

# Report on the Pariah Affair

8-26-24

## Foreword

The week of July 20th, 2024, it was made known to the Executive Editors and certain executive officers of USU Press that Pariah (age 35), a member of the Editorial Board at the time, had been engaged in what he described as a "romantic relationship" with Affected Person (AP), a recent member of the press (age 19). Pariah indicated that given the age difference and structural factors he did not believe Cde. AP had the ability to consent to the relationship, that he should not have participated, but that he proceeded with it anyway. He revealed this information because the relationship had recently ended and the fallout had affected his press work and internal communications between he and Cde. AP.

On August 15th, it was decided that this relationship warranted an internal investigation to determine the full extent of its current and potential negative effects on the involved parties and on the organization. The gap between certain members discovering this relationship and the decision to officially investigate is an inexcusable organizational failure, and the subject of multiple criticisms and self-criticisms included in this document.

The investigation consisted of individual interviews, first with Cde. AP and later that same day with Pariah. The recorded minutes of these interviews are included in this document. Portions in quotes are exact quotations of the interviewees, the rest is paraphrased. It occurred to the investigators afterward that for various reasons it is better to audio record interviews in investigatory processes such as this, and the organization will do so going forward. Here, though, we have paraphrased as faithfully as we could.

After the interviews, it was the unanimous opinion of the investigators that Pariah was knowingly carrying out flagrant gender chauvinism that has harmed Cde. AP and endangered the organization. When asked what accountability could look like, Pariah offered stepping down from prominent positions in the press and taking a hiatus from press work. It was the opinion of the other Executive Editors, Cdes. W and Y, that this was acceptable as a bare minimum, and not precluding a formal criticism process and further censure, made the recommendation to Pariah the next day that he step down as Executive Editor and cease all work with the press. Pariah accepted this recommendation and

resigned. This recommendation by the Executive Editors was the subject of criticism from both Pariah and Cde. AP, whose criticisms are included in this document.

Following the interviews, Cde. Z submitted a self and community criticism, also included in this document. This criticism was submitted without knowledge of what was revealed in the investigation and before the investigators delivered their report to the press. Nevertheless, it contained a criticism of Pariah's actions based on the available information, which the Editorial Board deemed worthy of a formal criticism process as outlined by the USU bylaws.

Shortly after the publication of the investigation results, Cde. AP submitted her criticism of the Editorial Board and Cde. Z for their handling of the investigation. She also requested a criticism of herself from Cde. Z, expressing that it would be beneficial to her political development to be openly criticized for her actions throughout this process. Both criticisms are contained in this document.

In the days following the initiation of the formal criticism of Pariah, Cde. V, Deputy of Cincinnati Community Aid and Praxis (CCAP), an affiliate organization of USU, submitted a resolution (included in this document) unanimously approved by CCAP members, presenting the organization's assessment of the situation and their recommendations: that the Editorial Board accept Pariah's resignation, that Pariah be removed from the USU Discord, and that he be permanently barred from membership. It also stated that under CCAP bylaws, Pariah would have been immediately expelled for credible allegations of sexual misconduct. This resolution clarified a glaring structural flaw in the bylaws of USU Press, already encountered by the Executive Editors Cde. W and Cde. Y, that limited available action on this issue to the criticism process, but did not allow for more decisive action in situations of credible misconduct. It was because of this limitation that the editors could only recommend a voluntary recommendation rather than force Pariah's immediate expulsion or suspension. This is a failure for which USU Press as an organization must self-criticize. We are grateful to CCAP for setting a principled example of how to effectively safeguard against gender chauvinism in an organization, and we are in the process of updating the USU Press bylaws with a special clause on sexual harassment and misconduct that will empower the organization to swiftly remove any member for any credible accusation of sexual misconduct.

This resolution from CCAP and the recommended actions regarding Pariah's censure directly resulted in the resignation of Cde. AP, who has consistently defended Pariah's actions and opposed any form of censure for him.

As a result of the events surrounding Pariah's misconduct, the organization has approved a number of policy updates. As previously mentioned, the USU Press bylaws will be updated with a special clause pertaining to sexual harassment and misconduct. We will also be enacting a fraternization rule requiring all members to disclose any romantic relationships between members, or between members and anyone who actively affiliates with the press. We have also established that a person must be the minimum age of 21 years old to apply for membership to the organization. It is our hope that these changes will minimize the possibility of situations like this in the future, and further empower the organization to take decisive action to remove the offender and minimize harm if they do.

It must be again stated that CCAP was instrumental in demonstrating how situations like this can be minimized and swiftly rectified, so we invite comrades and other organizations to submit their own perspectives on this incident as well as any and all recommendations for how USU Press can improve our ability to address situations of sexual misconduct and chauvinism.

A note on anonymization: At the affected party's request, we have anonymized all references to her and referred to her in this document as "Affected Party" or "AP." For security reasons, we have anonymized all references to USU Press members using unrelated initials. We have chosen not to anonymize references to Pariah, as we deem it important that he be publicly named (by his known pseudonym) so that other comrades and organizations in the movement are aware of this incident should he try to affiliate with them in the future.

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# Report on the Investigation of Pariah

8-22-24

## Introduction

This report is intended to inform the Pressorg regarding the recent investigation and resignation of Pariah, including what was communicated during interviews (in an accompanying document). This alone is not a formal criticism in the context of the press bylaws' Self and Community Criticism process. Planned to follow this report is a formal criticism/self-criticism compiled by members of the press who were first made aware of the relationship.

