likewise been rocked, and some destroyed, by sexual abuse scandals. Besides, being confessional sects, most are unwilling to accept as members any Marxists who do not swear allegiance to the given sect's special Fourth International lineage flavor of Trotskyism, and chairman-for-life ideologists. All sects, regardless of tendency, tend to be ruled undemocratically by self-perpetuating leadership cliques, and run like pyramid schemes. Freedom Road Socialist Organization (FRSO) is perhaps the only existing Marxist-Leninist formation of significant size and scope that is not absolutely enervated (however marred) by the above defects. It also has the unique advantage of recognizing that it is merely a "pre-party formation," i.e., that it is not self-sufficiently our Party, but instead has a role to play in uniting our Party. It suffers, however, from a worrying degree of insularity. Other fragments are so small as to be irrelevant. In contrast to the preceding, the considerably sized (that is, at least — perhaps at most — on paper) Democratic Socialists of America boasts a reputedly

vibrant organizational democracy, ergo the potential for Marxists to struggle, but owing to its "big tent" nature, consists of nine-tenths or ninety-nine-hundredths of left-liberals (pardon me — "democratic socialists") whose goals amount to "pushing the Democrats left," electing the next Bernie Sanders when we can (and canvassing for Joe Biden in the meantime), and securing various typically Scandinavian welfare-state reforms. In other words, people who balk at talk of revolutionary programs of emancipation, and are ambivalent, if not hostile, toward Communism; who are, on the other hand, incidentally, just slightly "to the left" of the CPUSA's leading right-opportunist tendency. About the same goes for the U.S. Green Party.

Facing this landscape, more or less all novitiate Communists go through one of three thought processes, and may be divided into three broad types. The first say "fuck it" and drop out of our movement altogether; we can and should ignore such people. The second say "fuck it" and join one of the existing Marxist fragments (a sect, greater or smaller, or a "pre-party formation") or, more often, the big-tent DSA, because getting organized in some capacity is, after all, better than nothing. The third and last type say "fuck it" and decide to create their own little organization — either "yet another new party," true and pure, i.e., yet another micro-sect, or the "embryo" of yet another new party, or a small local "collective."

The founders of the "Party" for Reclamation and Survival were of this third type — they chose the micro-sect approach to "party" organization. And the consequences of their "solution" serve to demonstrate the utter futility of this approach.

We have said that an error in the construction of RAS was general political underdevelopment. This is true insofar as we appraise RAS as a micro-sect. But stepping back to see the full picture reveals a still more basic error: When we say

that RAS never should have been founded in the first place, we mean to say not only that its founders were incapable of leading a micro-sect, but also, and more to the point, that building new micro-sects is inevitably a dead-end, and that the whole cottage industry of cobbling together true and pure “new parties” must be done away with. RAS stands as the most recent manifestation of an organizational tendency that has its roots in the New Communist Movement of the 1960’s–80’s; it represents the latest known iteration of a decades-old cycle of micro-sect construction. We must break this cycle, or else the miserable experience of RAS will be repeated — over, and over, and over again.

What, then, is the alternative to the micro-sect approach?

The reader might have gotten the impression, from the preceding brief outline, that the present authors are against joining one of the various sects, pre-party formations, and other fragments of our disunited Party, and also against joining the DSA. Yet it seems we are also against founding new organizations, whether micro-sects or local collectives. So what else is there?

Actually, the truth is more complicated — and isn’t it always? Indeed, to elaborate our views, our “party unification strategy,” and to provide in full a practicable path forward would demand, at the very least, another pamphlet, entirely dedicated to this question. But we will outline our views as best we can here, in the space we have.

The Party is, in form, an “organization of organizations,” or a complex of organizations, or a complex organism, the “cells” and “organs” of which are its constituent party organizations. The elementary type of party organization, which alone accounts for the vast majority of the Party’s organizations, is its geographically defined local primary organizations — party organizations in discrete workplaces, neighborhoods, etc. — the Party’s “cells.” Within the Party, definite political tendencies will inevitably coalesce,

whether informally or in the form of platforms, slates, caucuses, or (most dreaded of all by sectarians) factions. Such tendencies, when formalized and organized on an all-Party scale, also constitute party organizations, but of a categorically different type. There is much more nuance to the party-form's structure, organization, reproduction, etc. than is hinted at in this outline, but for now the above will need to suffice.

At present, as we said, our Party is fragmented. The fragments include the various Marxist sects and "pre-party formations" (bigger and smaller), the myriad hyperlocal Marxist "collectives," and the Marxist caucuses in larger "big-tent" Left organizations (where such exist, e.g., most notably, the few Marxist caucuses in the DSA). Some of these fragments represent "single cells," namely the local collectives, which, if united, would each constitute a local primary organization of our Party. Others comprise multiple (sometimes very many) such cells, namely the all-U.S. sects and pre-party formations; each of their local "branches" is such a cell. Finally, the Marxist caucuses in big-tent organizations could act — in effect, already act — as platforms or factions "within" our yet-to-be-united Party; moreover, the local groupings of those factions represent potential integral components of our Party's local organizations. We must note that, much like the Marxist caucuses trapped in the big-tent organizations, most of our Marxist sects, which are instead trapped in themselves, that is, in their own sectarianism, also act as factions "within" our yet-to-be-united Party — even if each would rather fancy itself the One True Party than a mere section of our yet-to-be-united Party.

Let us reiterate: We must unite our Party. For us, "unity of Marxists" is not merely a sonorous phrase; it is the precondition for the advancement of our movement. We may, even now, carry out the work of organization,

agitation, propaganda, education, mobilization, etc. — in sum, the work of Communists — and we should carry out this work, as best we can. But before we unite our Party, we cannot hope to organize the revolution, because we cannot hope to organize the revolutionary class as a class; we can at most organize fragments of the class, corresponding to the fragments of our Party. Therefore, the central and immediate (in the strategic scope) task of our moment, of this stage in our movement's development, is the unification of our movement (which, to zoom out, is but our section of the international Communist movement) into our Party (which, to zoom out again, is but our section of the International).

Where do we begin — where can we possibly begin — the work of fulfilling this monumental task?

We hold that, with some critical and hopefully obvious exceptions (e.g., cults, terrorist cells, etc.) all organization is good organization. That is to say, every solidification and heightening of Communist organization at this stage can be viewed as a positive (if messy, and not always linear) step toward the much greater goal of uniting our Party. But the aforementioned exception certainly applies to a micro-sect like RAS, and to nearly every micro-sect like it, for the very reason that such organizations inevitably degenerate into micro-cults.

We would therefore positively implore all Communists wishing to get organized, that is, wishing to really become Communists, in deeds as well as in words, to go ahead — go get organized! That could mean joining one of the existing sects or pre-party formations; it could mean founding a local "collective" with some of your local comrades; it could mean joining a Marxist caucus within a big-tent Left organization.

What must be consistent, however, is our shared purposive recognition that none of our respective fragments is self-sufficient: Those Marxists in the various Marxist sects and pre-party formations must recognize that one's

sect is not the One True Party, and that one's pre-party formation cannot, by itself, develop into our Party, but must instead unite with other formations. Those Marxists who opt to establish local collectives must recognize that the organization of Marxists at the level of localities is only a first step, a primary stage, and must lead to greater heights of organization. Those Marxists who organize caucuses within the "big-tent" "Left" organizations must recognize that our Party is the Communist Party, not some "big-tent" or broadly "Left" affair; that we must instead, "drawing clear lines of demarcation," struggle for the unity of Marxists, particularly around the content of a Marxist program and in the form of the Communist Party; and that the purpose of one's caucus, while it remains trapped within a big-tent organization, can be, at best, only to struggle for an eventual clean break on advantageous terms, that is, for an exodus of Marxists from yellow to red politics, from the comforts of the big tent to the perils of the Communist Party.

We recognize, for our part, that in the preceding we have likely managed to displease nearly "everyone" — the sectarians, the parochialists, and the big tent dwellers — all at once, in some way or another. But the annoyed reader will hopefully note, after taking a breath, that nothing in the preceding can be considered particularly "novel," let alone controversial, to a Marxist, whatever excuse she pleads.

What, in sum, can we learn from the experience of RAS?

First, do not attempt to establish yet another new party — that would be, correctly speaking, another micro-sect — in the vain hope that it will be "pure," that it will have an ideal "line" and will suffer none of the defects of the existing fragments. It will suffer those same defects — and even more acutely, in all likelihood. At best, you will only succeed in constructing an online discussion server. At worst, you will end up building the infrastructure for a micro-cult, as the founders of RAS inadvertently did.

Second, then, get organized — but get organized, from the outset, with the conscious aim of contributing, in your own way, to our Party's unification. You have options, any of which are worthwhile alternatives to a dead-end micro-sect vanity project. We reiterate: That could mean joining one of the existing sects or pre-party formations; it could mean founding a local "collective" with some of your comrades; it could mean joining a Marxist caucus within a big-tent Left organization. The point is that every step of Communist organization now, in whatever form, every partial unification, however fragmentary, is another step toward the grand unification of our whole Party.

Third, on that note, establish and build your organization on the basis of the broadest possible points of (Marxist) unity, rather than on an extremely exact, narrow, and rigid confession of faith. Your goal is to unite principled Marxists in some form of Communist organization, and ultimately to contribute to the unification of our Party — not to carve out your own ideal little sect with its own ideal sect-doctrine. Over and over again, since the time of Marx and Engels, in their critique of the sectarians of their day, this hyper-sectarian model of organization has been tried, tested, and proven an inevitable, abysmal failure. Embrace the alternative: the Party and the International.

Fourth, wherever you find yourself organized, struggle for organizational democracy and rationality. We have demonstrated what consequences anti-democracy and irrational hyper-security had for RAS — and we promise that these lessons will apply to whatever organizations you join and build. Undemocratic and irrational organization will always lead to abuses, stagnation, insularity, and, at worst, cult-building. Moreover, keep in mind that a merely formal democracy is insufficient, and that your organization should embody a democratic content. That means that comradesly struggle — struggle to correct mistaken ideas,

struggle between competing views, struggle against opportunism and chauvinism, struggle for better efficiency, etc. — struggle that begins from a place of unity, and aims to achieve a higher, more stable and effective, more principled unity — should be a normal and continual feature of your organization's internal and external life. That is to say, do not retreat into your organization; do not practice insularity, and isolate your organization from the rest of our movement and from the masses. Best practice, whenever and wherever possible, is to conduct criticism out in the open, to publish it, and to thereby generalize your organization's struggles, experiences, and lessons learned. The Bolsheviks, even in their underground years, proved this better than any faction or Party in history.

Fifth, if your organization has passed the point of no return, if it is definitely and irreversibly degenerating into a cult — get out! If you even suspect that you're in a cult, or a cult-in-the-making, your best course of action is to leave. Staying will never be worth it. You and whomever you can convince to leave can get organized elsewhere, that is, really organized, in an actual Marxist organization.

Sixth, prioritize ideological, political, and technical education — education in Marxism (i.e., theory), in the history of the global class struggle and the international Communist movement, and in the technique of one or more areas of revolutionary activity. Don't commit the opportunist error we noted in RAS, found in so many ostensibly "Communist" spaces, of believing that education — and that means, among other things, doing the reading; there's no getting around this — can be optional. It isn't. Don't build an organization of vaguely Communist-sympathetic activists — at least, if you do build such an organization, do not kid yourself about its real content. No, build an organization of revolutionaries.

And with that, we wish you safety and success, wherever

your part of our movement's work takes you.

A luta continua!

CASE STUDY: Allegations of Gender Chauvinism

CASE STUDY INTRODUCTION

The following addendum is the results of an exhaustive investigation conducted by a former member of the press who went by the *nomme de plume*, of Mazal. A year and a half later, she left the press after unrelated interpersonal conflicts between herself and other members of the press organization. This fracture represents a tragic chapter in the history of the press, as Mazal was one of the organization's founders and had been, until that point, one of its leading lights.

She has expressed, through back channels, that she does not believe the press should be permitted to make use of any work she did going forward. The press organization does not agree, and has adopted a resolution condemning this type of petty-bourgeois property-mongering over written words.

Nevertheless, given this former member's stance toward the press as it currently exists, the editors felt it would be appropriate to include a disclaimer here. It is also worth noting that she performed extensive edits on the Autopsy itself, to the extent that it has been greatly revised and enhanced by her insights.

While the press organization's members regret her loss as a contributing element of the press, the knowledge that other organizations can glean from what is essentially a case-study in Western Marxist organizing (from which, depressingly, lessons can be applied to larger, longer-lived pseudo-revolutionary bodies within the U.S. context) is too great to permit the bruised ego of one former member foreclose this path of exploration. To that end, this section has been presented unedited in its full form, albeit with the "receipts" sections removed for space.

Those receipts — texts, conversations, tweets, etc. — can still be found at the USU Press website.

Dear comrades in the struggle,

We, the comrades on the founding team behind the Unity–Struggle–Unity project, have received the 12 July letter from your organization’s Department of Education, concerning charges of a longstanding, malicious, and unrepentant pattern of gender chauvinism committed by one of our Editorial Board members, Cde. K. (AKA “Katsfoter”).

These are extremely serious allegations, and I first wish to assure you that we have responded accordingly: On the night of 12 July, the same day we received this communication, four members of our team, including the entire Editorial Board (including Cde. K.), convened a hitherto unprecedented “emergency meeting”, during which we spent several hours discussing in detail every accusation and every point of concern, interrogating Cde. K. and subjecting his account of events to close scrutiny, and compiling the facts available to us. The evidence at our disposal concerning this matter is both substantial and clear, and, as such, we wasted no time before systematically deliberating, preparing materials for a thorough report, and arriving at what we believe to be the correct course of action.

Please also know that my fellow USU teammates and I sincerely appreciate the manner in which your organization has handled this incident. We thank you for bringing these allegations to our attention as soon as you heard them; for explaining, in good faith, your entirely understandable concerns and uncertainty regarding continued affiliation with USU; and for trusting us to carry out an investigation into the actions of one of our team’s members. We also thank you for delivering your position to us in the form of an organization-to-organization letter and allowing us due time to respond. You have acted with

immense professionalism, and your collective commitment to the advancement of our movement could not be doubted. Moreover, on a personal level, as a trans woman who, in her capacity as a Communist, has suffered enough gendered chauvinism and abuse — and this includes during my relatively brief tenure as a member of the Party for Reclamation and Survival — to last her several lifetimes, let me thank you for your commitment to safeguarding your gender-oppressed comrades from the epidemic of gendered violence that plagues the U.S. Communist movement.

I, Cde. Cde. M. (AKA "Mazal"), have taken it upon myself to prepare this report on behalf of our founding team. Cdes. Sylveste (AKA "Sylveste") and Simcha (AKA "Simcha") have both contributed critical details, reviewed the report to ensure its accuracy, and provided testimony on their own experiences as members of the Party for Reclamation and Survival that serve as further clarifying evidence, both concerning Cde. K. and concerning our former party. I have taken the initiative in preparing this report, with their help, for two reasons: First, because my practical experience as a trans woman-Communist provides me with a general insight into the problem at hand. Second, because I have extensive experience working with Cde. K. and working within RAS as a trans woman, and thus I have considerable, direct insight into this particular situation.

We should caution from the outset that, while Cde. K. was interrogated as part of our preparation for writing this report, he did not contribute to this report, nor did he have any say in the writing and editing processes, nor did he have any say over the report's content. This would obviously constitute a conflict of interests. However, we have solicited extensive input from Cde. K.'s wife, Cde. J., who is an ex-member of RAS and was an early participant in our team's pre-USU collaboration. She has, by far, the most substantial insights into this situation, and her input has

proven invaluable to our investigation.

J. has made herself available to discuss this matter, and has volunteered to assist in mediation between the core USU team and our partner organizations.

Moving onto the report itself: First, I will respond, point-by-point, to your letter in its entirety, explaining the results of our team's investigation as I go. In doing so, I hope to comprehensively address your organization's concerns. Second, I will summarize the testimony provided by Cdes. Sylveste and Simcha concerning Cde. K., his tenure as a member of RAS, and that party's internal crisis of labor. Third, I will summarize my own testimony, which I believe provides a crucial context from this situation's crucial perspective: that of a trans woman who was a member of the Party for Reclamation and Survival. Finally, I will outline our team's conclusions and planned course of action.

The Allegations and Points of Concern Presented

Below I list each accusation and point of concern in the order it appears in your letter, followed by the results of our team's investigation.

Please excuse my decision to pull quotes directly from your letter. I do this for the sake of expediency and to ensure that I am not incorrectly paraphrasing.

Claim: "Cde. K. was disciplined by his formation [i.e., RAS] for Twitter posts that displayed both gender chauvinism and adventurism."

Our investigation verified that Cde. K. was censured in December 2020 for three (3) tweets in particular, each of which was deemed an infraction by a Committee of the RAS inner party, and also for an ongoing behavioral infraction related to his conduct in co-hosting *The Plough & Stars*, a podcast attached to RAS.

In order to thoroughly address this first point, we have reviewed every tweet that came under censure and the

subsequent disciplinary actions taken against Cde. K.. These three (3) tweets are described, and the reasons they came under censure summarized, as follows:

A tweet in which Cde. K. wrote, "Why didn't Dick van Dyke [i.e., the famous American actor] ever wear a van dyke [i.e., a style of facial hair popularized in 17th-Century Europe]?" The RAS Committee on Oppressed Genders (GenCom) decided that this tweet was lesbophobic.

A tweet in which Cde. K. wrote, "Someone should SWAT Vaush," referring to the direct-action practice of calling in false terrorism reports on individuals, in this case a fascist Twitch streamer. The RAS Security Committee (SecuCom) decided that this tweet was unreasonable and ill-advised, and carried a non negligible risk of attracting state attention with no perceivable benefit.

A tweet in which Cde. K. wrote, "Everyone spending time talking about SOPHIE [i.e., the late Scottish musician and producer, who was a trans woman] when they should be searching for σοφία [i.e., "sophia," the Greek word for "knowledge" or "wisdom"]," during the wave of public mourning that followed the artist's untimely, accidental death in Athens, Greece. GenCom decided that this tweet was transmisogynistic.

The aforementioned additional point in this December 2020 censure was that, in Cde. K.'s capacity as one of the hosts of *The Plough & Stars*, an RAS-affiliated podcast that was launched by Cde. K. and two fellow RAS members in the lead-up to the party's founding, he "spoke too much," which GenCom decided was an example of gender chauvinism on his part.