## Timeline

From April until July, Executive Editor Pariah (age 34 at the time, presently age 35) engaged in a romantic and sexual relationship with Pressorg Member Cde. AP (age 19). As details of this timeline as reported by the participants of the relationship conflict, we will let the recorded interviews speak for themselves and leave the hashing out of those details for the criticism process that will be undertaken.

The week of July 20th, Pariah made the relationship known to certain executive officers of the press. This message (as it was conveyed to Cde. W) is contained in Appendix A of the accompanying document.

At the Editorial Board meeting of August 14th, Cde. Z suggested that an investigatory process proceed in order to understand the full scope of the affair, as well as its effects on the participants and the Press. Cde. X also resigned at this meeting for unrelated reasons, but volunteered to take part in the investigatory process at the EB's discretion. Cde. Y was subsequently appointed Executive Editor Pro Tempore by the Editorial Board.

The investigation was originally conceived as a group conversation between affected parties, but Cde. W and Cde. Y agreed that it would be more effective in the form of individual interviews. These interviews were held on Monday August 19th.

After holding separate interviews with Cde. AP and Pariah, and in light of their earlier communication with us, we concluded that Pariah's actions regarding his relationship with Cde. AP were inappropriate and required an accountability process. The accountability steps offered by Pariah in his interview were to resign from the Editorial

Board and take a hiatus from presswork. We agreed with these steps as a minimum, and in the Editorial Board meeting of August 20th, Cde. W and Cde. Y recommended to Pariah that he carry them out, though we did not define whether the hiatus should be a leave of absence or a resignation from membership. Pariah then submitted his resignation (from the EB and the Pressorg), which the remaining editors accepted.

Signed,

Cde. W, Executive Editor

Cde. Y, Executive Editor Pro Tempore

Cde. X, Board Appointed Investigator

# Interviews and Testimony

8-19-24

Members Present: W, Y, X

## Interview with Affected Person (Cde. AP)

- Y: Could you give us a timeline?
  - AP:
    - We were mutuals on last twitter account, mentor-y relationship
    - Late March 2024: Started messaging on new account and becoming friends
    - Connected on twitter but mainly messaging on discord
- Y: How did escalation happen? Who escalated it?
  - AP:
    - mostly Pariah, because I knew Pariah had a wife and it didn't occur to me that me and Pariah could get involved. I didn't know about Pariah's relationship with his wife being open and was missing hints for a while.
- Y: Did Pariah talk about the future? Like getting together?
  - AP:
    - Pariah definitely talked about there possibly be a future after my current boyfriend
    - Towards the end Pariah got more dramatic about the future, or actually didn't know how to express how he felt
    - Wasn't anything explicit about leaving his wife
- Y: So to understand, the dramatic expressions were unhappiness in the current relationship and wanting something with you or with someone else?
  - AP:
    - no, he would be between casual flirtation and being very serious about the relationship, I didn't understand what he meant or what the difference was, the way Pariah expresses himself is confusing, Pariah would make jokes about leaving his wife but would never actually do it
- W: When did the relationship shift to being more flirtatious?
  - AP:
    - around May
    - The shift was that it went from me approaching Pariah for political advice to talking about personal stuff

- Began when Pariah would talk about men I was involved with and Pariah would hint that he would be better
- Clarifies she found message on May 5th where it became overt
- **Pariah has actually replied to old messages saying this was attempts at escalation or hints, those messages are from early April**
- Y: Pariah would switch between jokey and serious, did he ever indicate wanting to keep things secretive?
  - AP:
    - no, not really. Pariah was a little bit worried about the pressorg but mostly because in the beginning about his IRLs finding out and giving him shit about the age gap. He wasn't worried about repercussions in the org because he was intentional about not getting involved with org stuff involving me. There was a time that he didn't want IRLs to know but became more comfortable with IRLs knowing over time
- Y: When things were escalating did you ever feel uncomfortable?
  - AP:
    - no, I feel like he was more conflicted than I was. In my mind I wasn't worried about it and was clear I wanted an IRL boyfriend. When Pariah started to be more serious I became annoyed
- W: What was the nature of the annoyance?
  - AP:
    - he was being hypocritical, the idea that Pariah set the standard of the relationship
    - In his dream world me and his wife would be monogamous to him, but Pariah could be non-monogamous
    - Pariah would be jealous of men in my life, especially more towards the end
- Y: With this jealousy, do you think he was being fair in his assessment or was Pariah just feeling a way because you are talking to anybody? Do you think his criticisms were fair or overreacting?
  - AP:
    - In some respects he was fair
    - Pariah is very critical of my current boyfriend to the point that he might be saying things because he is mad about the situation
    - Pariah knows my current boyfriend has treated me better than other men
    - Jealousy plays a part in his disapproval
- W: What was different after the escalation of the relationship?