During our investigation, the USU team thoroughly deliberated on each of these points. We found as follows:

The tweet about a "van Dyke" (beard) is patently not lesbophobic, and the accusation of lesbophobia is patently absurd. Leaving aside the (irrelevant) question of whether

Cde. K. is a “good” or effective comedian, there is nothing objectionable about this tweet.

The tweet implying that SWAT-ing Vaush (or any other fascist) would be an acceptable action did betray a failure to criticize (1) the relationship between Communists and the enemy State and (2) the role of the repressive state apparatus in actively fostering civilian fascism, and was characteristically adventurist. Underlying his tweet is the erroneous suggestion that the enemy State can presently be manipulated to act against its own assets, viz., civilian fascists. Cde. K. was clearly in the wrong and his conduct was deserving of both censure and disciplinary measures.

The tweet about SOPHIE was insensitive, offensive, and transmisogynistic in effect, albeit not in intent. Cde. K. has explained that he was unaware, at the time, of SOPHIE and, by extension, of her untimely death, and that the tweet was intended to be an innocuous pun. He expressed remorse for any hurt his tweet caused to those mourning SOPHIE’s death. We hold that a censure was in order, and that a correct disciplinary measure would have been to demand that Cde. K. publicly apologize via his Twitter account for his comments. This, in fact, was the immediate RAS response to this tweet: A woman-comrade told Cde. K. to apologize and reprimanded him via Twitter DMs, and he followed her instructions, apologizing to her, in turn, for wasting her time. We have included screenshots of the offending tweet and resulting interaction in the Appendix, below the main body of this document.

As for his conduct on *The Plough & Stars*, Cde. K. admits that he *did* typically speak more than either of his two co-hosts; this is readily apparent to anyone who listens to older episodes of the podcast. He maintains, however, that his reason for speaking as much as he did was to make sure that discussion on the podcast was lively. He felt that discussion on the podcast often died down to awkward silence when

he didn't carry it. From a listener's perspective, it certainly seems that there is some legitimacy to Cde. K.'s appraisal of the podcast's dynamics. However, such a dynamic is all the more reason to work with one's co-hosts, improving their skills as orators and developing a better "flow" of discussion, and it is not evident that such work was done — either by Cde. K. or his co-hosts, or, for that matter, by the party's Committee on Propaganda (PropCom). Cde. K. may very well have erred in this regard, but it seems that the error was not his alone, and should have been collectively overcome by the comrades involved in producing *The Plough & Stars* and by those in PropCom with the most audiovisual propaganda experience. In any event, instead of getting to the root of the problem, Cde. K. was simply identified as "speaking too much" and censured. While criticism of Cde. K. may very well have been in order, the problem is that the way this was handled — punitively, and absent any course-correction — did nothing to rectify the underlying problem, nothing to train our women-comrades to be better orators and propagandists, and nothing to improve our public-facing organs, instead resulting in an unintended detriment to the podcast and, more broadly, to our party's public-facing organs.

The disciplinary actions taken against Cde. K. as a result of this censure were as follows: Sometime in December 2020, Cde. K. was immediately suspended from the Party for Reclamation and Survival's Central Committee for a period of six (6) months (he was, to be clear, *not* suspended from party membership) and ordered to fulfill a course of remedial training in materialist feminism (coded MatFem in the party) through the RAS Party School during his suspension period.

Cde. K. readily submitted to these disciplinary measures, resigning from the Central Committee and enrolling in the Party School's next-semester MatFem course. He went on

to actively participate in and pass this course in June 2021. This effectively ended his suspension, allowing him to resume his former inner-party work.

Subsequently, that same month, Cde. K. was also narrowly reelected to his former seat on the Central Committee.

Claim: "As a result of this disciplinary process [i.e., the process described above], [Cde. K.] agreed to delete his twitter account and remain off the website for a period of six months while he engaged in self-criticism about his online behavior. Before this six month probationary period was over, it was discovered that Cde. K. had created a new, secret Twitter account, in violation of the disciplinary terms he agreed to."

Our investigation found this claim to be definitely and entirely false.

Following his censure, Cde. K. *offered* to deactivate his Twitter account. Instead, the chair of SecuCom at the time decided that his account *could remain up*, but that it would need to be closely monitored, because it served to represent not only Cde. K., but RAS collectively, because his account presented him in his official capacity as one of the party's leaders. Cde. K. was instructed to lock his account for a period lasting one week following the censure, and then to have any tweets relevant to the party pre-approved by SecuCom for a period lasting one month. Cde. K. complied with these instructions.

Later, sometime in January 2021, Cde. K. requested to be allowed to make a private ("locked") Twitter account for personal use. This request was granted by SecuCom and Cde. K., in turn, created the account.

This information has been verified by the former chair of SecuCom, who oversaw these disciplinary measures.

We are unsure of how or why this misinformation was given to Shenandoah Socialist Collective. After deliberating on the question, I proposed (speculatively, of course) that it is

possible that the misinformation was the result of an honest mistake: It may be that a “game of telephone” has been played, such that the parties who contacted SSC may have received information, misinterpreted or misremembered it, and reported what they thought they heard in the form of misinformation. Again, while this is only speculation, I proposed this hypothesis because it maintains an assumption of good faith — it does not assume that anyone is attempting to lie or deceive SSC and other parties involved — which we all recognize as critically important to maintaining an ethos of solidarity in any situation such as this.

In sum, our investigation found that Cde. K. was not ordered to delete his Twitter account for any period of time as a result of this December 2020 censure. He did submit to a closer monitoring of his public-facing online presence, and received permission to make a private (“locked”) account for personal matters.

Furthermore, our investigation found that Cde. K. did not violate the terms of the disciplinary measures taken against him. On the contrary, all the evidence we have, which is substantial, clearly shows that he complied with these measures in full.

Claim: “In response to this discovery [i.e., the misinformation in the above claim], a second disciplinary process was initiated in which it was proposed that Cde. K. be removed from his leadership positions within the party...”

Our investigation found that a second disciplinary process was initiated against Cde. K., but not for the reason given in this letter, and that Cde. K. was removed from any and all leadership positions as a result of this process.

As we have already explained, Cde. K. was not censured once more for making a “secret” Twitter account, as this did not happen, nor was he otherwise found to be in violation of party discipline during his suspension from the Central

Committee and remediation period. Our records show that this period (from December 2020 to June 2021) passed without further incident.

So, why, when, and under what circumstances was Cde. K. again censured?

In July 2021, around one month after he was reelected to his Central Committee seat, Cde. K. was again censured by two Committees of the RAS "Congress" (its unelected, antidemocratic inner-party; more on this later), GenCom and SecuCom.

According to a comrade who I count as a dear friend, who was then in leadership, this censure was instigated by a specific tweet, but was used as an opportunity to air — and recapitulate, and resurrect from an old, digital graveyard — every grievance against Cde. K., however unrelated, minor, or remote, noted during his entire tenure as a member of RAS. The instigating infraction in question is as follows:

Cde. K. tweeted "RAS should send a group to make him shut up," in reference to (but without directly "@-ing") a social fascist of the "patriotic socialist" variety who goes by Noah Krachevik.

In other words, Cde. K. was "vague-tweeting" that RAS should "send" people to silence a fascist. This was interpreted as a vague death threat — an interpretation that is, in my view, fair enough, however debatable. In turn, this tweet was cited as yet another example of Cde. K.'s unchecked individual adventurist tendencies.

Our investigation found that Cde. K. *did in fact* exhibit adventurist tendencies in this and other tweets, and we would concur (as would Cde. K. himself) that he often uses his social media presence in an unprofessional — at worst, an unprincipled — manner.

Indeed, members of the USU team, mostly myself and Cde. Sylveste, have criticized Cde. K. at various points, during our time working with him on this project and, earlier,

in the immediate aftermath of the RAS collapse, for his irresponsible online behavior. Our team has unanimously decided, as well, that Cde. K. shouldn't touch USU's official Twitter account. Despite this, however, we've continued working with Cde. K., because we feel that this pattern of irresponsible online conduct, however detrimental it might be to the press, does not represent a danger, either to members of our team (here I include myself) or to the USU project. Cde. K. has demonstrated a willingness to self-criticize, shift gears, and work to avoid repeating mistakes once criticized. He has also proven himself capable of effectively promoting the USU project and drawing together a network of comrades across the U.S. Empire, including Shenandoah Socialist Collective.

Furthermore, the concern that the aforementioned tweet would "invite scrutiny" (from the enemy State), which is a very reasonable security concern, was taken down a slippery slope, which arrived at an accusation of chauvinism. Because comrades of oppressed nationalities and genders would be particularly at risk in the event of a police raid, Cde. K.'s conduct was considered chauvinist. I do not believe this assertion can be dismissed out of hand; its premises are true, but in my view, the conclusion misunderstands what "chauvinism" really is. Yes, adventurism has unintended consequences, and yes, these consequences are borne disproportionately by socially marginalized comrades. But any misstep, even missteps that do not constitute adventurism, can "provoke" the agents of the enemy State to act violently against us. I know from practical experience that the slightest tactical error in the execution of a protest — the slightest deficiency in our contingency plans, the slightest unaccounted factor, etc. — can lead to comrades, most of whom are in some way marginalized, getting assaulted, arrested, and abused by the police, and I have suffered my share of violence as a result. This does

not mean that tactical errors, even those amounting to adventurism upon investigation, are motivated by or rooted in chauvinism. Certain party members here, as in many other places, confused organizational, tactical, strategic, and other problems as ideological problems, ergo problems of chauvinism, failing to see that, while these problems are of course all connected at a deeper level, from the point of view of practically improving and safeguarding the organization and its members, we cannot afford conflation that make a straightforward practical error so theoretically esoteric that it is rendered unresolvable. This conflation on the part of GenCom, in my view, stemmed from that committee's collective ideological and political underdevelopment, from the poverty of its theory and praxis, which will be discussed in greater depth further in this document.

Aside from (and listed after) the instigating infraction, i.e., the above-mentioned tweet vaguely threatening a fascist, three (3) further reasons were given for Cde. K.'s censure. We shall quote at length the original document, circulated internally within RAS, that explained the censure and the resulting disciplinary actions. We shall pause after each point to thoroughly address it.

"He has divulged unfinished and democratically untested drafts of party documents on Twitter, at once betraying party secrecy and publicly committing the party to positions we have not yet adopted by democratic centralism. [Cde. K.] cannot unilaterally set party strategy nor unilaterally decree what to divulge with the public, yet he seems to have arrogated to himself that privilege."

I can address this second point personally, because the "untested drafts" were screenshots from a theoretical work that Cde. K. and I were collaborating on.

When I was made aware (by the same dear friend I mentioned earlier) that Cde. K. was posting these screenshots — screenshots largely of my work — I became

very anxious, as I considered our working draft incomplete, unfinished, unrefined, and unprepared for publication of any sort. I was also, at the same time, somewhat excited to see Communists respond positively to our work; although, most of these posts received very little attention from Cde. K.'s online following, probably because they were much too dense for Twitter. I expressed my conflicted feelings to my friend, who in turn mentioned my discomfort to individuals in the inner-party, who in turn took this as an opportunity to censure Cde. K..

As for the document in question, Cde. K. had prepared the first draft himself. When it was circulated internally (in the RAS server) and I read it, I decided that I should put on pause the projects I'd been working on and focus my attention on a critique of the document — not because it was horrible, but because it showed real potential. At some point I released a partially complete critique, and Cde. K., in response, completely altered his own priorities and invited me to work with him. He was extremely receptive to my critique and expressed that the work I'd done could result in, to paraphrase, one of the most important theoretical documents to come out of the U.S. Communist movement in a few decades. I was, of course, flattered (and overwhelmed). From then on, the two of us began to collaborate in earnest.

Meanwhile, without consulting me, asking for my side of the story, or even informing me, certain inner-party committees had crafted a narrative that I was being mistreated, even "abused", by Cde. K. in our collaborative work. I was eventually made aware of this narrative, when, in an entirely unrelated conversation, an inner-party member mentioned how horribly unfair my situation had been. I found this baffling, and the explanation I was given only made me angry: I was told that it was "unfair" to me that Cde. K. had given me work to do, as this workload was surely debilitating and foisted on me without my consent. I

replied that, actually, I began this collaboration of my own initiative — recall that my part began with a critique of Cde. K.'s earlier version, which he was extremely receptive to, which in turn led to our ongoing collaboration on theory production — and that, as it happened, I actually enjoyed working with Cde. K.. When it became clear that I wasn't playing along with the narrative that had been crafted on my behalf, without my knowledge, the inner-party rapidly shifted tactics and branded me a villain — a co-conspirator of Cde. K.'s who must be eliminated, by any means necessary, including abusive means. (This episode will be summarized further in this document.)

This background is provided to illustrate why this second point of censure is simply false: The document the two of us collaborated on was not a "party document", because it did not represent official positions adopted by the party. Instead, it represented *the two of us, in collaboration, and nothing more*. No party secrets were betrayed, the party was not forced to commit to any positions whatsoever, and a "strategy" was by no means "set", because strategy was not articulated in any of the screenshots posted. *I know this, because I wrote much of what was posted.*

Additionally, this point demonstrates that the leading members of RAS at the time (the last of whom are still leading the party's moribund husk) have no idea what democratic centralism is. Their censure suggests that any revolutionary activities whatsoever, even as unambiguously and safely legal as posting updates on a long-term, collaborative theoretical project, taken up by two party members, is in violation of "democratic centralism". It also suggests that any project or task taken up by a party member must be approved by the party's highest bodies beforehand, which would not only be unnecessary, except in select cases, but would be (and was, in RAS) immensely wasteful of any party's labor resources. This is simply not what

democratic centralism means. The only “violation” Cde. K. (or I) committed was to not show sufficient subservience to the antidemocratic, fundamentally abusive structure that characterized RAS from the party’s founding (again, more on this later; for now we need to move on).

He has made his Twitter a place of periodic public venting about a party member who is also his partner. This is not a suitable use of party aligned accounts. Nor, if the comrades are undergoing marital strife, is public pressure via Twitter comradely behavior. Such issues between comrades are instead best mediated through democratic centralism at least to the point where it’s possible for them to work together in comradely love and treat the future of their relationship as something to plan as comrades. The Committee on Gender will investigate this point further as it will probably set precedent and should be handled delicately and with deep comradely support for both comrades.

This point was addressed directly by Cdes. Cde. K. and J., who responded to this charge when it was leveled. Their multiple attempts at communication were rebuffed by the Central Committee. The following is extracted from a letter dated 22 September 2021, co-authored by Cdes. Cde. K. and J., adjusted with Cde. J.’s agreement to suit the purpose of the present document:

To the extent that Cde. K. posted about disagreements between himself and J., this was part of general posting about everyone in his life. The party has no way to identify any individual post (and, at the time of the preparation of this document, because it deleted the account and all posts and did not save any record of them, it would be impossible to reconstruct these posts) as being related to J.. The party did not approach J. about these issues. It did not consult her in any way before this censure was released. It has, to date, never once spoken to her concerning any of the supposed issues mentioned here. This, more than any other element

of the censure, reveals the entire affair to be one conducted in bad faith; to feign concern about the relationship between the two party members without ever speaking to either one, without ever once speaking to J. who was the "victim" on whose behalf the party was here acting, reveals a lack of principle behind the entire affair.

Further, J. has made it clear that she does not use twitter, that she has never read any of the posts which the party criticizes, thus negating any "public pressure," and that further neither Cde. K. nor J. consider their marriage to be something "best mediated through democratic centralism," and doubly so where the party expressed no interest in attempting such mediation. Both comrades agree that their relationship is on a much better footing since departing RAS, partly because of the extensive efforts made by Cde. K. to equalize domestic labor loads and to balance party work with family.

To the above, I will only add the general comment that it is a ridiculous and almost perverse misunderstanding of democratic centralism to believe that the method can be applied to marriage counseling between spouses who are both members of the same party. The Party is the organization of revolutionaries and the vehicle of the revolutionary movement in their highest historical form, and in their capacity as Communists, spouses and other intimate partners are expected to work together as comrades in the struggle, as they would with all other comrades, i.e., without bending the Party to accommodate their private lives. The Party, in turn, has no bearing whatsoever upon the personal affairs of intimate partners, except to the extent that the actions of one or both (or more) partners in this domain is, by coincidence, also in violation of the individual's duties to the Party, e.g., if secrets are divulged inappropriately, or if chauvinist abuse is committed. These are the very rare exceptions. An extremely minor interpersonal relationship

dispute, like the one described above, could not possibly overlap with the Party's domain, and the Party therefore had no right to intervene. The comrades who made this "their business" were out of line and should have been, at the very least, reprimanded.

He has failed to learn the lessons of repeated censure and shown that his judgment is unbecoming of a public face of the party, a serious problem under democratic centralism when we find ourselves forced to react to comrade Gracchus' latest missteps, often with substantial labor required from us. This has continued with additional posting after being ordered to stop.

Here our investigation found a grain of truth: With regard to his social media conduct, while Cde. K. has improved over time, becoming more professional, it is completely fair to say that he still makes too many "missteps" to be trusted with the responsibilities of a "public face" of a Party.

For our part, the USU team has unanimously decided that the official social media accounts of the press shouldn't be managed by Cde. K.. This is no problem for our team, as we have other comrades capable of handling these duties. On the other hand, while we often criticize specific tweets Cde. K. posts regarding USU, these complaints have only been minor, and Cde. K. has responded professionally and taken steps, under our advice, to course-correct every time. We are in agreement that Cde. K.'s Twitter presence is a greater boon to the USU project than a detriment. (For my part, I am terrified of social media and of talking with men I don't know very well, owing to my social anxiety and trauma, so I certainly could not have done a better job promoting the press and drawing together a network of comrades.)

But for an organization requiring more structure and greater discipline than a press, namely for a Party, it is reasonable that someone who behaves like Cde. K. online would be instructed to stop acting as their organization's

public representative.