- AP:
  - It was definitely more openly flirtatious, I assumed that's all it was. There was a point when we were snapchatting.
  - More towards the end Pariah would use different words to describe the relationship, used the Russian word for "girlfriend of a married man" with me, but when he was describing to IRL friends made it out as just a flirtation. Back and forth and unsure
- W: When did this end?
  - AP:
    - It wined down because I started talking to my current boyfriend, so it ended early-mid July when I visited my boyfriend July 17th
- W: Was it sexual?
  - AP:
    - Yes
    - Snapchatting was sexual starting in June
- Y: When it was escalating, did you plan on meeting up?
  - AP:
    - We would talk about it, but it made Pariah insecure and annoyed him that my boyfriend could see me before he could. He definitely would talk about it (meeting up)
- Y: the plan is for you both to go to the conference, how do you feel that you'll both be there?
  - AP:
    - Not worried about it, feels like we're back on track to being friends. He has been more active with my friends, trying to be more normal
- W: Anything you want to add?
  - AP:
    - not really, just want to be clear he never made me uncomfortable
- W: Are you aware he thinks you were unable to consent to any of this? He said he told you that, did he?
  - AP:
    - (Seems surprised) Pariah never told me that he didn't think I could consent, we would talk about age difference and he would say it's fine but also that he doesn't think it's fine

## Interview with Pariah

- W: Can you give us a full timeline?
  - Pariah:

- AP was blowing up my phone about the consent thing this morning, can I start with that?
- W: Sure
  - Pariah:
    - I think everything was consensual, except for trauma
- W: Why did you originally say she couldn't consent?
  - Pariah:
    - there were structural factors that "make her guaranteed" to consent
- W: Can you clarify more?
  - Pariah:
    - Her consent was informed by trauma and my position in the socialist movement, which most people would consider not being able to consent, especially socialists should have a high standard for this
- Beginning timeline
  - Pariah:
    - She has followed me since 2021, but I never interacted directly her until December 22
    - She commented on my tweets but I didn't interact with her
    - December 2022 we were in a Discord server together, and I DM'd her once about a guy who was fashy (fascist)
    - AP was off social media for a time and came back online in March 2024, and we started talking again
    - I was "very professional and arms length" with her from March-April
    - We had organizing conversations, she would ask about different orgs
    - Was hearing intermittently about her dating life
    - April-May became more flirtatious
    - Beginning of flirtation was mutual in my view
    - Became tired of hearing about "personal escapades" where she was "unsafe"
    - Felt like there was "no way to help her besides initiating a romantic relationship"
    - I initiated bringing it to "next level"
- W: You said it was professional and arm's length before May but were also hearing her personal life at the time, can you clarify?
  - Pariah:
    - she intermingled personal details
- X: What was the arrangement with your spouse?
  - Pariah:
    - Anything outside the marriage would be a casual internet flirtation

- Explained to wife about AP's safety and problems
- Wife said it's a stupid idea and will destroy your organization, but go for it I guess
- X: What were the boundaries with your spouse?
  - Pariah:
    - My wife is very against emotional attachment with other people, but sexual stuff was fine
- W: Back to timeline
  - Pariah:
    - May 8th "I initiated reciprocation," downloaded snapchat for sexting purposes
    - Didn't start flirting until last week of April, first week of May
    - Note: his flirtatious messages started early April, see AP notes
    - We had a 65 day Snapchat streak
- W: Did you talk about the future, visiting, etc.
  - Pariah:
    - I talked about visiting her at some point but was financially unable
- W: How were things defined with AP?
  - Pariah:
    - It was always made clear that my wife could end things at any time
- W: You told us originally that you crossed some boundary, what boundaries did you cross?
  - Pariah:
    - when AP and I started working earnestly on various agitation, especially student encampments and planning CPUSA agitation together, I began to "fall for her in a very real sense" which was not part of the original arrangement
    - Over that same time span began I began to develop jealousy from her other partners, though never demanded monogamy
- X: To what extent do those feelings of jealousy affect your view of her partners?
  - Pariah:
    - Initially I was very kind to current partner because we have been twitter mutuals
    - At the outset I thought AP's current boyfriend was keen, kind, and a simp and had no problem with him
    - Did have problems with her dating people who "beat their wives" (physically abusive)

- Wasn't until they (AP/new boyfriend) broke up temporarily and the boyfriend sent a "crazy message" with the boyfriend's credit card and social security number that I became angry in addition to jealous
- Comparatively speaking the new guy had been with her for 3 weeks and he was telling parents about her and planning wedding and "crazy shit"
- X: As these more serious feelings developed, did you talk to your wife?
  - Pariah:
    - No
- X: And have you at this point?
  - Pariah:
    - Yeah, that's why I went to therapy because I noticed we had stopped communicating
- W: How did your relationship develop after the new guy showed up?
  - Pariah:
    - While she was dating online but before being in person with now-bf they (AP/Pariah) put a cap on the sexual relationship and returned to being friends except for "notable occasions" when they didn't
    - Notable occasions meaning she initiated sexual aspects of relationship while she was dating other guy
    - Note: New guy doesn't know anything, Pariah and AP were sexting while she might've been exclusive with other partner
    - Note: Upon reading testimony, AP has clarified this was not cheating as defined by the terms of her new relationship (see Appendix B)
- W: Anything else you want to add to the timeline?
  - Pariah:
    - New guy flew her out on July 17th
    - This had a "drastic emotional impact on me"
    - Caused my wife to notice I had violated her trust
    - I had pretty severe breakdown
    - Relationship with wife was in jeopardy because I could not abide by her request to cut off contact with AP
    - My wife felt like I would leave her for AP
- X: Did you say anything to AP that might lead her to believe you'd leave your wife?
  - Pariah:
    - Other than the intensity of connection, no, not directly
    - AP would say she would never expect he would leave his wife for her
- W: Is your wife aware you're still in contact?
  - Pariah:

- Yeah, we worked it out
- My wife "would probably like her (AP) to go away, but she's not"
- Wife is aware AP is also going to the planned conference
- W: Why haven't you cut off contact with AP?
  - Pariah:
    - I feel it is important she has me as "a resource and mentor"
- W: What is a "placeholder husband" and why does it protect her? Does she know that was your motivation?
  - Pariah:
    - Over time of our friendship I heard a lot about her personal/dating life and I had tried all the tools and all the information that it was in my capacity to give (therapy, celibacy, not dating men, dating age appropriate men) and arrived at conclusion that she wouldn't listen to anyone she wasn't dating
    - "Also just to have her interact with somebody who doesn't treat her like shit"
    - It was probably stupid but that's what I did
- X: That advice and support wasn't possible to give while you were on a platonic level?
  - Pariah:
    - We were already on a platonic level so no, I guess not. "I don't know what we owe people on the internet"
- W: How old are you?
  - Pariah:
    - currently 35, was 34 for all of these events
    - Note: 15/16 year age gap
- W: How do you square trying to save her from relationships with older men by initiating a sexual relationship with a 19 year old as a mid 30s man?
  - Pariah:
    - It might be tied up in my ego, but I still felt like I was better than other options
    - Was "youngest dude in the mix"
    - Her boyfriend at 17 was also 34
    - Note: answer included a joking remark that we might think he's "just a narcissist who thinks he can fix everything and the rules don't apply to him"
- W: how did you two define the relationship?
  - Pariah:
    - AP would call me husband but I would call her "little lover" in Russian

- Never came up with a label
- Wife calls her "internet girlfriend"
- AP does not think I was a husband or she was girlfriend or anything
- I guess she would be my second/online wife
- X: You were the only person in contact with AP at the beginning of her affiliation with the press, why was that?
  - Pariah:
    - Always thought AP should engage with everyone in the organization and "have supportive people who are not trying to date her"
    - First reason she got in touch with him was to figure out if there were any good organizations
    - I said no, but that I'm doing work in USU
    - That's why she initially joined as a guest (non-member in contact with USU)
    - And at that time I didn't have any romantic intentions, just trying to guide her
    - For a long time when we were friends and she was corresponding with press through me I encouraged her to engage directly with press
    - Didn't like being middle man for first 2 months-ish
    - Possible she only started engaging with press once we were romantic
    - "But I definitely didn't want to isolate her"
- W: We didn't know about this relationship until it was over. Did you keep it secret or say that she should?
  - Pariah:
    - I was not originally comfortable with it being public
    - But don't think I said she couldn't tell anyone
- W: Why weren't you comfortable with it being public?
  - Pariah:
    - "The optics are very poor"
    - If I had said we were dating or romantically involved, "the discourse and stigma would be immediate regardless of how things happened or why"
- W: Did you ever think about how it could affect the organization?
  - Pariah:
    - Yeah I did
    - I determined that I would not let it affect the organization, and if it did I would remove myself and take full accountability and so on

- "My foremost responsibility is to AP as a person, and then to the org"
  - not counting my wife
- W: Did you do wrong? And what do you think accountability could look like?
  - Pariah:
    - "I think the primary thing that I did wrong was break the boundaries of my marriage"
    - "Secondarily, I should've notified my fellow editors sooner that there was a possibility of our relationship affecting the presswork"
    - I feel the extent of presswork affected is that I sent AWOL for a few days
    - Accountability could be "stepping away from a prominent position in press or taking a press hiatus, if it was asked"
- Pariah (unprompted):
  - Never asked AP to keep it a secret
  - while it was going on I don't think I was like "you can't tell people" but I might've been like "don't tweet about it"
  - I think of Calla/Fergie thing where people will compare him to Fergie
  - Note: no USU members present understand this reference
  - As far as I can tell Fergie didn't even do anything, but there was still discourse
- X (indirectly via W): What was your reaction to AP bringing up the relationship in Juche Chat (a large twitter group chat)?
  - Pariah:
    - At first I didn't want to because that is a "very monogamous chat"
    - I have IRL mutuals in chat who don't know about my sex life and who my wife doesn't want to talk to about it with
    - I would flirt to see if it would get noticed
    - "We developed a system of flirtation to see what we could get away with, which apparently is a lot."
    - Concluded people "won't say anything" about "overt flirtation"
- X: Do you think that same type of flirtation tolerance test was present in the USU chat at all?
  - Pariah:
    - No, I think in USU we were professional
    - "As much as possible we would keep flirtation out of the pressorg"
    - My emotionality in race conversation was definitely driven by the fact that we had recently broken things off
    - Note: the race conversation refers to an internal discussion about race in which Pariah and AP had heated conflict