What would this look like “under democratic centralism”? It would be a very simple matter: A vote would be held and, if a resolution to this effect passed, Cde. K. would be ordered to clarify publicly (in this case, via his Twitter) that he doesn’t speak for his party (in this case, RAS), and instead his tweets only reflect his own views. From then on, he would use Twitter in the same way that most RAS members did, i.e., in an individual capacity, without actively disclosing his party membership. There is, however, no precedent under democratic centralism, at least in a *legal* party like RAS, to completely gag a member. The only situation that would permit such an extreme measure “under democratic centralism” is if the party, or a wing of the party (particularly a paramilitary wing), was illegal, therefore clandestine, and required a very high degree of secrecy, at the expense of fuller democracy, for the sake of operational security. Lenin is very clear that broad democracy must be sacrificed to a proportional degree in such cases (as was the case for the RSDLP, which was still a far more democratic party than most U.S. “Marxist” parties today), but that the maximum broadness of democracy is always preferable. We face considerable repression from the enemy State — this goes without saying — but a legal party in the U.S. should be significantly more democratic than Lenin’s RSDLP could have been, and incomparably more democratic than RAS ever was. If Cde. K. had been a member of an underground wing of RAS, then it could have been appropriate to gag him for the duration of his tenure in that wing, plus a brief stabilization period thereafter. It was not, however, appropriate to gag him at all, let alone for a year, under normal circumstances. If he had committed some egregious offense, e.g., by making an unacceptably chauvinist remark, then it could have been appropriate to suspend his party membership. But as we have already covered, our investigation found no evidence

of any such egregious chauvinism, and no such infractions are listed in either official document censuring Cde. K..

Below is the list of disciplinary measures taken against Cde. K., extracted directly from the official censure document, without alteration:

- remove his permission to run a Twitter account affiliated with or known to the party
- order the catdad Twitter account and all other related Twitter accounts shuttered
- bar him from Twitter until January 1 2023, and no social media exemptions to post party affiliated content will be considered until January 1 2024
- remove him from the Central Committee
- bar him from running for Central Committee until January 1 2025, and
- demote him from Chair of the Northeast Action Committee, with the current Vice Chair to solely assume acting Chairship until Congress confirms a full chair of NEAC.

As we have already explained, the first point, to remove Cde. K.'s permission to run an account affiliated with RAS, could be allowable under democratic centralism. The second and third points, however, are beyond any democratic procedure, and could only have been reasonably and justly enforced in a situation that was reasonably, justly, and temporarily undemocratic (e.g., hypothetically, in an illegal underground wing of the party, during the period of Cde. K.'s activities therein), which certainly did not apply to RAS at any time.

As to the fourth, fifth, and sixth points, the fact that two inner-party committees, SecuCom and GenCom, could act unilaterally to remove an individual from the Central Committee and from his post as chair of his regional action committee (his branch, in other words), without a vote of the party's elected Congress (which, anyway, effectively

didn't exist) and without the approval of the members of his regional action committee (as to the sixth point), reveals the antidemocratic nature of RAS's structure and the antidemocratic attitudes of many of its leaders. In any democratic centralist party, the Central Committee is elected by and from the Congress, which is in turn formed of representatives from the lower levels (regional and local, etc.) of the party. A member of the Central Committee can certainly be unseated, but only through the party's democratic processes, and not through the antidemocratic bureaucratic maneuverings of committees that should, in practice, stand only in an advisory and simple administrative capacity.

To further complicate the matter, internal deliberation between GenCom and SecuCom at the time of censorship was characterized by a steeply uneven relationship between the two committees. According to three USU members who were seated in SecuCom at the time of these deliberations, GenCom leadership proposed that the two committees investigate and prepare a censure as a joint effort. However, GenCom actually submitted a fully-written censure, having carried out the investigation unilaterally, and then demanded it be adopted, as written, and without further alterations, by SecuCom. By this time an atmosphere that, in our reflections, could be characterized as one of witch-hunting, had gripped the party; the antidemocratic faction, perhaps still in the process of coalescing at this stage, was already enforcing its will through vague threats of censure (as its normal *modus operandi*) and through abuse and terror tactics, such as "round-robin" style interrogations, lasting entire weeks, and in several cases "provoked" against neurodivergent comrades by well-understood neuroatypical behaviors. In this environment of general fear, the SecuCom members didn't feel empowered to dissent against or stand up to the antidemocratic faction, largely nested in GenCom,

that proposed the censure; when a few SecuCom members did attempt to voice opposition to the draft, in whole or in part, they were explicitly intimidated and summarily dismissed. Failure to vocally and affirmatively support and vote for this most extreme actions, not only against Cde. K., but against any comrade deemed a threat to the antidemocratic faction's hegemony, by this point meant that one became suspect themselves of harboring the same "gender chauvinist" deviations that Cde. K. was alleged to exhibit. We should state clearly here that while most of those intimidated were men, women-comrades were not spared this treatment, if they "aligned" themselves (knowingly or not) with efforts to reform the party. In the weeks following the vote, several members of SecuCom (including some individuals involved in preparing this document or affiliated with USU), voiced frustration with the way that they had effectively been silenced in this process. It is worth noting that every one of these individuals, both those involved in USU and those who took different paths, is now unaffiliated with the party, having either been expelled or "compelled to resign" under unrelenting pressure and, at worst, outright abuse from the antidemocratic faction that now controls the party. Thus, the process of removing Cde. K. from his leadership positions and his social media accounts was not only undemocratic owing to the lack of input allowed to the party's "Congress" and general membership; it was not even minimally democratic, even if one considers a joint censure by two standing committees, GenCom and SecuCom, to be minimally democratic. Moreover, with the aid of hindsight, we now know that these efforts were steps in a concerted, most likely pre-planned effort on the part of the antidemocratic faction to consolidate absolute control over the party — an effort that, unfortunately, succeeded.

Moreover, the period of Cde. K.'s disbarment from the Centrl Committee and all other leadership positions —

4.5 years — was absurdly harsh. If Cde. K. had committed such egregious offenses as to warrant a 4.5-year-long punishment, then a more correct measure would have been simply to expel him, while possibly allowing him to reapply for membership after a few years. (This really depends on the nature and severity of the hypothetical offense; a permanent expulsion might also have been called for, depending on what, hypothetically, happened.) To order any punishment lasting 4.5 years against any party member, without so much as a vote by the Congress, is not only a clear violation of that member's rights under democratic centralism, but also an outrageously disproportionate punishment. To quote a letter co-authored by Cde. K. and J., addressed to the Central Committee, dated 22 September 2021,

The period ... is twice as long as the Party ... has existed. It is longer than most jail sentences I plead my clients to on a daily basis. The conditions which gave rise to the censure are likely to stop existing well before the censure runs out. It is no salve to us to know we can ask for it to be overturned early.

But putting aside whether the disciplinary measures, and even the censure itself, were justly and justifiably enacted — our investigation found that Cde. K. complied with the terms outlined in this censure document. He resigned from the Central Committee and from the chair of the Northeast Action Committee without protest, deleted his Twitter account, and did not make a new Twitter account for the duration of his tenure as a member of RAS. This demonstrates to us that Cde. K. was willing to comply with unjust disciplinary measures, taken against him in an antidemocratic process, and in so doing to sacrifice his rights under democratic centralism, for the sake of his party's internal stability. Not only this, but Cde. K. went beyond what was required of him by the censure, by

proactively removing himself from *The Plough & Stars*, so as not to inadvertently act as a representative of the party, in contravention of the censure against him.

At this point, in hindsight, the real, underlying purpose of these bureaucratic maneuverings and punitive measures against Cde. K. becomes clear: A faction was consolidating within RAS, characterized (1) by a commitment to maintaining the party's fundamentally antidemocratic structure, and to keeping certain members in positions of power, and (2) by what can only be described as a general "anti-theory" and "anti-education" sentiment. Cde. K. was identified as one of the leading proponents of democratization, and, as one of the most ideologically developed party members, actively engaged in theory production (alongside myself) as an "academic" deviant.

Our investigation found, instead, that Cde. K. and J. were compliant to a fault. In hindsight, we should have known that something had gone severely wrong — something that not only threatened Cde. K.'s position in the party, but also threatened several other members (myself included) with abuse, and threatened to collapse the party itself.

Claim: "... eliciting from him [i.e., Cde. K.] a response, once again, charged with chauvinism directed at his gender oppressed comrades and prompting him to resign from the party rather than submit to group discipline."

Our investigation found this claim to be definitely and entirely false.

The censure and disciplinary measures enacted undemocratically and punitively against Cde. K. (and, by extension, J.) by GenCom and SecuCom did elicit eventual responses — not from Cde. K. alone, but from both Cde. K. and J. together, as the censure affected both comrades.

As mentioned previously, together, Cde. K. and J. made multiple attempts to communicate with the RAS Central Committee, all of which were ignored. These attempts, in

the form of letters, are dated to between 22 July 2021 and 1 October 2021, ending with Cde. K. and J.'s joint letter of resignation from RAS.

However, our investigation found no evidence of chauvinism of any type in any of these communications, either from Cde. K. or J..

We have at our disposal an archive of every communication sent from Cde. K. (and J.) during this period, and we reviewed all the material. In order to illustrate the general tenor of these communications, I will quote at length a few excerpts. To begin with, Cde. K. and J.'s first letter to the Central Committee includes an admission, on Cde. K.'s part, that some of the disciplinary measures were warranted:

In the specific: removing me from twitter was probably for the best. Regardless of whether I had been instructed not to post violent rhetoric in the past, the Party is certainly capable of determining whether I should be permitted to do that in the future.

As per my previous discussion of democratic centralism, vis-à-vis the antidemocratic structure of RAS, I believe that Cde. K. was here incorrect to accept that the party had the right, under democratic centralism, to gag him. But his error on this question only demonstrates Cde. K.'s willingness to comply with the inner-party's standing committees and to respect the process, even though the process was unjust and abusive.

Another quote regarding Cde. K.'s usage of Twitter follows:

The allegation that I "divulged unfinished and democratically untested drafts of [P]arty documents" is, while technically true, not a strong point in this censure. The drafts were not marked as Party documents. They were not secret Party information. They were not contested, new, or special elements of Party theory but rather simple statements of well-accepted theory couched in new language. To claim

that by posting screenshots of my own theoretical work in trying to create a primer on dialectical materialism I "set party strategy" and "unilaterally decreed what to divulge with the public" is ludicrous. If it is the intention of the Party to pre-clear all theoretical statements from all Party members to the public, then operations will very soon cease entirely under this burden. This is to say nothing of the fact that the material I posted was part of a project I was strongly encouraged to work non-stop on, at a nearly inhuman rate of speed, and which, during that time, I had several discussions with propaganda about "teasing" or releasing parts of the drafts to build public excitement. That being said, the drafts that were eventually released were not identified as Party material except through the fact that I was the one posting them.

As per our earlier discussion, this appraisal of the situation is basically correct. And, while it is admittedly not calm in tone — it sounds exasperated — there is no detectable hint of chauvinism underlying this passage. Moreover, Cde. K.'s point that it would be unbelievably taxing on the party, as a collective, if every last modicum of theoretical work written by a party member had to be pre-approved by a vote of the party's Congress before it was "divulged" — this is particularly salient to those aware that a major reason for the collapse of RAS was that its antidemocratic structure resulted in extreme top-heaviness, which in turn resulted in extreme overburdening, labor shortages, and crises of burnout among the more advanced members.

This passage also speaks to a problem of internal party policy regarding social media that goes beyond the online conduct of any one member acting as a party representative. When the Committee on Propaganda (PropCom) and SecuCom jointly established the framework which was to govern RAS members' social media usage, they did so in a way that forced an indeterminate admixture

of members' personal expression and official party-representative capacities. Certain members were selected to be spokespersons, official voices of the party, and these members were directed to conduct themselves as the *only official mouthpieces for party communications* outside of the official RAS Twitter account. These spokespersons were not, however, provided sufficient instruction and training on how to delineate their personal and official capacities online. So, when an individual spokesperson made a comment, or a joke, or (in this instance) a post about a project they had been working on in their individual capacity as a Communist, the party found it impossible to level a coherent response, based on its own policy. Sometimes the post would be treated as if it were of a personal nature, sometimes the opposite. As a corollary, online actions carried the dual character of being both personal and official simultaneously. Cde. K.'s collaborative project, for instance, was inadvertently made official by the fact of this administrative incoherence, and this contradiction resolved itself in the grossly undemocratic censorship we have so far examined here. PropCom and SecuCom attempted to remedy this shortcoming with more carefully prepared guidelines than had been available before, but this effort ultimately failed to address the underlying incoherence of the policy and, importantly, neglected to comment on or retroactively adjust the terms of the censure against and resulting censorship of Cde. K..

I will provide one last excerpt concerning Cde. K.'s usage of Twitter. I hope that our comrades will excuse just how absurdly lengthy the following passage is, but for the sake of this report's transparency, I have not abridged it at all. Here it is:

It has also come to my attention that the Party at large appears to have been operating under the belief that the katsfoter account was being run as though I were a professional social media manager – that is, that

propaganda was either reading my tweets before I tweeted them, or else that I was consulting a rubric as to what was considered "proper" posting for our brand. The guidelines I received from propaganda were very short (I cannot reference them directly because, when I stepped down from Congress, in consultation with Cmrdr [name redacted] as both a GenCom officer and the archivist, I deleted my archive, which I no longer had clearance to possess) and were mostly constrained to not publicly attacking or mocking women or oppressed nations and not directly threatening public officials. In the immediate wake of my first censure for posting a joke about Dick van Dyke, which I believe was reported for containing an anti-lesbian slur in the form of the actor's name, an inappropriate and insensitive pun about the artist Sophia [sic.], and other tweets which were reported to the Party, the Committee on Security instructed me that I was no longer permitted to make personal posts or post as though the account were myself, and was only to post things that were 1) theory or 2) party announcements. As a result, my Twitter engagement plummeted, mutual followers reached out to me to make sure I was ok, and our recruitment suffered. After following this restrictive posting schedule for one month, Security and Propaganda jointly lifted that restriction and Propaganda provided the very brief guidelines.

If I had been made aware that a social media exemption would require me to transform my personal posting into the work of a social media manager, I would have refused it. I did not consider myself to be acting as a social media adjunct for the RAS, and the confusion that resulted (was I an individual that was merely "affiliated" with RAS? Was I the official voice of RAS?) made it difficult to determine what the limits of my posting should be. Further, as someone with poor impulse control and Attention Deficit

Hyperactivity Disorder, I used twitter as a place to dispose of momentary thoughts and urges, not as a place to make considered efforts toward following a propaganda plan. That being said, obviously making threats that included the Party itself, even as a joke, were not only out of bounds for a social media manager, but for any member at all, under any circumstances.

I did not then have time to be an RAS social media manager, which is a full time job and which bourgeois corporations control with guidelines that are often upwards of fifty pages in length. For the sake of the other similarly situated comrade, [name redacted], I hope that between the rest of the Party, it can be worked out what exactly is expected of a cleared comrade; clearly it is something more restrictive than "continue to post in the same fashion as before." Hopefully it will be determined to be something less restrictive than consulting a list of rules before posting, or submitting posts to a preclearance committee.

Yet again, upon substantial deliberation, the other members of the core USU team in attendance, including myself and Cdes. Sylveste and Simcha, found no instances of chauvinism, even buried under the surface.

In fact, quite on the contrary, we found that J. was forced to defend herself from the not-so-subtle gender chauvinism to which she was subjected in the GenCom–SecuCom joint censure. As explained previously, it was blatantly chauvinist for either committee to speak for J., about her own marriage, without her prior knowledge or consent, without so much as consulting her. The fact that SecuCom and GenCom (recall, this is the "Committee on Oppressed Genders") felt that a woman-comrade needed to be "spoken for" concerning her own marriage, without her affirmative approval, and the fact that those committees felt they had the right to intervene in the minute personal affairs of two married comrades, when those affairs had no bearing whatsoever on the party,

and when both spouses felt that their relationship was in no way the party's business, reveals that the pretense of "combating gender chauvinism" was nothing more than that — a pretense and a facade.

Furthermore, despite their grievances, neither Cde. K. nor J. were "prompted to resign from the party rather than submit to group discipline." Our investigation has decidedly established that the exact opposite is true: Cde. K. and J. both remained members of the party for nearly three (3) months after the censure, from mid-July 2021 until 1 October 2021. Their actual reasons for resigning from the party are explained in their joint letter of resignation, which I will quote at length:

For the past three years, I have worked at the direction of and also in directing the formation of the RAS, but the time has come for our departure. [J.] and I have both made many sacrifices for the Party; we have sacrificed time together as a family and time with friends so that I could attend numerous meetings, strategy sessions, recording sessions, and spend time producing economic theory and analysis.

We have been two of the three operating members of New Haven Red Aid for over a year, giving up every single Sunday morning to prepare and supply food for the station and half of our Saturday nights to do the same. [J.] has been left to care for our child while I attended organizing meetings for rallies, Party meetings, and marched with local organizers. We have both given up things to work for the Party, and we have both been a constant presence with the public in New Haven and at the Red Aid Station where we are known and recognized by the community.

Both [J.] and myself consider the latest censure to represent a repudiation of that labor and those sacrifices; we had intended to request a special leave of absence at some point going forward that would permit us to remain at a low work load: writing articles, hosting the Plough and

Stars, providing strategic and tactical input to the central organs, and from time to time running and supporting the Red Aid Station.

It has become clear that my continued work at the highest levels of Party organizing has been considered and may very well be detrimental to Party growth and development. The censure placed on me also removes much of [J.'s] input in the theoretical direction of the Party and removes many of the reasons for a long-term leave of absence or other specially-fashioned term that would permit us to support the Party.

Neither [J.] nor I, at this point, feel the desire to work at the Red Aid Station while I am under the four-and-one-half-year censure that removes me as a direct representative of the Party to the masses. If we determine we do wish to contribute to Red Aid in the future, it is just as easy to do that as a Friend of the Party.

As a final note, both [J.] and myself are concerned about the lack of comradliness within the Party; members, including both of us, have been treated as suspect agents rather than volunteers who have devoted immense resources in both time and in raw materials—thousands of hours and dollars—to the advancement of the cause. The internal attitude appears to us, and perhaps to others, to be that the Party is at risk of infiltration not by the police forces of the U.S. empire, but by ideologically compromised members who are not acting in good faith, and who must be treated the same way the U.S.S.R. had to treat enemy technical workers after the revolution. This is not conducive to good work, and has degraded the capacity of the Party at least in a few instances to perform the labor for which it was designed.

It is my hope that this will not foreclose a later return to the Party, but the date of that return is likely to be many years in the future.

Without turning this report into an in-depth textual analysis of every communication Cde. K. and J. wrote to the Central Committee, I believe we can safely say that this letter, and the preceding excerpts, are decidedly not "charged with chauvinism directed at his gender oppressed comrades," nor any type of chauvinism whatsoever.

That said, I wish to call to attention one aspect of this letter of resignation. Cdes. Cde. K. and J. state that they did not feel the desire to continue their work for the RAS Red Aid station in New Haven, due to Cde. K.'s removal from serving "as a direct representative of the Party to the masses." I appreciate that this may, at first sight, be interpreted as an example of chauvinism, namely because Cde. K., a man, does not want to engage in practical, on-the-ground work if he cannot take a vocal role (specifically as a propagandist representing the party) in doing that work.

This interpretation can be systematically refuted when one understands the RAS Red Aid program in general and the New Haven station in particular.

In the first place, when placed in its context, i.e., in the letter, this rationale becomes clearly not about Cde. K.'s (or J.'s) personal desire to serve as a vocal representative of the party, but for the party to be vocally represented at the New Haven RAS Red Aid station at all. The entire point of Red Aid, the factor that singularly elevates it beyond mere "red charity" or "mutual aid", and makes it a genuine Serve the People program, is that it is a vehicle for raising consciousness through propaganda, agitation, and mass education. Thus it is absolutely essential that at least some of the party members responsible for any given local Red Aid station, and preferably those who are most capable, serve the party as its direct representatives to the masses.

In the case of the New Haven station, Cde. K. and J. were two (2) of only three (3) or four (4) comrades who regularly — that is, every single week, absent emergencies

— showed up, and, owing to their class positions and income level, they supplied (that is, purchased) most of the necessary materials (food, water, etc.). In all, as many as seven (7) comrades worked at the New Haven Red Aid station, but most of these comrades attended infrequently, often due to the difficulty of commuting long distances, or due to a lack of energy on their weekends. Of the comrades who regularly attended, Cde. K. and J. were among the minority who were comfortable engaging large crowds as orators, who regularly showed up and thereby developed a rapport with the community served by the New Haven station, and who were at a sufficient level of ideological and political development to serve as propagandists.

This was not a hypothetical concern. By the time these sentiments were expressed, in their joint letter of resignation (1 October 2021), J. and Cde. K. had been continuing to support the New Haven Red Aid station for over two months, and in so doing witnessed first-hand the results of Cde. K.'s compliance with the censure against him: The New Haven Red Aid station suffered immediately from a drop in the effectiveness of our comrades' engagement with the masses, and turned into little more than a food distribution activity, rather than a consciousness-raising tactic of vital significance to the party's revolutionary strategy.

On one day in September 2021, during a regular Red Aid tabling, the New Haven station served as the hosting site of a plenary convention of RAS; inner-party members from other regional action committees attended the tabling. Most of those in attendance did not assist with the food distribution and engagement work, and instead talked among themselves in a small circle *while the Red Aid tabling was carried on* by Cde. K., J., and a few other Northeast Action Committee comrades. A mass meeting had been scheduled to coincide with the plenary; one had been successfully held at the prior plenary. However, the event failed to draw in, effectively

engage, and maintain the interest of a sufficient number of people to carry out a “mass” conversation, inclusive of the whole unhoused community — in large part because the task of leading the mass meeting, which had previously been Cde. K.’s, was taken up by another member of the party, who has often been openly hostile towards the local unhoused community over (real and perceived) reactionary ideas that existed among them, and that exist generally among the U.S. Empire’s masses. This comrade, a cis man, grabbed a bullhorn and promptly began annoying, condescending to, and alienating those gathered. Inappropriate and amateurish conduct turned into chauvinist posturing. Soon, one of Cde. K.’s fellow Northeast AC members asked him to confront the errant comrade and to take the bullhorn back (in the most comradely way possible, of course), and then to attempt to reignite the meeting by taking lead — recall that Cde. K. and J. had established a strong, lasting rapport with the community they were serving — but Cde. K., in compliance with his censure, felt he couldn’t and none of the many people present attempted to remedy the situation. No one else felt prepared to stand up to the man in question, so the mass meeting not only ended in total failure, but ended up undoing considerable progress made by the Northeast AC during the past year and more of Red Aid work.

Despite this decline in the New Haven station’s efficacy, Cde. K. and J. make clear in their joint letter of resignation that they would be willing to support the New Haven Red Aid table in the future — not as party members, but as friends of the party. This would mean supporting a definite action by providing labor-time and materials, without, at the same time, acting as representatives of the party. Cdes. Cde. K. and J. reasoned, in our view correctly, that if this was the only manner in which they were *allowed* to support a party action, then there was no need for them to remain party members; they could just as well support RAS — at

that time, both Cde. K. and J. still wanted to support the party — as non-member volunteers. In other words, the stipulations of Cde. K.'s censure were such that his and J.'s resignation from the party would in no way meaningfully change the situation at the New Haven Red Aid station.

Aside from the letters sent by Cde. K. and J. to the RAS Central Committee, there was only one other communication by Cde. K. that could be considered (at best, tangentially) "elicited in response" to his July 2021 censure. To explain, I'll need to back up slightly.

Sometime in mid-September, the dear friend and comrade I mentioned earlier, who was then a sitting member of the RAS Central Committee, approached me asking for help with a letter to the RAS "Congress" that she and Cde. K. were writing together. As they were both members of the Northeast Action Committee, she and Cde. K. had had the opportunity to discuss the party's organizational problems at length. At the time, these problems had reached the point of crisis — an ongoing, increasingly severe crisis — and this letter was a last-ditch effort (although we didn't realize just how last-ditch it was at the time) to correct our course, before the party collapsed in on itself. I agreed to look over the letter and, upon reading it, made extensive additions and revisions to it. The draft I sent back to my friend, which in my files is dated 21 September 2021, was adopted with minor further revisions, and sent to the Central Committee the following day, on 22 September 2022. I would estimate that more than half of the document is my work, about one-third is Cde. K.'s, and the rest is my friend's, although her discussions with Cde. K. and myself also underlie much of our contributions, so there's no clear way to divide up the letter's content. It is perhaps worth stating, unambiguously, that this letter was not from Cde. K. alone, but from two women-comrades (myself and a friend) and Cde. K., and that Cde. K.'s contributions were substantial, but not primary.

he contents of this letter, which when finished amounted to over 11,000 words, were (1) an extensive analysis of the organizational problems at the root of the crisis that was then slowly, but surely, destroying RAS from within, followed by (2) a course of action to correct those errors, developed by the three of us. Rather than reiterate its major points, some of which have already been briefly touched upon in this report, we have decided to attach that letter to this one, including it in our report directly, as we feel that, while imperfect, it still very much stands on its own merits.

We will, however, confidently assert that there was no gender chauvinism whatsoever in this letter, and as such we doubt that this could be “the response charged with chauvinism” that the present claim refers to. We are including this letter with our report (1) to cover all bases and (2) to demonstrate just how broken, antidemocratic, and abusive RAS had become.

Returning to the present claim, that Cde. K. resigned “rather than submit to group discipline,” our investigation found this claim to be false.

Cde. K. *did* willingly submit to and comply with the orders outlined in his censure, despite that the censure was carried out undemocratically (without any vote by the “Congress”, which itself was an unelected and largely illusory body), was chauvinistic towards his wife, and, in our view, was ridiculously disproportionate to the actual offense (that he posted a single adventurist-minded, irresponsible, and potentially dangerous tweet).

So, why did Cde. K. (and J.) resign?

Aside from the problems discussed above — to reiterate, Cde. K. was barred from contributing in any way to the party’s development, while Cde. K. and J. together watched their Red Aid station deteriorate, and therefore correctly recognized that there was no “point” to them remaining

party members, when they could just as well support it as friends of the party — the decisive factor was that communication between Cde. K. and J., on the one hand, and the RAS inner-party (including the Central Committee and other standing committees, such as GenCom and SecuCom) has completely broken down. Despite repeated attempts to reach out and communicate with party leadership, in good faith, Cde. K. and J. were systematically ignored. This, while the party continued to collapse. If one is locked in the brig on a sinking ship, and the captain refuses to answer one's pleas to be let out and allowed to help patch up the holes, then escaping and finding the nearest liferaft is a reasonable course of action. The antidemocratic party leadership was allowing RAS to spiral towards collapse, and was subjecting many of its members (myself included) to abuse in the process. So, the time had clearly come for those who could properly see the situation (keep in mind, many of us were kept in the dark by leadership throughout the spiral, until it was too late to gracefully exit) to jump ship, and abandon the party they'd devoted so much time, labor, and love to building.

We could no more condemn Cde. K. or J. for their departure than we could condemn ourselves for leaving (or, in my case, not returning to after getting unjustly expelled from) RAS when all other options had been exhausted, and so had we.

Claim: "Following his resignation, Cde. K. instigated and encouraged the harassment of the trans women who had been involved with bringing to light his problematic online behavior and attempting to discipline him..."

Our investigation found this claim to be unsubstantiated by a wealth of available evidence, as well as, to the comrades who have worked with Cde. K. most and know him best, including his wife, inconsistent with Cde. K.'s character. Furthermore, the two trans women on the core USU team, including myself, have had no similar experiences with Cde.

K., and indeed have found him to be a stalwart ally — even if, admittedly, I find him somewhat frustrating to work with at times. Therefore, we have concluded that this accusation is *most likely* false.

We are unclear as to whether the charge of “instigating and encouraging harassment” refers to any platform in particular. For example, Discord is mentioned — and our investigation into Cde. K.’s conduct on Discord with regard to RAS is discussed further on. But this may also refer to, for example, Cde. K.’s Twitter account. Or, it may not refer to social media at all, and instead might refer to “backroom” communications aimed at “instigating and encouraging harassment” against those “trans women involved with bringing to light his problematic online behavior and attempting to discipline him” (i.e., RAS inner-party members) within the party itself, through its official channels.

We decided to investigate each of these possible meanings, however improbable at first glance.

The obvious place to start was with the RAS server, during the months immediately preceding and following Cde. K.’s and J.’s departure from the party. A comrade who was in the RAS inner-party apparatus during this period, from September to October 2021, has provided the below information.

Multiple former members of the Committee on Party Security, one of the inner-party committees responsible for censuring Cde. K., who were sitting members of SecuCom during this period, have verified that the last censure issued against Cde. K. was the one issued in July 2021. Cdes. Sylveste and Austin (AKA “Lyxzen” on our discord server and formerly in RAS), both members of the core USU team, were sitting members of SecuCom during this period, and would not have worked with Cde. K. following their resignations from the party had they witnessed the behavior with which

he is presently charged. Furthermore, multiple ex-RAS members — and this includes every member of our team, as well as Cde. K.'s wife and comrades who are not involved with the USU project — have confirmed that they did not witness Cde. K. instigating or encouraging the harassment of any trans woman at any point during or after his tenure as a member of RAS. No complaints regarding such behavior were ever filed against Cde. K. within RAS. This is despite the fact that the party's organizational culture strongly encouraged gender-oppressed comrades to report any instance of possible gender chauvinism whatsoever. I can personally confirm that during most of my experience in RAS, I felt safe reporting, and was encouraged to report, gender chauvinism from anyone in the party, and even to report any generally unpleasant behavior from men that wasn't necessarily chauvinist — until the very last week of my membership, during which party leadership maneuvered to dispose of me *after* I had suffered and reported multiple instances of chauvinism and abuse committed against me by leading members of the inner-party apparatus. Coupled with the fact that even infractions as minor as a single insensitive tweet, an honest mistake with no ill-intent, were levied against Cde. K. as examples of a pattern of gender chauvinism and punished with years-long sentences, there can be little doubt that *had he committed such abuse* as "instigating and encouraging harassment" of trans women — had there been any evidence whatsoever of such behavior — he would have been summarily expelled from RAS.

But he wasn't, because no such evidence exists, because Cde. K. almost certainly never engaged in any such behavior.

Other than the RAS server, we have still to investigate Twitter as a potential source of the charge that Cde. K. "instigated and encouraged harassment" against his former comrades.

We found only one possible instance of conflict — not

abuse — that specifically occurred on Twitter, to which the anonymous party who “made [SSC] aware of alarming information regarding ... Cde. K.” may, at a considerable stretch, be referring. In this instance, we have the benefit of having, each of us on the core USU team, *directly witnessed* the incident unfold in real time, as it occurred early on in the collaboration that eventually blossomed into the USU project. We therefore have the benefit of knowing the context and Cde. K.’s intent, which means we know unambiguously and categorically that “what happened” was not harassment, nor any other form of abuse. Nonetheless, we included a reevaluation of this instance in our investigation and discussed it thoroughly, and will here summarize the evidence and our conclusions.

The incident in question occurred mainly on 14 March 2022, but I reviewed absolutely every tweet Cde. K. posted in the two-week period before and after this (from 7 March until 21 March).

In the months after he left RAS, Cde. K. tweeted indirectly and rather vaguely about his experiences in the party, although without ever naming the party, and certainly without ever “instigating and encouraging harassment” (or any actions) against its members or attempting to undermine it.

Most of these tweets appear to be incomplete ideas taken from a full analysis of the RAS collapse, titled *Errors in Party Construction*, on which Cde. K. and a few other comrades had collaborated before I reestablished contact with them; this document has never been published. When, some few months after my expulsion from RAS, I decided to reconnect with Cde. K. via Signal, he shared this analysis with me (with the permission of its co-authors), and I read it in full. I not only found nothing malicious in this document, but indeed found that its authors mainly blamed *themselves* — Errors refers to those of the authors — for allowing the now-dominant

antidemocratic faction to form, outmaneuver them, and procedurally wrest control, while in the process subjecting multiple comrades to outrageous abuses. In many ways this document is the successor to the letter Cde. K., myself, and our mutual friend sent to the RAS "Congress" in our failed last-ditch attempt to introduce vital reforms, most importantly democratization, and thereby save it. We plan, in the coming weeks, before the launch of the *Red Clarion* and first major step in the USU project's development, to release an updated, refined, and completed version of this *Errors in Party Construction* document, which will serve as a full analysis of the development and eventual collapse of RAS, and the lessons this experience can teach not only ourselves, but (we hope) our entire movement.

So, for example, on 6 March 2022, Cde. K. tweeted, "IT'S NOT JUST SELF-CRITICISM, IT'S SELF-AND-MUTUAL CRITICISM I FEEL LIKE THE ENTIRE WESTERN LEFT HAS BEEN DEPRIVED OF THIS IMPORTANT KNOWLEDGE," and in another tweet posted the next day wrote, "demanding absolute ideological and/or praxological purity on pain of expulsion or being shunned from a group is a left deviation."

As many Shenandoah Socialist Collective members who have been long-time followers or "mutuals" with Cde. K. on Twitter likely know, this is pretty typical of the way he tweets (his "online tone", etc.). Note that the subject of his criticism is left unidentified, although Cde. K. has verified that he was talking about RAS.

Cde. K. avoided identifying RAS for two main reasons:

First, because he did not want to engage in unprincipled behavior. He has maintained this position for as long as I've collaborated with him, and this commitment can be verified by comrades (including J.) who've worked with him longer than I have since his departure from RAS. We have no reason to doubt the sincerity of Cde. K.'s desire not to engage in an unprincipled attack on an already-collapsing organization.

Second, because the comrades with whom Cde. K. was working, after they all “jumped ship” later in 2021, feared repercussions from some of the remaining RAS membership, particularly the antidemocratic faction that had, by then, commandeered absolute control over what remained of the party. Cde. K. respected these fears, and on multiple occasions checked his behavior and apologized when concerns were raised about certain tweets he posted — tweets as vague as the above examples — that had any reasonable chance of provoking reprisal attacks. In other words, Cde. K. remained willing to self-censor to accommodate his comrades, even in a “collective” which at that time lacked any formal structure. This is not the attitude of a brazen, egotistical adventurer, even though Cde. K. certainly has made errors of an adventurer character in the past.

Other comrades on the core USU team confirm that, from his departure until the incident in question, this is the extent to which Cde. K. engaged with the party, its members, and its friends (i.e., not at all) on Twitter.

The incident in question began on 14 March 2022, at around 8:00 AM (EST), when a trans woman named Scout, who had been long-time “mutuals” with Cde. K., and whom Cde. K. then still followed on Twitter, tweeted,

*careful who you idolize online!!! they might be a man who has been removed from two separate communist parties for gender chauvinism, and breaking democratic centralism!!
lmaoooo*

This was clearly a subtweet about Cde. K., as he perfectly fit the description. Scout also mentioned in a reply, “this person follows me.”

Because Cde. K. followed Scout up to this point, he saw this tweet, at which point he unfollowed Scout and subtweeted her in turn. He tweeted, first, at around 9:00 AM (EST) the same day, “The gender chauvinism of threatening a patriotic

socialist online," followed by a tweet posted several minutes later which read, more provocatively, "If you're gonna try to discipline a lawyer you'd better keep receipts and hope they show what you say, just saying."

Later that day, at around 4:00 PM (EST), Cde. K. tweeted, "If your formation begins to collapse, you must entertain the possibility that you have made some errors."

At around 5:00 PM (EST) the same day, Cde. K. tweeted, "kids, I kept all the receipts."

Within several minutes of this last tweet, that is, also around 5:00 PM (EST), Scout tweeted,

making vague tweets about having "receipts" on trans women is a really weird thing to tweet bud!! :)

The last tweet in the controversy, from either Scout or Cde. K., on 14 March, is a tweet from Cde. K., posted around 7:30 PM, which reads, "People will really just get on twitter and said anything they want with utter confidence."

Then, on 15 March, at around 7:00 AM, Cde. K. tweets, "No investigation no right to speak, unless you wanna spread incorrect rumors about other communists."

This seems to be the last tweet in the controversy from either Scout or Cde. K. on 15 March, and possibly is the end of the controversy altogether. A few tweets in the following days may be connected, but this is unclear.

As I stated previously, by the date of this incident, I was already involved in the informal collaboration on theoretical work with Cdes. Cde. K., Sylveste, Simcha, and others that eventually blossomed into the USU project. Put bluntly, we watched this Twitter controversy between Scout and Cde. K. unfold in real time.