- X: To reiterate the effect you felt this has had on presswork, do you feel like 2 days AWOL was the extent of the effect the relationship had on the organization?
  - Pariah confirms previous statement
  - Pariah:
    - When we were flirtatious that was when the press work was at its highest views
    - Note: Seems to be attributing site views to the relationship as a positive effect
    - I feel that AP's vigor at CPUSA convention was "a form of gift giving or romance towards me"
- W: You two both plan to attend the coming conference (as delegates to a regional conference). What are expectations of each one at the conference?
  - Pariah:
    - I think we are both capable enough and responsible enough to attend and nothing will happen
- W: Have you discussed it, and what have you discussed?
  - Pariah:
    - we both get in on Thursday night
    - we are staying separately
    - "she wants to meet up Thursday night, I'm not sure"
    - definitely meeting up with Z on Friday
    - as far as I'm concerned there's no romantic potential at the conference
- W: But you haven't been explicit about expectations?
  - Pariah:
    - We haven't explicitly said we aren't doing anything at the conference, but I believe current boundaries of relationships are enough that nothing will happen
- W: Anything you'd like to add that we didn't cover?
  - Pariah: No, if you're all satisfied



## Appendix A



Pariah 07/24/2024 2:33 PM

The TLDR. I had a romantic relationship with **AP** from April-May until the 11th.

Which I should not have participated in, on the basis of her age and the structural factors making her incapable of consenting (which i told her)... but chose to make an exception for because her other romantic choices were more endangering and harmful to her.

I exhausted every normal method of convincing her (go to therapy, try celibacy, try age appropriate dating, date women, take on a sport? Get a hobby? Do Communist agitation?) But it seemed that acting as a "placeholder husband" until she found a real, safe relationship was the only form of support that would work.

Like, either I did so, or she would continue to get raped and maybe killed at some point.

Despite laying out parameters and expectations from the outset, such as my wife being able to end things at any time, no expectation of leaving my wife, no jealousy on my part towards her physical partners, the relationship broke these boundaries. We got emotionally involved.

It's clear she has held out a hope that I will leave my wife for her.

And I couldn't deal with her choice of "real partner" whom she solidified things with last week. Because he:

- is economically coercing her
- showed crazy signs of possessiveness: like sending her his SIN, drivers license, credit card front & back, when she tried to break up with him previously.
- is twice divorced and wants to get married again??

And I felt our "breakup" affected that discussion in **USU chat** about race, and how escalated she was. (Though she insists it wasn't that, and we have hopefully put that to rest now).

## Appendix B

Cde. X 08/17/2024 8:41 AM

Do you want to explain via text? I think we'll have the meeting regardless (if that's ok) but since pariah explained it via text it's probably more fair if you get a chance to too

AP 08/17/2024 8:53 AM

sure 🤔 im not sure what all he said or how much to say

TLDR: (i can find exact dates another time if u want) we were more mentory besties for a couple months after reconnecting and then after a little while his flirting was explicit enough for me to say "dont u have a wife" lol, he explained his sitch to me, we had a flirtation thing that lasted til like a little over a month ago becuz of my new boyfriend! we r still friends even tho we had a little bit of a disconnect for a couple weeks after i started dating **boyfriend**

he explicitly never got involved w anything involving me w the pressorg and tried to take a back seat in stuff like letting me in as a member

Cde. X Today at 8:15 AM

hey btw forgot to ask, how old are you? and when is your birthday?

AP Today at 8:48 AM

19 and october 2nd! we never dmed until i was 19! we were moots when i was maybe 16/17 but he wasnt aware of my being 16 at the tjme if i did make my original twitter that early. either way only mentor-y replies to tweets every once in a while until i was 18, he messaged me once to warn me about **twit user's**. cryptofash tendencies, then i seriously logged off lol and then came back around march when i was 19

👍 1

also as a follow up he would make remarks that in my head im like "r u talking about leaving ur wife..." which would be followed by me telling him no be fr lol. i never asked or wanted him to do that. i think he struggles to articulate feelings, and hes said he was never able to properly express how he felt, but he still hasnt! so im not sure how real any of that was, but for a majority of our thing it felt exclusively like an e-fwb thing which is cringe but lol. idk if hes complained to YOU abt me **being w/ boyfriend** just bc he can be a "husband" but its like u couldnt even be a boyfriend so 🤔 idk all to say irdk how he actually felt about any of it and i havent really bothered to press him on it.

👍 1

Cde. X Today at 9:00 AM

that's something he said too, that he was "playing husband". did he communicate that with you too then?

AP Today at 9:10 AM

lol hes hilarious, no. if thats what he meant by "playing husband" to my recollection i was the person/thing that would course correct back to thats not happening and should not happen

AP

08/22/2024 11:39 AM

can you add a note to pariahs testimony

where it says i may have cheated on my boyfriend (ex rn but its complicated anyways) can u add in parenthesis that i have clarified that we were physically exclusive but not monogamous

i would appreciate if it didnt look like i cheated on my ex or whatever at the time from the notes

any "notable moments" were before I visited, and he said it was fine if i talked to other people, i didnt become his girlfriend until about 3 days or so after i had finished my visit and been home.

# [Cde. Z] Notes on the Pariah Affair: Self and Community Criticism

8-21-24

Pariah stepped up to help save the press during a period of anarchic disorganization occasioned by the sudden departure of one of our founding editors and helped to steady the organization in the wake of her personally motivated attacks on the press organization itself. He has worked as an Executive Editor of our press since that period and has served as an anchor for the organization. He has expanded our capacity, worked, like I have, to rectify his own past ultra-leftism, and has helped develop the press in the direction of unification; he has helped to make the forthcoming regional conference possible.