At the time, we advised Cde. K. to stop engaging with Scout, as we believed that she was attempting to "bait" him — and, by extension, any ex-RAS members he was working with; the party, at this point, didn't know about our

collaboration — into a prolonged controversy. None of us were prepared to handle such a controversy, not only because we were all still emotionally exhausted and (to varying degrees) traumatized by our experiences in RAS, but also because we weren't sure exactly what the now-ascendant antidemocratic faction was capable of. I suspected then, and still suspect now, that the de facto leader of this faction (and, thereby, of RAS) might be an agent of the enemy State — either a cop or an informant. These suspicions have been duly considered by my comrades, but only one of them is yet really convinced that this individual is indeed most likely a cop. In either case, we didn't want to attract the attention of the remnant-party RAS.

Cde. K. heeded our advice and, out of respect for everyone's fears of reprisal and general emotional well-being, disengaged from the controversy, "locked" his account, and dropped the matter the next day.

In our view, upon reevaluating the evidence and our collective recollections, we hold that neither Scout's nor Cde. K.'s conduct in this controversy constitutes efforts to "encourage and instigate harassment" — although both individuals certainly acted in an unprincipled manner. In general, we believe that subtweeting is not proper behavior for organized Communists (even Communists who've just exited their organizations) to engage in, and that direct criticism, even when uncomfortable, is always preferable to indirect criticism. However, in this instance, Cde. K.'s decision to refrain from direct criticism clearly demonstrates that he didn't want to "encourage and instigate harassment" when baited.

We also wish to clarify that, when Scout claims that Cde. K. "has been removed from two separate communist parties for gender chauvinism, and breaking democratic centralism," this is straightforwardly false.

We have already discussed why Cde. K. was "removed"

(he actually resigned, along with his wife) from RAS. This “removal” clearly was not due to a violation of democratic centralism on Cde. K.’s part — first, for the simple reason that RAS does not, and never has, actually practiced democratic centralism, its claims to the contrary notwithstanding, and second, because none of Cde. K.’s actions discussed thus far (nor any of which we are aware) would constitute a violation of democratic centralism in a party that did practice it.

As for this second party, Scout refers to the CPUSA. Cdes. Cde. K. and J. applied for membership in the CPUSA in January 2022, while Cde. Sylveste had already applied in December 2021. Around this time, shortly after Cdes. Cde. K., J., and Sylveste exited RAS, they reconnected and, as they all live in the same region, in southern New England, they decided to organize a small reading group together. They took up this initiative without notifying the central body of the CPUSA — because any reasonable person would assume that such a notification wouldn’t be necessary, particularly from applicants who had not yet attained party membership — but hoped that any recruitment they managed via their reading group would solidify into a new “club” (this is CPUSA’s special word for “branch”, which I personally loathe) of their new party. Technically, they had only applied to the CPUSA, but when party leaders found out that Cdes. Cde. K., J., and Sylveste had taken this initiative, they accused the three of violating democratic centralism and rejected their membership applications.

I hope that the absurdity of these events speaks for itself.

In sum, Cde. K. was not removed from any organization for violating democratic centralism, and thus far we have demonstrated that he was not removed from RAS for gender chauvinism.

How this matter was handled — and how, apparently, it continues to be handled by remaining RAS members and friends of the party — is, in our view, unbecoming of

revolutionaries and a regrettable waste of everyone's time. But we consider this specific controversy, between Scout and Cde. K., on and immediately after 14 March 2022, to be a closed matter.

Claim: "Following his resignation, Cde. K. ... disparaged the organization [i.e., RAS] in online spaces."

Our investigation found this claim to be true.

As we've already covered in the preceding section, after he and J. resigned from RAS, Cde. K. frequently voiced retrospective criticisms of the party, as well as of his own errors in helping to found and build it. However, to reiterate, he always did so without identifying RAS by name.

The sole exception to this personal "policy" he maintained that I could find is a reply-thread to a tweet, dated 17 May 2022, in which Cde. K. states the following:

*Most of the communists at the RAS Red Aid station in New Haven were afraid of talking to people. It's scary to put yourself out there - but we got success only when we consistently engaged the masses and led them from simple Red Aid to mass meetings and organizing conferences
But this is all part of one problem; the marches, for example, that communist and anarchist orgs lead that stop traffic for a few hours and then dissipate without further infrastructure-building.*

Most groups have NO CLEAR STRATEGY to get from here to revolution.

In some cases its lack of theory, in others lack of experience, and in many its that they are being purposefully misled by leadership that has NO INTENTION of escalating the struggle and heightening the work

This was in response to a tweet-thread about the importance of actually talking to the masses with whom we interact in the course of our Serve the People programs; to not only distribute food, water, etc., but also to engage the

masses in discussion of Communist ideas and, at best, to help them engage with propaganda and to get them actively involved in revolutionary struggles. Cde. K.'s reply, then, illustrated this general point with a particular example from his own experience as a Communist, organizing RAS Red Aid. There is no detectable criticism, let alone disparagement, of the party in Cde. K.'s tweets here — this seems rather obvious — but I include it, again, for the sake of thoroughness.

In sum, Cde. K. has criticized RAS frequently since he and J. resigned from the party, and some of these criticisms could be characterized as “disparaging”.

However, we are unclear as to why our comrades in Shenandoah Socialist Collective (and, presumably, the anonymous reporter) seem to consider it an offense for a Communist to “disparage” a Communist organization — particularly one which they know to be controlled by an antidemocratic and habitually abusive clique, and particularly when one has, for extended periods, dutifully borne the brunt of this abuse for what one believed was the good of the party.

Criticism is often unpleasant, and it is sometimes mean-spirited, but it is, and always has been, the lifeblood of the Communist movement, in all countries and during all periods. We feel it unnecessary to belabor this point at any length, for example, by reminding our comrades that all of our historical heroes — not only those who lived and struggled decades or centuries ago, and not only those whose movements took hold across the oceans, but also those who lived and struggled in North America, and in recent generations — were fierce critics not only of our class enemies and their State, nor only of fascists and committed reactionaries, but also of themselves, their comrades, their parties, and their movement. If the Bolsheviks were routinely criticized by Lenin, and the best representatives

of Communism in 19th-Century Europe were routinely criticized by Marx and Engels, and the Communist Party of China at the height of its heroism was criticized by Mao, and the Communist Party USA before and after its decline was criticized by Harry Haywood — and we could go on — then why should a miniscule organization like RAS, hopelessly commanded by a faction characterized by its anti-democracy (ergo, by its anti-democratic centralism), which frequently subjected (and, in all likelihood, still subjects) comrades to terror tactics and abuse to maintain its hegemony — why should such an organization be spared criticism, even of a “disparaging” nature? Such an organization should be left to rot, just as soon as every effort is made to warn our comrades against joining it. We have avoided direct confrontation with RAS for this long largely out of fear, but we obviously have no choice now but to engage directly with the monster we all had a hand, through our various errors, in creating.

We will let the point rest here and, for now, move on to the remainder of this report.

Claim: “Following his resignation, Cde. K. ... posted on discord about attempting to goad former comrades into arguments online.”

Our investigation found this claim to be, at best, half-true.

There are two known instances of Cde. K. discussing RAS on Discord in such a way that he could be interpreted as wanting to “goad” the party, but particularly its antidemocratic ruling faction, into debate.

The first instance took place on 7 December 2021, in a Discord server that Cde. K. describes as a “roleplaying server for Marxist-Leninists that predates RAS,” and which (as verified by Cde. Sylveste) drew some of that party’s earliest recruits.

Here, Cde. K. discusses his then-recent resignation from RAS, his appraisal of the continued charges of gender

chauvinism against him, the collaborative analysis of “what went wrong” in the aforementioned *Errors in Party Construction* document, and his frustration with the party’s decision to continue publishing backlogged episodes of *The Plough & Stars* featuring Cde. K. despite the circumstances surrounding his resignation.

This last point strikes me as especially bizarre. If I was a leading member of a party from which a dangerous gender chauvinist had recently resigned rather than face censure and disciplinary measures, I would wish to disassociate the party from *any and all work* that individual had touched. I would consider any such content tainted and tarnished beyond repair. I certainly *wouldn’t* want episodes of an official party podcast, featuring such an individual, to be aired. I would want those episodes deleted, and any prior episodes featuring this man taken down. I would want to make it absolutely clear that my party does not condone this man’s behavior and does not want to accept contributions from such individuals.

But then, I wasn’t leading RAS. I was wrongly expelled from RAS shortly after requesting to file a complaint against party leaders for their gender chauvinism.

The operative moment in this instance is when Cde. K. mentions that he’s made a “secret account” (on Twitter) that he wants the “lurching corpse of RAS to chase [him] down” with accusations of gender chauvinism and violating democratic centralism.

This part of the exchange was screen-shot and leaked to remaining RAS members, who used it as evidence that Cde. K. planned to engage in wrecking actions, based on two points of concern.

The first point of concern, that of a “secret Twitter account”, was used as evidence that Cde. K. had violated the terms of the disciplinary measures against him. However, this assertion doesn’t hold up for one decisive reason: In

December 2021, Cde. K. was no longer a member of RAS, and hadn't been for over two months. Therefore, he was no longer bound by any rules imposed on him by the party's leadership. Anyone can make a "secret account" on a social media service — including Communists — and only under certain operational-security procedures, such as those established in RAS, would an organized Communist be required to disclose such an account to their organization. In this case, Cde. K. was then not organized and was under no such obligations.

The second point of concern, that of wanting RAS to "chase him down", has more weight behind it. This is certainly an unprincipled attitude, not least because any such confrontation, at that stage, would have put Cde. K.'s fellow ex-RAS members in harm's way, by exposing them to whatever retaliatory actions the remnant-party RAS took against them. However, as we've covered previously, despite his words in this server, in practice Cde. K. consistently avoided direct confrontations with RAS following his exit, largely out of respect for the wishes of his ex-RAS comrades. So, while it would certainly be reasonable to criticize his words and the attitude he displays here, his subsequent actions demonstrate that he reconsidered this attitude and self-corrected in a timely fashion.

When asked to comment on this first instance, and specifically on why Cde. K. initially took this attitude, Cde. K. replied with the following:

This was posted immediately after I discovered that RAS was still using recordings of my voice to solicit money, still uploading as-yet-unheard episodes of *The Plough & Stars* that I hosted, even after my resignation. The entire exchange was spurred by my anger that RAS was continuing to recruit new members, solicit money, and claim operational status using the achievements J. and I had laid the groundwork for — particularly Red Aid — when it had been related to me

that the RAS Red Aid station in New Haven had closed down almost immediately after we left. This waste of resources, with my voice attached to it, was what spurred the angry outburst on the discord server pictured below. I regret I did not contest the mods of the server at the time they requested the most aggressive portion of the conversation be scrubbed.

Although most of our team would not have reacted in the same way Cde. K. did, that is, by hoping for a confrontation, we share his outrage at the situation. As I've already discussed, that the remnant-party RAS would continue publishing episodes of *The Plough & Stars* co-hosted by Cde. K., supposedly an irredeemable and dangerous "gender chauvinist", reveals the charge to be an opportunistic facade. When one then, moreover, has the added benefit of knowing just how abusive RAS became by the time of Cde. K.'s expulsion, and that this abuse affected gender-oppressed comrades as well as men, what might have been annoyance with the antidemocratic faction's hypocrisy becomes understandable outrage at their blatant opportunism.

The second instance took place on 14 March 2022, in the same Discord server.

Here, Cde. K. makes the following comment: "RAS [is] still telling people I'm an irredeemable gender chauvinist who should be barred from organizing."

A short while later, after a few messages from other members of the server, he then references the Twitter controversy between himself and Scout, which, recall, started that same day, saying, "Scout is now openly gunning for me."

Seemingly light discussion ensues. One server member makes a comment to the effect that anyone being "messy about comrades online" should "post fucking receipts," to which Cde. K. replies, "There are none." Another individual concurs that the party has so far failed to back up its claims

of chauvinism against Cde. K. with evidence. Another individual remarks that it's ridiculous for Communists to "go to bat" for the CPUSA, as Scout seemed to be doing.

One individual asks what might have prompted this, to which Cde. K. replies that a "preformation became public knowledge" — by which he really means that he mentioned on his Twitter that a few ex-RAS members, who represented most of the more theoretically developed cadres, had been collaborating on theory production together.

Later on, someone makes the rather insightful point that, if they knew a man was a dangerous gender chauvinist, they'd want to expose him publicly and directly, in order to protect marginalized comrades, rather than just subtweet. Cde. K. concurs with this individual's point and adds that the correct course of action would be to publish a full account, complete with all the available evidence, of gender chauvinism. He is, in effect, asking to be damned, if he's done anything damnable.

Conversation on the matter then dissipates.

As to this second instance, our investigation did not find any evidence of an attempt to "goad former comrades into arguments online." We gather from the chat log that Cde. K. did discuss a controversy, initiated by Scout, but that he did not attempt to goad anyone into arguing with Scout (or anyone else), and that, as to the earlier charge, no "instigation or encouragement of harassment" was made.

In sum, in the first instance, we found that Cde. K.'s attitude was unprincipled and, with respect to the wishes of his fellow ex-RAS comrades, irresponsible, but that he self-corrected before causing any harm, and in practice did not "goad" RAS or its members and friends of the party into confrontations. In the second instance, we found that Cde. K.'s discussion of the controversy between himself and Scout, happening contemporaneously on Twitter, was unobjectionable, and certainly did not represent an attempt

to “instigate or encourage harassment” against anyone.

Claim: “Cde. K. has not made any attempt to make amends or repair the harm he caused his gender oppressed comrades.”

Our investigation found this claim to be categorically false, both in its underlying assumptions (i.e., that Cde. K. caused lasting, unresolved harm) and in its assertion that Cde. K. has not made efforts to make amends when he *has* caused harm.

First, we need to address the underlying assumption that Cde. K. has indeed caused serious, lasting harm to his gender-oppressed comrades (or, for that matter, anyone). As we’ve discussed throughout this report, Cde. K.’s behavior (especially on social media) has more than once been indicative of an adventurist attitude and general impulsivity that we hold to be inappropriate for any Communist, especially so for one of the leading spokespersons of a dedicated revolutionary Communist organization. We certainly recognize that state repression against revolutionaries disproportionately harms gender-oppressed, nationally and colonially oppressed, and otherwise socially marginalized comrades, and as such we agree that Cde. K.’s tweets might very well have increased the likelihood that the enemy State would take notice of and repressive actions against RAS. As I discussed earlier in this document, experienced Communists understand that even the *slightest error in judgment or preparation* can have the effect of “provoking” our enemies before we’re prepared to respond.

In practice, however, the fact is that Cde. K.’s conduct, whether on Twitter, or on *The Plough & Stars*, or in the party’s newspaper, etc., demonstrably did not bring down the weight of the U.S. Empire’s repressive state apparatuses upon the party or its members, either while Cde. K. was a member or since his resignation. Nobody, either inside of or

outside of the party, has suffered harm, lasting or otherwise, as a result of Cde. K.'s occasional adventurist tweets. These tweets, however innocuous in effect, were nonetheless unprincipled and inexcusable, and, as we have maintained, censures and disciplinary measures were in order. But as we've already established, when censures and disciplinary measures were enacted against Cde. K., to a degree that we hold was ridiculously disproportionate, Cde. K., in turn, *complied with every measure, even to a fault.*

Further, from among the various charges and claims presented, we've found, to reiterate, a total of one (1) identifiable instance of gender chauvinism committed by Cde. K.: his aforementioned tweet featuring an insensitive, offensive, and effectively transmisogynistic pun following the death of SOPHIE. The evidence provided in Appendix A5 shows that Cde. K. deleted this tweet immediately and issued an apology (multiple successive apologies, even) as soon as it was demanded he do so. As stated above, we believe that this censure and demand for an apology from Cde. K. was in order, and so to this extent we concur with the RAS member who appears in the attached screenshots. In his initial apology, Cde. K. makes clear that he didn't understand the context or weight of the conversation surrounding SOPHIE's death, and that he didn't intend to hurt anyone. The other RAS member felt that this apology was insufficient, specifically because his impulse to contextualize his action implied he wished to avoid taking responsibility. He subsequently posted a second, more thorough apology and apologized personally to the other RAS member in the DM, both for his original tweet and also for having put her in the position of needing to explain to him how and why it was harmful. In other words, Cde. K.'s immediate response to criticism was to "make amends for and repair the harm" he inadvertently caused.

Furthermore, Cde. K. complied to the letter with the

subsequent (far more severe) censure of December 2020, accepting the new restrictions on his social media use, and participating in (and passing) remediation in the party's official MatFem course, and members who were present at the time report that he apologized to GenCom and to the general party membership for his behavior. As he complied with each and every demand, it is unclear to us what further steps Cde. K. might then have taken, or should now take, to make amends or to remedy harm he caused in this incident.

Finally, we wish to remind the reader that Cde. K. (and J.) did attempt to "make amends" with RAS inner-party members during the period of Cde. K.'s second censure, by sending multiple well-intentioned and carefully thought-out letters to the RAS "Congress". These communications were systematically ignored by the antidemocratic faction, as was the aforementioned letter written by my anonymous friend, Cde. K., and myself in our last-ditch effort to reform the party. All the evidence we have demonstrates that Cde. K. remained open to dialogue, and to self-criticizing his own errors, even well after he resigned from RAS, even going so far as to write, in collaboration with other ex-RAS comrades, a lengthy analysis of their errors in attempting to build a revolutionary party. We do not believe that these are the actions of an individual who wishes to avoid accountability and who would refuse to "make amends and repair harm" they'd caused.

Having reviewed the whole wealth of evidence, from every source available to us, and having carefully examined each charge that was communicated to SSC and subsequently passed along to us in the form of your letter, we have found no other evidence of Cde. K. exhibiting gender chauvinism.

It is additionally relevant here that since his resignation, Cde. K. has kept in contact with some members of RAS, two of which, notably, are or were members of the antidemocratic faction centered in GenCom. He has positive

relationships with both of these members, one of whom continues to participate in a weekly roleplaying game that he hosts, and the other of whom has come to him for advice and aid with the various projects she has worked on since her own departure from RAS. We have no doubt that, had either of these two individuals really (1) considered Cde. K. to be an irredeemable or dangerous gender chauvinist, or (2) suspected him of causing serious, lasting harm to gender-oppressed comrades, or (3) known him to have failed to “make amends or repair harm” he caused, they would have broken off contact with him, and would not willingly and regularly engage with him as friends and comrades. For my part, I personally would certainly not still be working with Cde. K. if I discovered any credible evidence of the above. I have broken off contact with men in the Communist movement for much, much less.