Despite all of this, this does not mean that he is incapable of fault – even egregious fault – either politically or ideologically. The present criticism reflects major political and ideological faults not only in Pariah, but in the behavior of the Executive Editors and myself as secretary. In an effort to keep this complicated matter clear, I will work systematically, first through the events that serve as background context for the errors of the executive apparatus of the press and the errors of Cde. AP in particular (addressed in a separate section) and as the basis for the criticism of Pariah. Then, I will lay out the basis for the criticisms; the Editors of the press will be criticized collectively.

## I. Background

As a prefatory note, I do not have access to the full scope of the events in question. That investigation was conducted by the Executive Editors and their findings have not yet been made public. However, due to the back-and-forth that has already emerged on the press discord, I believe waiting for the Editors' report would be a mistake. Therefore, this background is only as complete as my own knowledge of the underlying affair.

To begin, then: On July 20, after a two-day absence, Pariah made known to certain executive officers of the press that he had been involved in a romantic relationship with Cde. AP that lasted from May of 2024 until that absence. He indicated that he knew that this relationship presented a major power differential in age and resources (Pariah is in his middle 30s and Cde. AP is 19) and that the relationship was inappropriate. By his account to me, he had engaged in that relationship primarily to act as a "placeholder husband" (his words) and that he sought and received the assent of his wife to do so. However, it is worth noting that Pariah's wife warned that, should the existence of this relationship become public, it would imperil the future operations of the press and grant a very potent weapon to our opportunist and revisionist enemies.

He revealed that his absence had been the result of an acute emotional crisis in which his wife invoked their mutually agreed-upon right of terminating Pariah's relationship with Cde. AP and that he had, instead, tried to take his own life.

I took no action other than to encourage him to report this to the other Executive Editors. Despite having a handful of informal communications with the other two Editors about this, I did not suggest that it be discussed in a formal fashion until nearly one month later. That occurred at the mid-August editorial board meeting last week which prompted the Editors to begin a more thorough investigation. At that same meeting, Cde. X resigned for other reasons, necessitating a change in the guard of the Board.

## II. Self-Criticism

It took me nearly one full month to realize that any action at all needed to be taken by the press. At no point did I undertake to make an investigation or to suggest anyone else investigate until that point.

This is an unforgivable breach of duty as a Communist, no matter what the result of the investigation would later show. It may be unforgivable, but it is perhaps rectifiable going forward. I will suggest throughout that each of these errors may be subject to political and ideological rectification.

Why was this a breach of Communist duty?

The history of the anti-capitalist and revolutionary movements in the West, even when confined to a study of merely the past decade, reveals that there are deep-seated issues of gender chauvinism, abuse, and the smothering or burying of complaints of the same. We have witnessed, in our own lifetimes, the vilification of the victims of sexual abuse and, as recently as the CP Canada scandal of several years ago, the splitting of an entire organization where the perpetrators of sexual abuse and harassment were protected by that "party's" leadership.

What should I have done properly? Immediately drafted a criticism or some other notification that would have alerted the Editorial Board of the need to act. At the very least an investigation was necessary to determine the degree of error, the existence or not of abuse, and so forth. Although I'm personal friends with Pariah, in the matter of revolutionary organizing, such a confession should have immediately alerted my political training and brought about an intervention. Without such an investigation, there was no way to know whether Pariah was telling the truth, a half-truth, or any other variant of the truth.

Indeed, Pariah should have also had some manner of relief available to him at that point in the form of an interview, if only for his own mental health, but this will fall more generally to the Executive Board in the criticisms below.

### III. Pariah

For obvious reasons, the bulk of this criticism must be laid at the feet of Pariah himself. My criticisms of Pariah can be reduced to the following four points:

- 1) Engaging in a romantic relationship with a substantially younger comrade, knowing that such a relationship did not comport with the necessary standards of Communist conduct
- 2) Engaging in a romantic relationship that he knew would put the press in danger and give its opponents a ready-made weapon against our legitimate criticisms of their organizations.
- 3) Engaging in behavior that hands a lever to the state to manipulate him.
- 4) Failing to pursue personal ideological rectification during the subsequent investigation at its early stage.

**Romantic relationship with a 19-year-old.** It is my understanding that there was no physical contact between Pariah and Cde. AP. Nevertheless, Pariah's reasoning, that he would act as a "placeholder husband" because of the history of abuse that Cde. AP had suffered and therefore help to prevent further abuse, lays bear the ideological underpinnings of this criticism. Cde. AP, if she truly is the victim of past abuse, has been groomed by older men in the past and subject to extortionate and dangerous financial manipulation. Pariah, as a substantially older man who has been an active Communist for a much longer time, recognized his structural power over Cde. AP, but engaged in the relationship regardless.

Although he professed to have set boundaries, he also admitted to violating those boundaries. Is it possible that a relationship between a seasoned veteran Communist and a 19-year-old revolutionary could be anything but coercive? That is a question that we do not need to answer here. Certainly, I believe Pariah would answer in the negative and both he and I would cite to Wittig and the enforced hetero-orthodoxy of the patriarchal mode of social and economic organization that pervades Western societies.

Thus, to judge him by his own standards, this aspect alone merits self-criticism and some form of censure.