In sum, we have not found any evidence that Cde. K. has caused lasting harm to his gender-oppressed comrades. Furthermore, we have found that Cde. K. consistently made himself amenable to “making amends and repairing harm” during and after his tenure as a member of the Party for Reclamation and Survival; he readily self-criticized, submitted to any censures and disciplinary measures (again, despite the undemocratic process involved), and worked to correct his errors.

This is exactly how an organized Communist should be expected to “make amends” and “repair harm” their actions have caused. If, therefore, the present charge refers to infractions in Cde. K.’s conduct during his tenure as a party member, then we can only reply that we consider these matters long-since closed.

Further Evidence and Testimony

Cdes. Sylveste (AKA “Sylveste”) and Simcha (AKA “Simcha”) have taken the time to write full, descriptive timelines of their experiences in RAS, with particular

focus given to the party's undemocratic and often abusive internal disciplinary process and to the consolidation of the antidemocratic faction.

These accounts are both quite lengthy, so Sylveste has abridged his, and I have abridged Simcha's, for inclusion in this report. The full accounts will be integrated into our comprehensive analysis, i.e., our forthcoming Errors in Party Construction.

Note that, as a general courtesy to those involved, all names given, aside from our own, are the pseudonymous "cadre names" used within RAS.

Cde. Sylveste's testimony

I applied for admission into the Party for Reclamation and Survival in March 2020, and I was quickly elevated to the "congress", the party-within-a-party that oversaw both RAS' day-to-day level and strategic level operations. I was placed in SecuCom, and about two months later Central Committee members approached me and offered me the position of SecuCom Chair. I had reservations, but I accepted this promotion and got to work setting up SecuCom subcommittees responsible for various committee functions. One of these, the Digital Security Subcommittee, which consisted of myself, Erik, and Dipper (Erik's partner) would come to be important later.

In September of 2020, CC leadership again approached me about taking over as Chair of OLAC, the party's branch for members who joined but who were not in a geographical area already represented by a normal Action Committee, and which represented fully forty percent of the party's total membership. Again, I expressed reservations. I told them I had my hands full with SecuCom already and I wasn't sure I had the time to devote to such a large committee. Erik responded by saying, frankly, I was the only option and that, if I declined, the party would be in serious trouble. I accepted the OLAC Chair after that.

Around this time, Erik commented in a SecuCom space that his ex-wife had accused him of being abusive. I forwarded this information to GenCom, which at that time was still a new committee yet to find solid footing. I helped select a joint GenCom–SecuCom ad-hoc committee (of which I was not a part) to investigate Erik’s claims, and in the beginning everybody generally assumed that there was no substance to them. After all, why would he bring them up to the party if there was? I was not privy to the day-to-day activities of this ad-hoc committee, but as their investigation dragged on first for weeks, then for a full month, it became clear that they were growing increasingly concerned by the information they were gathering.

Towards the end of the ad-hoc committee’s investigation, an incident occurred on a non-party Discord server in which Erik harassed a member of the server, who was a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist and a trans woman, until she left. Waffles, a member of RAS and a trans woman, said she was uncomfortable with his behavior. In response, Erik and Dipper cornered Waffles in a private room on the RAS party server and made her feel deeply uncomfortable and unsafe. When I found out, I launched SecuCom into a full investigation which ended with us finding that Dipper had violated the party’s harassment policy (which Erik himself had written) and was guilty of transmisogyny, in particular because she had asked Waffles whether the only reason she was uncomfortable with Erik’s behavior was that the person he’d harassed was a fellow trans woman. SecuCom also found that Erik himself had acted wrongly and abusively by using his leadership within the party to corner Waffles the way that he did. Dipper was suspended from the party for one month for violating the harassment policy. As soon as I informed them of this, Erik and Dipper resigned from the party. I’ve not had any contact with either of them since.

Erik’s Central Committee seat was then vacant, and

Congress voted unanimously to appoint me to it. I would continue to sit on the Central Committee until September of 2021.

In the immediate aftermath, it was suggested in the Central Committee that the party open up a new investigation into Waffles, to find whether she actually was sympathetic to the ultra-leftism that Erik had mocked her for. I strongly resisted this suggestion, because I did not want to set a precedent that coming forward about abusive behavior might then open oneself up to being investigated over ideological mistakes and other trivial, unrelated issues. In the end, there was no such follow-up investigation.

Erik's and Dipper's departure from SecuCom left the Digital Security Subcommittee entirely depopulated aside from myself. This was a major problem, as they had taught me the rudiments of maintaining our server infrastructure, but I had no deep knowledge of how any of it worked, and would be very hard pressed to find a solution if the party experienced a major technical problem. By this time, I was devoting on average 30 (sometimes up to 45) hours per week to party work, split between six different committees, on top of my full time job and organizing with a local antifascist organization. I was badly overwhelmed, and while Cde. Simcha signed on to help me in digital security around that time, he had scarcely more expertise in the subject than I did and was doing even more work for the party than I was.

Around January 2021, Ambergreene was elevated to Congress and assigned to SecuCom. She had previous experience with server maintenance and when I asked her about helping in Digital Security she expressed a great deal of excitement at the opportunity. She quickly became integral to Digital Security. Around this time we brought on another member to help out in this capacity, Austin, one of the founding members of USU (known in RAS and now on the USU team as Lyxzen).

In May, and through April, my husband and I moved across the country, and I left OLAC and passed the Chair to a long-time member named Possum. The move did not go well, and we were unexpectedly made homeless for about three weeks. When we finally did find a place to live and started our new jobs, I found that mine was in an incredibly toxic atmosphere and had much more demanding hours than I had expected, and I sunk into a deep depression.

Around this time the party server completely crashed and had to be rebuilt. Owing to the experience gap and my being generally overwhelmed, Ambergreene shouldered the bulk of the work of setting up the backend of the new server. While I and others divvied up much of the work of restoring rooms, channels, and userIDs, she reinstalled Matrix (the program we used) on the new server herself.

SecuCom decided to migrate the party to a more stable program after the crash, and after we selected a suitable alternative to Matrix, work commenced on getting it set up. In this instance too, Ambergreene shouldered the bulk of the work of installing the server itself. After the program was installed on it, we held a committee meeting in which we went through all of the settings one by one together, and then we again divided up the work of setting up rooms, channels, userIDs and doing testing. This process was not yet complete by the time of my stepping down as SecuCom Chair.

The party congress had issued a directive early in 2021 mandating that all major committees appoint from among their membership a Labor Secretary, to track ongoing tasks and commitments and ensure that nothing was falling by the wayside. SecuCom had done so, but as the months wore on it became clear that our labor secretary was struggling to fulfill this role. As a result, a non-man on our committee felt that she had to regularly remind people of tasks they had been assigned. This was a developing situation that I

failed to address and for which I would go on to issue an official self-criticism in the months that followed.

In June 2021, GenCom distributed a statement within Congress (but not to the general membership) titled "INCOMING GENDER RAGE" and warned that there would be a litany of proceedings — interrogations, investigations, censures, and so on — from which nobody would be exempted. The immediate cause of this "gender rage" was the continuing and rolling labor-shortage crisis that plagued almost every corner of the party, which had existed for at least as long as I'd been a member of RAS, and which had grown increasingly acute heading into the summer of 2021.

During this period I was elected unanimously to another term as SecuCom Chair and on the Central Committee.

In mid-June 2021 I became aware of serious structural deficiencies which had developed in OLAC. I produced a report on these issues and brought it to the Central Committee, which met specifically to discuss the problem. As a former chair of OLAC, the other Central Committee members asked my opinion of the unique challenges that OLAC faces and together, we drafted a directive for OLAC to begin remedying these deficiencies. After unanimously approving the draft, we passed it along to Possum, the OLAC Chair. The following week, Waffles, a Central Committee member and Possum's wife, reported that Possum had been upset that she wasn't consulted before the Central Committee's directive was issued. I recognized then that we might have acted in a commandist style in this instance, and that a more proper course would have been to include Possum in our deliberations. I asked Waffles if she thought I should issue a self-crit for my part in this debacle, and she replied that she didn't think I should, since it was a collective error. Pyrrha, the chair of GenCom and a Central Committee member, concurred with Waffles' judgment.

In August 2021, as part of the "Gender Rage" campaign, I was interviewed by GenCom. I was placed in a dedicated server room with five or six GenCom members while Waffles asked me a series of questions about my time in the party, and my opinion of other male members of the party, while the others listened. They asked about several of the events that I have recounted here. At one point, Possum broke into the questioning and asked me directly "Why did you think you could speak for OLAC in the Central Committee?" Waffles followed this up by asking if I thought that my "speaking for OLAC" out of turn was indicative of gender chauvinism on my part, and asking me why I hadn't yet issued a self-criticism for it. I refrained from asking her why she and Pyrrha voted for the directive if it was so tainted with chauvinism as to merit this line of questioning. All told, I was in the channel with them for over two hours.

After my interview, I issued a self criticism for allowing a culture to develop in SecuCom in which the labor secretary's role was so ineffective that a non-man had to take up much of that responsibility, and for not intervening to prevent Ambergreene from having to take on most of the responsibility for setting up the new server. I was harshly critical of myself for allowing what I then believed was a gender-unequal labor environment to develop in the committee I was responsible for, and listed steps that I planned to take to address the issue at the structural level. The next day I issued a new and much more specific labor-secretary mandate and made it clear to the secretary how critical their position was. I also spoke to Ambergreene on the side and apologized to her directly, and shared some ideas I had to bulk up the Digital Security subcommittee.

Two days later, Ambergreene resigned from SecuCom. This blow, coupled with the overt hostility of GenCom both during and after my interview, events in my personal and my work life, and my steadily deepening depression, pushed

me to resign from my position as SecuCom Chair and from the Central Committee. Of the sitting SecuCom members, Manu was the only one I thought had the available labor capacity to take my place, so I recommended them and they were elected to both positions in the next few days.

I remained in the party at a limited level of engagement and helped out in SecuCom where I could. It was in this capacity that I was present during the July censure proceedings against Cde. K.. I have contributed extensively to the account of those proceedings in this report and will not repeat every detail of my recollection here, other than to say that during this period I was reminded directly and privately that I might still be subject to GenCom's "Gender Rage" investigations myself at any moment; when I voiced an objection during the proceedings against Cde. K., I was warned off by GenCom members and my concerns dismissed. I regret now not taking a stronger stand in this instance, but it is still difficult to really describe the climate of fear that the antidemocratic faction, centered in GenCom, had created by that point.

The day after Cde. K.'s censure was announced to Congress, one member (and a very dear friend of mine) who struggles with BPD experienced a mental health crisis in the channel we reserved for mental health conversation. He expressed deep anger at those who were involved in what he viewed as the undemocratic and unjust punishment leveled against Cde. K.. For this he was berated, called uncomradely, and the insinuation was made that he was sympathetic to gender-chauvinist positions. He signaled that he needed to disengage for his own mental and physical safety, but the GenCom members engaging with him wouldn't let it go until someone else intervened. To be clear, this channel was explicitly established as a safe space where members could go to express their feelings. I got into a very serious, bitter argument with one or two GenCom members over this, and

promised that I would escalate this issue as it was a clear violation of the party's harassment policy. After calling my friend on the phone, talking him down, and making sure he was physically safe, I lodged an official complaint with the Committee on Disability (DisCom), which also holds the power to unilaterally censure members. By this point, about two-thirds of DisCom's membership overlapped with that of GenCom, so this went nowhere. I was told directly that they would not be getting involved. By this time I was feeling very discouraged about the party.

At one point, Cde. M. was brought up in SecuCom. She'd had a disagreement in another area of the party to do with editing another member's article for the newspaper. She had referred to something that this other member said as "foolish", which had generated a red flag. I cannot remember now how exactly the situation developed, as I was not present for much of the initial conflict, but GenCom had at some point initiated the same type of round-robin interrogation of her as they did against myself and others. After this interrogation, SecuCom was asked to determine whether or not her use of the term "foolish" constituted a violation of the harassment policy. After significant debate, the majority of the committee refused to ascribe to the position that Cde. M. had here breached the harassment policy. Manu stated at this time that they didn't think there was space in the party for Cde. M., regardless of whether she had broken the policy or not.

During our deliberations, it came up that Cde. M. had also had a minor disagreement with other members, including Manu, about whether or not Black people in New Afrika were indigenous to their land. This point was entirely tangential to the subject of her conflict with GenCom, but it was taken up by Manu, who insisted that her position was ridiculous. I asked what Manu meant by this, and in the subsequent discussion it became clear that they held deeply anti-Black

positions. They told me that Black people are not indigenous to New Afrika but that white people were indeed indigenous to Europe, and suggested that instead of "indigenous" we might use the term "endemic". I told them that as a half-Black man and as a Communist I was deeply uncomfortable using the term "endemic", a word we use to describe virulent and stubborn disease, to refer to Black people. I further made the point that stripping indigeneity from Black people was proximal to downgrading their struggle for national self-determination.

The following day or the day after — I can't recall — the committee was planning to hold a vote on whether or not to censure Cde. M.. When I woke up that morning I found that Manu had taken it upon themselves, at 2:00 AM, when everyone else was asleep, to expel Cde. M. against the party rules and without any form of a vote. I was outraged and demanded to know why they'd done this. Manu's reply was that I never told them how expulsions work or how to complete one. This was a bold, vicious lie, and especially so given that Manu had participated in (and voted on) several expulsions for various reasons while I was Chair of SecuCom. I forced a committee vote on whether or not to retroactively approve of Manu's actions, and when it became clear that Manu was losing that vote, they tried to invalidate my right to cast my ballot, by claiming I wasn't a member of SecuCom any longer. This, despite their reminding me not a week before that I needed to vote on a minor procedural matter for SecuCom. Fortunately, other members of the committee (most especially Austin/Lyxzen) defended me, and Manu's attempt to circumvent the vote failed. Manu's resolution also failed in the committee, and SecuCom did not retroactively condone Cde. M.'s expulsion. This information was sent to the Congress and to the Central Committee, but to my knowledge no action was ever taken in response.

Manu's boldness, and their absolute contempt for

established party rules and norms, caught me off-guard. I brought the issue in front of the Congress, and brought up the conversation that we had had about Black indigeneity. I expressed how deeply uncomfortable it made me, and how Congress' failure to establish a stable Committee on Oppressed Nationalities, the committee that this complaint would have been taken to, belied a quiet and entrenched anti-Blackness that had yet to be wrestled with. Several (white) members of Congress told me that I need to forgive people when they "misspeak" out of genuine ignorance, and that Manu didn't mean anything by it. In response, Manu submitted a six-page report to Congress slandering me, telling outright lies, and appealing to GenCom, with the implication that I was attacking them because they're nonbinary.

During this prolonged conflict with Manu, I was approached by several party members privately who urged me not to resign, including one GenCom member who had sat in on my interrogation months before. This member said they felt that things had gone too far, that Manu needed to be removed, that I should replace them as Chair of SecuCom, and that they didn't feel that I harbored any real gender chauvinism. They also observed that Manu had broken the harassment policy on more than one occasion and continued to do so.

By this point, I had had quite enough. I announced my resignation that same day, and left the server two days later. All those who supported or defended me publicly in Congress have now left RAS — either expelled or forced to resign by the antidemocratic leadership faction led by Manu. In the weeks after I left, Congress went so far as to pass a resolution absolving Manu of any wrongdoing and applauding them for acting responsibly and reasonably.

Of GenCom's "Gender Rage" campaign, no report was ever produced, no transcript of any interview was ever released,

no directives (outside of Cde. K.'s censure, which was never officially filed) were ever delivered, and no structural changes were ever proposed or implemented. The campaign concluded with one or two quiet lines at the bottom of a monthly report that most Congress members didn't read, that said something to the effect of, "the campaign has achieved its purpose," and which vaguely urged members to consider gendered dynamics in all their interactions in the party. It concluded this way after, and only after, the old leadership had been expelled from or bullied out of the Central Committee, and only after the remaining GenCom members occupied the majority of Central Committee seats, as well as the majority of seats on *every other committee with censoring powers*. It never extended these investigations to any other corner of the party's life, plenty of which I am quite sure do in fact struggle with problems of gender chauvinism.

Cde. Simcha's testimony

In March 2020, right after the pandemic began, I sent my application email.

I was part of the first On-Line Action Committee (OLAC), initially on a Discord server. (Sylveste was there too.) It was a fairly unproductive time. I was promoted to Congress in June. I asked how to launch a branch and was informed that we needed 3 "congressional" members in a region to start a new Action Committee. There was one other comrade already in "Congress" and eventually my wife was also promoted.

Shortly after we launched the Pacific Northwest Action Committee (PNWAC), in September 2020, while facilitating a meeting, I spoke over a non-binary comrade. I immediately wrote a voluntary self-criticism and submitted it to my AC and the RAS "Congress." It was well received, and I was lauded for taking accountability. We changed the structure of our meetings after that to more closely monitor gendered

dynamics, and eventually an Element steward was elected to continue that work.

Shortly after, I was unanimously elected to the Central Committee.

In the winter of 2020/2021, I was reprimanded for ableism when discussing the contributions of one of our comrades. The language I used in my self-criticism document, which I no longer have access to, was well received in the inner-party, although this was something that only the inner-party saw at the time. This was my first and only formal censure in RAS.

I wrote a few other self-criticisms over my time as PNWAC Chair and Chair of the Committee on Propaganda (PropCom). One was for poorly managing a transition to our revised dual-membership policy. Again, I wrote a well-received self-criticism and revised our onboarding procedures. I also voluntarily wrote a self-criticism for not identifying a problematic analysis written by an RAS member, Jefflin, based on the work of Michael Hudson, a fascist economist. This was due to negligence, as I had literally just not read the Michael Hudson article Jefflin's analysis references, which had been selected for our AC reading discussion that week. Around the late winter or early spring of 2021, I was urged to self-criticize, but not formally reprimanded, for my failure to follow through on editing another RAS member, Kepler's, article, as I had promised almost a year earlier. I wrote a formal self-criticism, again well-received. Kepler thanked me for the gesture.

In June 2021, an inner-party campaign, initiated and designated "Gender Rage" by GenCom, began. I was investigated and subsequently interrogated for gender chauvinism, but ultimately cleared of charges. During my interrogation, language that I used to describe my labor expectations for the Vice chair of PNWAC, Bird, was used out of context, in a hurtful way, to imply that I had accused

Bird of “doing nothing.” What I really meant was that, as Bird had a lot of party responsibilities elsewhere, I didn’t want to ask her to do much for PNWAC. Bird and I had a heartfelt discussion later that week and resolved things on good terms. Bird ultimately left the party, for reasons that remain unclear. During my “Gender Rage” interrogation, I was also accused of dismissing the concerns of two comrades, two non-binary women, about my management style as Chair of PropCom. The issue ultimately hinged on a misunderstanding about my use of the pronoun “they.” We resolved the conflict without the need for a formal self-criticism and subsequently established a rule that at least one other member of PropCom (usually the PropCom Vice-Chair, Siegel) had to sign off on any decision I made, so that I wasn’t acting unilaterally.

During the “Gender Rage” campaign, elections for the Central Committee began, and I was elected by 18 out of the 21 voting members, the second highest.

By September 2021, I had personal plans to sign up for a computer programming bootcamp, and knew that my party responsibilities would have to be reduced by a significant degree, but also that my tendency to overwork myself would not yield itself organically, so I chose to resign. Because of this I set up a time to discuss the “Gender Rage” investigation with Pyrrha, still chair of GenCom at the time, who assured me that the investigation had come to the determination that I was not in fact guilty of gender chauvinism. With her approval, I included that detail, quoting her, in my resignation letter, which I had hoped would alleviate anyone’s concerns that I was fleeing from my responsibilities to my gender oppressed comrades.

During my time in RAS I was consistently in the top tier of comrades considered “over burdened” by party work as determined by the Committee on Party Welfare. I was the chair of PropCom, PNWAC Chair, and was elected member

to the Central Committee three times.

Cde. Cde. M.'s testimony

Rather than summarize the entirety of my tenure as a member of RAS, my account will mainly focus on my experience with gender chauvinism and abusive control tactics in RAS, as well as with the party's undemocratic structure and its now-ruling antidemocratic faction. It will thus focus exclusively on a period of about two weeks, mainly in October 2021. Because I no longer have access to the old party server, and had no chance to record these events as they unfolded, I cannot be sure of any exact dates, for which I must mainly rely on memory. I am also relying heavily on the notes I wrote, originally for my own benefit, in the immediate aftermath of my expulsion, recorded in a document which amounts to about 11,000 words. The account provided here may be considered a condensed version of those notes.

Let's rewind to September. I had requested, and was granted, a 15-day leave of absence (LOA) from the party for the Yom Kippur holiday. I believe I returned around late September — likely just a few days before Cde. K. and J. formally resigned, although, as I recall, I was never so much as informed of their departure until a while after my expulsion.

Almost as soon as I returned to my duties, the leading editor of RISE!, our party newspaper, CWJeffries, invited me onto the newspaper's editorial team. We had already discussed my role on RISE! before my LOA, so this was expected. Once I'd been invited to the appropriate server "room", I was given my first assignment as an editor: revising an article, written by a member going by Cirsium, in preparation for our upcoming issue. (Digressing to explain the subject of the article, etc., isn't necessary here.)

Before I began editing the article, I quickly found a glaring mistake in it: Cirsium had badly misinterpreted a passage

in the 1960s Soviet handbook *Fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism*. (Again, digressing to explain the error is unnecessary.) I pointed out the error directly to Cirsium in the "RISE! Writing Room" (or so I think it was called). From the start, he absolutely refused to listen to my explanation or accept that he had made a minor error.

During this exchange, Cirsium got very heated and became rude. He was clearly not interested in listening to me, let alone getting corrected by me, but in the interest of our Party's ideological development, I decided to ignore his rudeness and continue on with our "discussion" in a calm, straightforward manner. Besides, as soon as he "blew up" at me, he apologized. In hindsight, I should not have accepted this apology, because it was very clearly insincere. Cirsium got the chance to blow up at a woman, but then instantly "took it back" in an "I just couldn't help myself" sort of way. Still, for the sake of comradeship and in an effort to refocus our "discussion" towards correcting a simple error, I decided to tacitly accept Cirsium's insincere apology and not press for accountability.

A member (who's also a man) named Linden then joined in. He shared Cirsium's misreading of the text and was equally unwilling to listen to me. Perhaps he was determined to maintain his (mis-)reading, or perhaps he, like Cirsium, refused to get corrected (particularly by a woman) — or both. In any case, the debate tactics he used were similarly uncomradely, but more passive-aggressive. Whereas Cirsium outright blew up at me, then apologized immediately (and insincerely) to minimize the damage, Linden more subtly twisted my words, asked loaded questions that implied I had ulterior motives and/or was ignorant, and jumped from one question to the next to avoid acknowledging my answers and, thereby, his errors.

In hindsight, I should have immediately disengaged and reported both Cirsium and Linden. But at that moment, I

decided to remain calm, try to keep our “discussion” focused on the matter at hand, and straightforwardly correct my “comrades”. I very much blame myself for not listening to my instincts.

The discussion more or less ended when I pointed to and quoted from a brief passage in *Capital*, vol. 1, ch. 7, that I hoped would clarify my comrades’ misunderstanding. In hindsight, somewhat amusingly, when confronted with actually doing the reading, rather than just grandstanding to a woman — God forbid — both Cirsium and Linden went rather quiet. I believe Cirsium, at this point, said something to the effect of “maybe I’ll read this later,” before informing me that he no longer had time to discuss the matter. CWJeffries jumped in around this point, not having wanted to overwhelm me, as I understand, to ask clarifying questions; he was also interested in hearing about my work on the Marxist concept of labor, which was nice. This further exchange brought home, for me, just how unfortunate it was that Cirsium and Linden chose to act the way they did.

I set to work editing Cirsium’s article soon thereafter. This took a few hours, because there were many errors. When I showed my revisions/corrections to CWJeffries, he noted that my edits were “very good”. I was informed later that “PropCom” agreed with my corrections. However, CWJeffries actually proposed cutting Cirsium’s article altogether, because of just how broken it had been from the start. I argued that we should keep it, both because of a sort of “sunk-cost fallacy” (all the work we’d already put in) and because I thought rejecting it might hurt Cirsium’s feelings — a sentiment that, in hindsight, makes me want to punch myself. After considering my position, CWJeffries ultimately decided to keep the article. However, upon seeing the revised version, Cirsium felt that it was “unrecognizable” (correctly so), threw a tantrum about this, and resigned from (or simply abandoned; it was unclear) the party — pretty

typical behavior for a certain type of Communist man. After this, PropCom decided against publishing Cirsius's article, overruling CWJeffries.

While Cirsius was off throwing his tantrum (which I didn't witness), CWJeffries and I were talking over, in an altogether comradely and even enjoyable way, some theoretical questions relating to Cirsius's article. I wasn't able to answer all of CWJeffries' questions right then, but offered to do so the next day. By the time I got around to answering these questions, PropCom had sent a handful (the exact number escapes me, but maybe two or three) of its representatives to the "Editors' Desk" room, including Linden. As I went about answering CWJeffries' questions, at one point, Linden decided to intervene. It again became clear to me, almost immediately, that Linden hadn't actually read what I'd just written, hadn't read the conversations between myself and CWJeffries (which I'd copied/pasted to catch everyone up), and hadn't read my edits of Cirsius's article (which I'd reposted in the form of a document when Linden and Alba, another PropCom member, joined, also to catch them up). I know this because Linden complained that my response — to CWJeffries — actually didn't disagree with or refute anything in Cirsius's article. Of course, my response — to CWJeffries — didn't refute any specific point in Cirsius's article, because it was not a response to Cirsius's article. Linden would have known this if he'd bothered to read the conversation I'd reproduced, again, as a courtesy to him, or if he'd bothered to notice that I was replying, as I'd noted at the beginning of my reply, specifically to a question from CWJeffries. (I could say more, but I'll just move on.) Nonetheless, Linden decided this was the opportune moment to derail my responses to CWJeffries by accusing me of saying something — something quite reactionary — that was almost exactly the opposite of what I'd just said. In other words, he was using the same

passive-aggressive tactics he'd used in our "discussion" a few days earlier. He was back for "round 2", trying again to "win" a debate. At this point, yet again, I foolishly decided to entertain Linden the way I had before, i.e., by remaining calm and trying to refocus our "discussion" to the actual theoretical problems at hand. So, I asked Linden to slow down, so that we could address his points one by one, and see if we could figure out the real substance of our debate. He agreed to this. When I asked for clarification on his first point, noting why I thought it didn't hold up, instead of working through that one point, he took another opportunity to spend several minutes reiterating his entire argument all over again, complete with putting the same whole mess of disgusting words in my mouth. I tried once again to refocus our conversation, but this time, when it became clear that I wouldn't "play along" and allow myself to get derailed, attempting to address several unrelated, loaded points (some of which were phrased as accusations) at once, Linden "stopped playing", because the "game" was more or less over.

With great effort (and naivete), I let this go for a second time, figuring that there was nothing to gain from stating my grievances, and feeling that the actual propaganda work we were supposed to be engaged in should take priority.

But soon enough, during another discussion of Cirsium's article, Linden attempted to derail some point I was making (now I can't even remember the context) by employing the same passive-aggressive tactics — twisting my words, asking loaded questions that implied I had ulterior motives and/or was ignorant, jumping from one question to the next to avoid acknowledging my responses (and, thereby, his errors), overwhelming me with several points at once, and putting flat-out disgusting words in my mouth. At some point during this, Linden admitted that he still hadn't read the passage I'd linked and still didn't know what the

terminology his misreading hinged on meant; he also acted like I'd refused to educate him, despite the fact that I'd taken the time to explain this exact concept to him, Cirsium, and CWJeffries earlier, and CWJeffries had actually bothered to listen.

This was strike three, and I was really done. I decided to put my foot down and demand an apology. I told Linden — and everyone else in the "Editors' Desk" room — that I wouldn't work with him for another moment until he apologized. I made sure to state exactly what I was demanding an apology for: Linden's conscious choice to passive-aggressively derail multiple conversations by putting words in my mouth, overwhelming me with whole series of loaded questions, and generally being rude.

Linden, perhaps sensing danger, immediately stopped, "apologized" (for nothing in particular), and promised to submit a self-criticism — which I didn't ask for and didn't want. Rather than a straightforward apology, the next day, I received a long-winded, convoluted "self-criticism" document, in which Linden apologized for exactly one thing — "taking a confrontational tone" — and in which he reinterpreted what happened as him valiantly attempting to defend the oppressed, just a little too zealously.

I saw the "self-criticism" for what it was and told Linden that his apology was insufficient. But by that time, I was too exhausted to push the matter any further, and decided to "accept" the document for what it was and move on.

A few minutes later, another member of PropCom, Siegel, sent me what I can only describe as the most bizarre message I've ever read since becoming a Communist. I'll quote it in full, because I can't capture its essence by describing it:

comrade cat2 [she/her]

There is something that I need to address regarding the exchange with Cirsium the other day about his article

During the editing of Cirsium's article there was tense

discussion around a theoretical line in *The Foundations of Marxism-Leninism* resulting in an edit calling Cirsium's analysis "foolish."

The word "fool" as it's used today usually refers to someone acting "unwise," "unintelligent," "idiotic." It comes from Old French meaning "mad," and "empty headed." It's comparable to the "village idiot," or, a disabled person being exploited for entertainment.

We are asking you to submit a self criticism addressing this comment, the generally combative and uncomradely tone that made the tensions of this situation worse, and we ask you to consider why you felt comfortable expressing your disagreement with another comrade by calling them "foolish."

I believe — I hope — that the absurdity of this message speaks for itself, so I won't dwell on it. I'll just clarify that I didn't call Cirsium himself foolish; the remark was about his continued insistence upon his misreading, even after I'd corrected him and spent hours "discussing" it with him (i.e., getting aggressively lectured to by him so that he could avoid admitting he was wrong). This was, aside from a pretty clear example of everyday, mundane organizational misogyny, also just foolish behavior on Cirsium's part. On the other hand, I would have no qualms about calling "foolish" any man who acts this way when straightforwardly corrected by a woman.

Anyway, what's more important than the absurdity of the request for self-criticism is its timing, which I felt was suspicious from the moment I received it. Cirsium had just left the party after throwing a tantrum over receiving criticism from a woman who knows more than him about a certain topic. (I only found out later that the article was passed to me for revisions after Cirsium had managed to frustrate every other comrade who attempted to work with him.) Meanwhile, I had just put my foot down and demanded

an apology from Linden for his behavior. Now, the next day, the same day Linden sent me his “self-criticism” by way of not actually apologizing, PropCom, on which Linden sat at the time, just happened to be “asking” me for a self-criticism — for the most absurd reason, and in the most absurd way, I’ve ever seen. I knew something was up, but figured that all this amounted to was Linden abusing the party’s internal mechanisms to bully me. I was partially correct, but I was missing a much bigger picture that I couldn’t possibly have seen at the time, because of how extensively the RAS general membership was kept in the dark by the unelected inner-party apparatus.

Still, out of respect for “the process” — remember, at this stage, I didn’t know that there essentially was no process — I agreed to submit a self-criticism, and said it would be submitted that same day.

During this conversation, the same representative of PropCom, Siegel, mentioned that PropCom had decided to reform the way we produced the newspaper and other materials. I forget exactly what he said was changing, as it mostly wasn’t relevant to me. But in explaining this, Siegel told me that I and other more “academic” members had been identified as doing too much theory-production work, which was supposedly “unfair” to both us (the “academics”) and to the “less academic” majority of members. In particular, I was told that I had been put under “unfair” working conditions and stress by Cde. K.. (By that point, Cde. K. and I had been indefinitely blocked by the inner-party apparatus from collaborating on our shared theoretical project, after having worked on it together for at least a few weeks.)

This was said in such an obviously manipulative way that it only heightened my suspicions that something was up.

I replied that, actually, I had enjoyed working with Cde. K., and I felt that a lot of our work (and my time) had been wasted when collaboration on our project was indefinitely

blocked from continuing, without consent from either of us.

I also felt particularly offended by the inner-party designating me an “academic”, because not only do I not have a university degree, but I was actually forced to leave university during my sophomore year (back in, I believe, 2017) when I became unsafe; this caused me to forfeit any scholarships I’d earned, which means that I’d have no way to afford a higher education, even if I wanted one. All of my ideological training as a Communist — everything I’ve learned — has been autodidactic, and I’m admittedly very proud of that. To call me “academic”, because, as I saw it, I’m a lower-class woman who (usually) knows what she’s talking about, and (usually) isn’t afraid to speak, was incredibly insulting.

Siegel immediately switched tactics, shifting the narrative from one of me getting abused *and* exploited by Cde. K. (which I obviously wasn’t buying into) to one of myself and Cde. K. both “unfairly” working on theory. It was never explained to me how, exactly, a theoretically developed cadre working on theory production is “unfair” to anyone — I’m not even sure where to begin with such an idea. But getting ripped away from my project was particularly disheartening to me, specifically because I’m disabled, poor, and geographically isolated, and thus had few other ways of meaningfully contributing to our party’s development. I felt that working on theory production was the best way — and perhaps the only way, other than working for the party newspaper — I *could* contribute, as the undemocratic structure of RAS closed off every other avenue.

I began to feel that something was very wrong. I knew I was being manipulated.

I stated that I felt that this entire dynamic was abusive, to which Siegel replied that, having made an accusation of abuse, he would refer me to GenCom, ostensibly so that my complaints could be voiced, heard, and acted upon.

What actually happened was that I was subjected to a round-robin interrogation, in which I was ganged up on and gaslit by (if memory serves) seven inner-party members at once, all members of GenCom, and representing, as far as I know, GenCom's entire membership. This lasted (again, to my memory) around a week. During this time, I suffered several debilitating panic attacks that left me incapable of almost any other activities, party-related or otherwise. The purpose of this interrogation, in hindsight, is clear: It was an effort to bully me into submission, so that I'd either abandon the party of my own volition, rather than put up with the abuse, or else acquiesce to the rapidly consolidating rule of the antidemocratic faction. What I didn't know then, of course, was that I was experiencing the tail-end of, or a sort of coda to, the "Gender Rage" campaign of previous months — the facts of my gender notwithstanding.

Some (but certainly not all) of the specific abuses I experienced in this interrogation are listed as follows:

Almost from the start of the interrogation, the only man in the room, Kepler, took over and derailed the entire conversation. I'm pretty sure he spoke more than all the other interrogators combined. Rather than allow me to address the grievances I'd ostensibly been invited to this room to address, he spent almost the entire time mansplaining epistemology — of all topics — to me in the most pedantic, arrogant, and infantilizing tone imaginable, even though it quickly became clear that he didn't know what he was talking about and — who would have thought — I did. Throughout this, Kepler maintained that I was guilty of "academic-ism", despite the fact that he has a professional degree, whereas I explained that I don't.

As it happens, the only "evidence" I was given during this interrogation that I was guilty of "academic-ism" was that I tend to be perfectionistic and attempt a high degree of precision in language — which is indeed something

I struggle a lot with. However, I pointed out that this “evidence” amounted to a description of my autistic traits, and that accusing me of “academic-ism” on that basis really just amounted to ableism. I don’t believe this point was ever acknowledged by any of the interrogators, as any time I made any point, the subject was changed.

At one of the few points when Linden’s earlier behavior came up, one of the GenCom members, Alba, gave a version of events in which Linden innocently asked me a few questions and I, being “academic”, told him he was stupid. It is presumably unnecessary to reiterate that a member of the Committee on Oppressed Genders was gaslighting me about misogyny I’d suffered from a man, who still hadn’t apologized, only a few days ago.

While the interrogation was ongoing, the day after it started (as I recall) Siegel asked how soon I would submit my self-criticism. I couldn’t believe he was still asking me to submit it at this point, on top of the interrogation I was getting subjected to. I had initially told him I would complete it the same day it was “requested” by PropCom, but then, minutes later, the interrogation started, and now I couldn’t focus on anything else — I was too much of an emotional wreck. Moreover, I believed this represented a clear conflict of interest, as Siegel was directly involved in an “interview” ostensibly to hear my complaints of abuse, having to do with his actions. Siegel demanded the self-criticism immediately, insisting that he was well within his authority to force me to write it, regardless of the situation, and threatened to have me removed from PropCom unless I submitted it at once. I then preemptively left every PropCom-related room I was in, as I refused to be bullied into submission. I wouldn’t have written any self-criticism under those conditions, let alone one for something as absurd as calling the behavior of a petulant misogynist “foolish”.