Although it might, at first blush, be instructive to look to the Bauman affair of 1903, in actuality this is not a personal failing but an ideological-political one. We must be wary of standing in moral judgment of our comrades; criticism is only for political errors, and not errors of morality. We must resist the ultra-leftist lure of turning each and every moral failing into a corresponding political failing. As Comrade Irene Krull wrote eloquently in 1972 for Proletarian Cause, "The struggle against the bourgeois ideology of male chauvinism is revolutionary because it seeks to change one aspect of inequality in class society... and is part of the struggle to unify the working class against the capitalist class."

The exertion of this extreme of structural power is an expression of gender chauvinism; it is this which is the primary danger, and which must be combatted. In essence, the core error is one of gender chauvinism and all other errors are secondary to this central error.

**Romantic relationship that endangers the press.** No matter what the ideological-theoretical basis for the criticism, it was well-known to Pariah that a relationship with Cde. AP might put the press' credibility in danger. This might be more properly compared to the Bauman affair... but if it were, it must be acknowledged that Comrade Lenin thought the Bauman affair to be nothing and ruled its discussion out of order for being purely "personal."

Nevertheless, we must be alive to the danger that negative impressions will have on the press. In this instance, the press distinguishes itself from past and current "Communist" organizations by its dedication to transparency and differentiation from the great nation chauvinism and gender chauvinism of past and present organizations. We cannot surrender that theoretical ground.

**Lever for state manipulation.** By concealing this affair, Pariah made himself vulnerable to state manipulation by intelligence services. We are currently beneath the view of the imperial intelligence apparatus, but it must nevertheless be stated and acknowledged that this secret could have carried on and endangered the press not through a public airing, but rather through the private manipulation of Pariah himself by forces of the bourgeois state.

**Failure to engage in rectification.** Lastly, Pariah was presented with the chance to engage in rectification work and failed to seize it. He surrendered to the urge toward self-annihilation and stepped away from the press entirely. This represents an attitude which cannot be permitted among revolutionaries, namely, the abandonment of the struggle. Only should self-rectification be deemed impossible by his comrades is Pariah released from the need to bring about political development in response to this crisis.

The one outstanding question to answer is: is there a way to "kill the disease and save the patient," as we are required to do? That is, can Pariah be ideologically rehabilitated, and if so, what would that ideological rehabilitation entail? These are questions for a full struggle meeting and for the Press Organization itself to consider, but my opinion is that it is still possible for Pariah to seek ideological rectification. I suggest that this rectification process would include a period of suspension from work and heightened study and self-criticism as well as repairing harms done to both his wife and Cde. AP.

#### IV. The Executive Board

The original executive board (Comrades X and W) are guilty of the same errors that I self-criticized for above. I hope they intend to self-criticize subsequently. The second executive board (Comrades W and Y) are guilty of permitting Pariah to evade self-rectification. He must be held to a higher standard, and he must at least attempt to engage in political rehabilitation. This is his duty as a Communist, however painful it may be.



## [Cde. X] Self-Criticism Regarding the Pariah Affair

I was initially made aware of Pariah's relationship with Cde. AP shortly after Cde. Z was, after Z asked Pariah to tell me what was going on. After being briefed on the situation, I made the mistake of uncritically taking Pariah at his word about his motivations and the resolution of this issue without doing further investigation. Some of my feelings could be described as "coping denial" as Pariah had always been someone I thought I could trust and looked to as a mentor to some degree. Like Z, it took me considerably too long to realize that action needed to be taken on this matter as it directly affected the PressOrg.

I especially should have known better as a victim of chauvinism and sexual abuse both inside and outside of organizing settings. I initially felt paralyzed by what had been told to me and fell into a false sense of security that everything was settled adequately. This sort of mindset is what leads complaints of abuse to be covered up in ostensibly "leftist" organizations all over the country.

I should have immediately demanded a full investigation occur that allowed the entire story to be told by all parties. In an attempt to redress some of the harm I allowed to befall, I stayed on the case as appointed by the current Executive Board in an investigator role. I understand it may feel like I have done too little too late, and that is a highly valid criticism.

All of this occurs against the backdrop of some of the most severe mental health issues I have ever faced that are mostly unrelated to this case. I do believe I failed to act promptly because I was distracted and paralyzed by a number of these issues, which is unacceptable. I should have informed my fellow editors of the extent of these issues before they affected me so dramatically.

To be clear, my resignation from the Executive Board is almost entirely due to my mental health struggles and desire for greater political development. This case had no direct bearing on my decision, but it has certainly reinforced the case for me to take some time away from the Executive Board to reflect.

I apologize to my fellow Pressworkers and am grateful for the opportunity to present this self-criticism.

## [Cde. W] Self-Criticism Regarding the Pariah Affair

I was first made aware of the relationship between Pariah and Cde. AP on July 24th, 2024. Not until the suggestion was made by Cde. Z in the Editorial Board meeting of August 15th, a full 3 weeks later, and only from the prompting of a comrade, did it occur to me that the situation required further action by the organization. As an elected editor chosen to look after the best interests of USU and its members, and also as a comrade in the Communist movement, this is an inexcusable lapse in judgment. Though this type of situation is new to me personally, I nevertheless was aware of the numerous examples in recent years of left organizations that have failed to address situations similar to this one with the seriousness they deserve. I was aware of the irreparable damage these failures have done to those organizations and as a result to the movement as a whole. I had more than enough information from the first moment I was made aware of this relationship to have been able to understand the gravity of this information and the immediate need to notify the Pressorg and begin an investigation to understand the full scope of the relationship, the existence or lack thereof of abuse, and the potential risks to the organization.