Near the end of the interview, Siegel, a nonbinary (but

non-trans) woman, said he “felt unsafe”, implying that I was in some way dangerous to him, an extremely common transmisogynistic tactic used by cis women to put trans women in harm’s way, and especially to recruit men to enact violence against trans women. When I pointed out that this comment was transmisogynistic, Siegel accused me of “harassing” him, despite the facts that (1) I had said nothing that could remotely be considered “harassment”; (2) Siegel was in a position of power over me, not the other way around; and (3) an entire interrogation was unfolding in which the interrogators were bullying me, largely on behalf of Siegel, who was a sitting member of GenCom. Of course, none of the GenCom interrogators intervened. When I said that I now wanted to file a complaint against Siegel for gender chauvinism, he balked and left the interrogation room. I was first told that I would be allowed to file this report, but was then told that I wouldn’t; this was literally a few hours before I was summarily expelled.

I find myself reticent now with regard to describing everything that happened during this interrogation, as it was a disturbing and somewhat traumatic experience, and I find recounting it incredibly emotionally exhausting. For my own health, I will limit my description to the above, but may enter into greater detail in our forthcoming analysis.

I’ll briefly summarize and contextualize all of the events described above.

In my work for the party’s newspaper, I experienced misogyny from two men. I let this go repeatedly. One of these men stormed out of the party after receiving any harsh criticism from me, including for his behavior, despite berating me only a few days before. Another of these men kept trying to passive-aggressively derail and “win” the same debate with me until I’d had enough and demanded he apologize. He didn’t apologize, but instead wrote an unwanted “self-criticism” that twisted the situation to be

my fault. Immediately after he handed this to me, I was instructed to self-criticize for using the word "foolish" to describe the behavior of the other misogynist man involved towards me. The inner-party member who instructed me to do this, who sat on both PropCom and GenCom, then tried to manipulate me into getting behind GenCom's narrative that I'd been "abused" by Cde. K., despite my insistence, to the contrary, that I enjoyed working with Cde. K. and was upset that so much of our work had been wasted when I was disallowed from doing so (which, needless to say, has no precedent under democratic centralism). I was then called an "academic" and accused of "academic-ism", which I found deeply insulting (and which I later found out was motivated by ableism). When I said that this process was beginning to feel abusive, an "interview" room was set up, ostensibly so that I could voice my complaints to GenCom, but really so that GenCom could bully me into submission. During this interrogation, I was gaslit by one GenCom member, the conversation was derailed and I was mansplained to for literal days by another, and I was subjected to a transmisogynistic tactic often deployed by cis women ("I feel unsafe around this trans woman"), and often to extremely violent effect. When it was clear that I wouldn't acquiesce, and that I also was willing to hold out for much longer than GenCom anticipated, I was summarily expelled from the party, in contravention of all established rules and norms, by Manu, the de facto leader of the antidemocratic faction.

All told, from the above, I count at least nine (9) discrete instances of gender chauvinism, each of which would have been worthy of censure under the RAS harassment policy, as well as an ongoing ableist slander based on my autism. And this is without entering into a full recounting of the interrogation.

This encapsulates GenCom: what, in practice, it actually

was.

To tie this directly into the report at hand: If Cde. K. had done any of the above to me, I would likely never speak with him again, just as I plan to never speak with any of the offending RAS members again. And, what's more, if I had so much as hinted to anyone on GenCom that Cde. K. had done any of the above to me, the antidemocratic faction would have used this as the nail in his coffin, because they would, at last, have found actual evidence of his gender chauvinism. But I know from experience that Cde. K. has never done anything like this to me, and all the evidence we have, the whole great wealth of it, demonstrates that he's never acted this way towards any other woman he's worked with. When I've had disagreements with Cde. K., he's never tried to aggressively or passive-aggressively derail the conversation; he's always respectfully listened to and considered my views in the course of our collaboration, even when we've ultimately maintained comradely disagreements. Cde. K. has never talked down to me or mansplained to me — which likely puts him in the minority of Communist men I've worked extensively with. Cde. K. has never gaslit me. And I've witnessed Cde. K. be among the first comrades to stand up for trans women against the sorts of transmisogyny I experienced from GenCom.

GenCom, I can confidently state, was nothing more than a tool used by the RAS inner-party's antidemocratic faction to wrest absolute control over the party. In doing so, it mostly terrorized men, justifying its "rage" by invoking what amount to (1) minor errors committed by some men and (2) refusing to admit that every single organizational problem that brought RAS to crisis was, in the final analysis, the party's fundamentally undemocratic structure — the very same structure that, ironically enough, this antidemocratic faction consolidated around keeping in place. But it never relented in its terror campaign if women, however

marginalized and vulnerable, got in the way of its ultimate aim.

Furthermore, I can reasonably assert that what, so to speak, painted a target on my back, was the following:

First, I collaborated on a theoretical project with Cde. K., during which I was identified as a potential threat, months in advance of my censure.

Second, I got into exactly one argument involving Manu (which I then thought was completely innocuous and comradely on all sides), which in time led to the blatant exposure of Manu's antiblackness (which is discussed by Cde. Sylveste, above).

Third, Cde. K. and I led the charge to expel Jefflin, an RAS member who was exposed as a fascist, from the party. Manu originally invited Jefflin into the party and defended him even after he was exposed as a fascist, and the two remain close personal friends. My role in getting Jefflin expelled, which involved systematically and harshly criticizing him, likely angered Manu.

Fourth, I was openly critical, from the first week or so of my membership, of the RAS Party School's "Material Feminism" course, because I felt it taught neither materialist feminism nor any practical and organizational skills for combatting gender chauvinism. I made clear that I believed the course needed to be rebuilt from the ground up. This demonstrated that I was willing to criticize GenCom (long before I knew it was little more than a tool of the antidemocratic faction), and that, as a more ideologically developed comrade (relative to the level in RAS) who happened to be a trans woman, I was, crucially, capable of challenging GenCom's claim to standing as the sole legitimate representative of gender-oppressed comrades and feminist issues within the party.

Fifth, I took a significant, although not a leading, role in the efforts, led by my aforementioned dear friend, who was then a sitting member of the Central Committee, alongside

Cde. K., to reform the party from within, and especially to democratize it. This was obviously unacceptable to the antidemocratic faction and, in my estimation, was likely when they decided I needed to be disposed of at the first opportunity.

Sixth, in those last two or so weeks, I experienced transmisogynistic and ableist abuse from, and in turn criticized and refused to submit to, multiple inner-party members, in or aligned with the antidemocratic faction, which provided them with the necessary pretense to make my expulsion imminent.

Before wrapping up, I will briefly reiterate what has already been discussed at length by Cde. Sylveste: Not only was my expulsion in contravention of all established rules and norms, carried out by Manu in a bureaucratic maneuver to eliminate a threat to their faction's consolidation of power, but it was also so obviously and egregiously wrongful and abusive that it was overturned by a supermajority vote — the entire committee versus Manu and one other member. My aforementioned dear friend reached out to me the day I was expelled to make sure I was alright and to apologize for how unjust the situation was. She informed me, either that day or the day after, that my expulsion had been overturned, and said that someone would contact me to invite me back to the party within a few days. She was surprised to learn, a week or so later, that no one had contacted me. I now, of course, know why no one ever contacted me: The antidemocratic faction rapidly consolidated power, expelling and forcing out through abuse anyone they deemed a potential threat — and, needless to say, anyone who vocally stood up for me was instantly identified “for elimination” — so that, in short order, no one who might have contacted me, that is, no one with any respect for even the remotest democratic process, was still sitting on the Central Committee.

As I touched upon earlier in this report, from the evidence

I've seen and reviewed since my expulsion, I believe that Manu is most likely a cop, or otherwise an agent of the enemy State. In fact, I believe this is the most convincing explanation of their actions. Someone who simply wanted to control a cult, for instance, wouldn't spend years infiltrating a very small, mostly online-based party, removing or forcing out all but a few dozen of its members, thus rendering it what amounts to a moribund, decaying online club. A would-be cult leader has any number of less effortful, more effective ways of amassing followers. Moreover, throughout their tenure, Manu consistently advocated that RAS take up illegal activities that would have undoubtedly gotten everyone involved sent to prison. For example, they proposed a plan for RAS to buy land and use it to start a psychedelic mushroom plantation, to which most party members would then relocate for work — a plan that would easily get most of us incarcerated. Another of their plans was to set up a fake NGO, solicit charitable donations from wealthy individuals, and then funnel the money into RAS activities — a plan that amounts to committing fraud, which, again, would almost certainly end with all of us arrested by the next tax filing season. This is classic cop behavior. On the other hand, whenever Manu was given the responsibility of handling a local militant action, they'd "forget" to do anything or casually shrug it off as "too late". For example, at one point, Manu received a directive to carry out a specific action involving a housing crisis and tenant organizing in their locality; when Cde. K. checked up on their progress, they casually said the situation had already "blown over", without further explanation as to their failure to do anything. Cde. Simcha said of Manu, "After meeting them in person I can honestly say they are one of the least trustworthy people I've ever met. Which is sad because a lot of promising Bay Area organizers are caught up in their web of lies and manipulation." From my brief interactions

with Manu, this isn't hard to believe. As a final bit of evidence, there's the fact, previously mentioned, that Manu encouraged fascist infiltration, both by inviting Jefflin and by defending him after he'd been exposed as a fascist.

All of this evidence points, in my view, to only one sensible conclusion: that Manu is, and was from the beginning, an agent of the enemy State. Even so, only one other member of the core USU team — neither Sylveste, nor Simcha, nor Cde. K. — is similarly convinced, the rest preferring the explanation that Manu is simply a cruel and manipulative person who wanted to control a tiny, geographically dispersed cult.

Whatever the truth, it speaks volumes of the farce that was the GenCom's "Gender Rage campaign" to root out gender chauvinism that, in the course of this campaign, its members formed the greater share of an antidemocratic faction that defeated last efforts to democratize the party; abused several comrades with misogynistic, transphobic, racist, and ableist chauvinism in the process; and consolidated around, cleared of any wrongdoing, and elevated to the position of RAS party chairperson, such a depraved and clearly anti-Communist individual as Manu.

There are many lessons to be learned from this experience, but perhaps the most relevant to this report are as follows:

Just because six women and one man (by my count), all unelected, present themselves as a "Committee on Oppressed Genders", and present their systemic terror campaign as a feminist crusade, that doesn't mean they should be taken at face-value as the collective authority on gender chauvinism, or as defenders of gender-oppressed comrades.

Absolutely anyone, of any background, provided with motive and opportunity, i.e., with authority over an antidemocratic structure and a desire for power, including within a purportedly "revolutionary" organization, has the

potential to abuse and terrorize those over whom they hold and wield power.

It is essential that every Communist be ideologically, politically, organizationally, and practically trained in democratic centralism, and a vital task during this stage in the development of the U.S. Communist movement will be to soundly defeat and isolate the antidemocratic leadership of every fundamentally undemocratic "Communist" party and organization in proximity to us.

For the purposes of this report, I hope my account and those of my comrades have thoroughly discredited the notion that the remnant-party RAS, its leaders, and persons adjacent to it should be trusted to speak on matters of gender chauvinism, abuse, accountability, and democratic centralism — in general and particularly with regard to Cde. Cde. K..

Appendix: Findings and Conclusions

We will summarize the findings of our investigation regarding each of the charges brought against Cde. K., point-by-point, below:

Claim: "Cde. K. was disciplined by his formation [i.e., RAS] for Twitter posts that displayed both gender chauvinism and adventurism."

Our investigation found this to be true. However, we found that the censure was only partially true, and that the disciplinary measures were disproportionately harsh and unnecessarily punitive in light of the actual substance of Cde. K.'s few infractions.

We hold that this matter is closed, and has been for around eighteen months.

Claim: "As a result of this disciplinary process [i.e., the process described above], [Cde. K.] agreed to delete his twitter account and remain off the website for a period of six months while he engaged in self-criticism about his online behavior. Before this six month probationary period was over, it was discovered that Cde. K. had created a new, secret Twitter account, in violation of the disciplinary terms he agreed to."

Our investigation found this claim to be definitely and entirely false.

Claim: "In response to this discovery [i.e., the misinformation in the above claim], a second disciplinary process was initiated in which it was proposed that Cde. K. be removed from his leadership positions within the party..."

Our investigation found this claim to be partially true, insofar as a second censure and set of disciplinary measures were enacted against Cde. K..

However, we found that Shenandoah Socialist Collective has been misinformed as to why Cde. K. was again

disciplined.

Furthermore, our investigation found that the measures taken against Cde. K. were extremely disproportionate to any minor missteps, errors, or infractions he had made in the party.

Lastly, we now know that the real reason for these measures was to remove Cde. K. as an obstacle to the consolidation of the antidemocratic faction's power — as many comrades in RAS would soon be similarly targeted.

Claim: "... eliciting from him [i.e., Cde. K.] a response, once again, charged with chauvinism directed at his gender oppressed comrades and prompting him to resign from the party rather than submit to group discipline."

Our investigation found this claim to be definitely and entirely false.

Indeed, we found that Cde. K. was compliant to a *fault*, even when he had the right under democratic centralism to protest the measures against him and the abuses of the underlying undemocratic process.

We have found no evidence whatsoever, despite having a wealth of evidence at our disposal, of any "response charged with chauvinism" from Cde. K. (or J).

Claim: "Following his resignation, Cde. K. instigated and encouraged the harassment of the trans women who had been involved with bringing to light his problematic online behavior and attempting to discipline him..."

Our investigation found this claim to be entirely unsubstantiated, even after pouring over a wealth of evidence, and also inconsistent with Cde. K.'s character. We therefore conclude that this claim is most likely, and almost certainly, false.

Claim: "Following his resignation, Cde. K. ... disparaged the organization [i.e., RAS] in online spaces."

Our investigation found this claim to be true.

However, as we explained at length, we could not find

any criticisms or disparaging remarks that constituted an offense. Cde. K., and any Communist, and any member of the public (other than a committed fascist), has the right to criticize; in turn, every Communist organization must engage with criticism, both from external comrades and from the masses, and respond to its own failures with self-criticism. This is vital to the health of any organization, as well as, viewed holistically, to the health of our movement. We hold that Cde. K. was not in the wrong to criticize RAS, even if he did so "disparagingly".

Further, we found that Cde. K., largely out of respect for the concerns of his comrades, avoided directly antagonizing RAS, and did not "disparage" the organization by name, even though this would have been perfectly warranted.

Claim: "Following his resignation, Cde. K. ... posted on discord about attempting to goad former comrades into arguments online."

Our investigation found this claim to be, at most, half-true.

We found that Cde. K.'s words in one Discord server did reveal an attitude of desiring conflict with RAS. However, in actual practice, Cde. K. never made any attempt to "goad" the remnant-party into conflict. Instead, he self-corrected in a timely fashion, largely out of respect for the concerns of his fellow ex-RAS comrades.

Otherwise, we found no evidence whatsoever of the conduct with which Cde. K. is charged, despite extensively looking through Discord records.

Claim: "Cde. K. has not made any attempt to make amends or repair the harm he caused his gender oppressed comrades."

Our investigation found this claim to be categorically false.

We found that this claim's underlying assumption, i.e., that Cde. K. indeed caused lasting, unresolved harm

to his gender-oppressed comrades, was completely unsubstantiated by all available evidence.

We found, moreover, that Cde. K. has made efforts to make amends when he has caused harm.

Furthermore, we found that Cde. K. and J., together, made multiple good-faith, comradely attempts at communication with the RAS "Congress" — efforts towards reconciliation with the same antidemocratic faction that caused *them* harm — out of their sense of duty as Communists.

Cde. K.'s respect for the party's stability and his willingness to subject himself to its internal processes, however undemocratic and abusive, resulted in a major loss to the party's theory production. (On a personal level, it also meant I was disallowed from collaborating with him, which effectively halted my work for our party as well.) It resulted in a deleterious backslide for the New Haven RAS Red Aid station. In terms of the party's political work, it meant that RAS lost two of its most effective propagandists, Cdes. Cde. K. and J. — not because they refused to work, but because one comrade was disallowed from serving as a propagandist, and the other was, simultaneously, subjected to gender chauvinism, for no other reason than her proximity to her husband, that quite understandably made her feel that her contributions were unwelcome. (And this, I hardly need to reiterate, was due to a censure carried out undemocratically by the RAS Committee on Oppressed Genders.)

Was this loss worth it? Was it a necessary blow, say, in order to safeguard the party and its more vulnerable, gender-oppressed members?

Upon combing through every shred of a wealth of available evidence; thoroughly subjecting Cde. K.'s account of events to scrutiny; closely comparing his account with those of other ex-RAS members, including myself; and extensively deliberating on every charge presented — our team has unanimously arrived at the above-outlined

conclusions. We found that Cde. K.'s general behavior, conduct, and actions in RAS and since his departure have been, generally speaking, steadfastly principled; that he and J. made considerable sacrifices, over three and more years, to help build the party; that Cde. K. has erred, and has always shown a willingness to self-criticize, correct his errors, and better himself as a Communist; that none of his errors or infractions constituted grounds for the extreme punishments he received; that he was a leading voice for democratic centralism and democratization, but was outmaneuvered and defeated, as with the rest of us, in his attempts to reform the party; that he is certainly not a dangerous gender chauvinist, but has, on the contrary, made himself a stalwart ally to his gender-oppressed comrades, including trans women; and that, lastly, he is worthy of the leading role he has taken, alongside myself and Cde. Sylveste, in the *Unity–Struggle–Unity* project.

We thank you for your consideration, and we sincerely hope that SSC, upon reviewing this report, arrives at the same conclusions that we have.

Other Organizing Materials

If you are a member of a Communist organization, you will, sooner or later (and, let's be honest, likely sooner), need to engage in some kind of struggle, either internally or with another organization.

Constructive Struggle is available on Lulu

The ***Red Clarion***, our mass political newspaper, is available at

clarion.unity-struggle-unity.org