As I've considered this failure of judgment, spoken with fellow members, and have read about the nature and patterns of narcissistic abuse, I have come to better understand how my perception and decision making can be flawed in unsure circumstances. Pariah controlling the dissemination of information and presenting it as a personal issue he was confiding in us was a form of manipulation to control the narrative and obscure the existence of the abuse, and he succeeded in affecting my judgment and immobilizing me from acting swiftly.

None of this excuses my failure in adequately addressing this situation. I share this only to demonstrate that I am trying to understand the root causes of my failure in order to eliminate the possibility of repeating it in the future. I would like to take an active role in the training planned by the Pressorg to educate members on how to recognize patterns of manipulation and abusive behavior.

Upon realizing this error, I took steps to rectify the situation by playing a leading role in the investigatory process, initiating the recommended resignation of Pariah, and managing the follow-up actions decided on by the Pressorg. These, however, are nothing more than the minimum expectations of an Executive Editor of USU. I therefore submit myself and this self-criticism to the Pressorg so that they may make an informed decision on whether any further action is needed to rectify this error.

In Solidarity,  
Cde. W

# [Pariah] Critique and Clarification of the AP Matter, and my Resignation

8-22-24

Comrades,

I was originally going to take some time to self-reflect on the events of the last several days, before submitting any sort of critique or appeal. However, conflict in the USU server between AP, other pressworkers, and the org has made it clear that I should do so immediately to reduce further and future harm to the organization and its members.

In the Discord Call between Cdes. W, X, Y, and myself, I suggested that accountability for my behavior could include:

- stepping down as an Executive Editor
- taking a hiatus from or leaving the press org

I had intended to include the possibility of a Struggle Session, prior to stepping down as Executive Editor, but it's been brought to my attention that I didn't say so.

I offered these out of concern for the press's reputation should AP's and my relationship have become public, and as substantial, meaningful consequences if AP or the Editors had found me guilty of any wrong-doing. I had believed the other editors would be acting according to principles outlined in Article VI of USU's Bylaws, such as "Seek Truth from Facts," and "Cure the Illness, Save the Patient," as well as consider mitigations such as:

"The pressworker actively confesses their own problems"

"The pressworker cooperates with whatever investigation into the allegations is undertaken"

"The pressworker actively redresses loss, eliminates harmful impacts, or effectively obstructs the consequences of the behavior which caused the breach."

I have been in discussions about this matter with Cdes. W, X, and Z since mid-July. In addition to the phone call I think this constitutes confessing my problems, and cooperating with the investigation. As well, there was no indication of a severe problem from these parties between the time of our conversation and the phone call. My pro-offering to step down and/or leave were intended to show my commitment to eliminating harmful impacts to the press.

Based on these factors, and having already personally redressed with AP all the issues discussed on the call, and given that she did not accuse me of any wrongdoing, and given that I am attending therapy, and am repairing my relationship with my wife, I did not

believe the editors would find these solutions to be appropriate, or recommend them.

However, as these steps were recommended by Cdes. W and Y, and since I accepted, the question has been posed, "If you disagreed with the recommendation, why did you accept it?"

The answers being that I trusted my fellow editors' judgment, and I don't think it's possible to refuse such a recommendation. Were it possible to do so, the ensuing conflict would bring more harm to the organization. As well, refusing would have brought more emotionality into the situation. Therefore the appropriate course of action was to accept the recommendation, re-evaluate everything that transpired, and then initiate a criticism or appeal.

When I accepted the recommendation, AP immediately began to complain about the handling of the matter. From her comments and the way pressworkers and editors responded to her, as well as my above comments, I no longer feel that the editors followed USU's Bylaws in making their recommendation. The decision appears moralistic. It seems they simply accepted what I proposed as accountability, without accounting for AP's perspective. This is a chauvinism I exhibited in my relationship with her, that we have remedied, that the organization has now replicated. If this process has ultimately made the person it's supposedly for feel infantilized, demeaned, and ignored then it has failed. An action intended to preserve the organization against critique is causing it significant harm and inner strife. If such decisions are going to be made without accounting for the people involved, far more conversation is needed around what that should look like, and parameters established for how it should be done.

I have written this from my own understanding of events. I accept that I have not displayed the best judgment throughout the last several months to the detriment of everyone involved, but the current resolution remains unsatisfactory. As well, I could have asked Cdes. W, Y, and X for more details about why they deliberated in the direction they did. If they believe I have left anything vital out, I welcome it being brought to my attention. That said, based on how this transpired, I do not currently wish to rescind my resignation and will be taking a three month hiatus from the press.

In Solidarity,

Pariah

# [Cde. AP] Critique of the Investigation of Pariah

8-22-24

Comrades,

I am writing this critique in response to what I believe is a mishandling of organizational matters. One being the investigation and subsequent punishment of Pariah in regards to what has been dubbed something to the effect of the investigation of Pariah.

[Criticism of the EB] In regards to the investigation of Pariah, I feel as though I have been infantilized and ultimately disregarded in the pursuit of what I can only assume was meant to be restorative justice, as we do claim to be communists. I have several contentions with this process.

I question who this was for? It seems that this was ultimately a PR concern for the press org, and the presented concern for me as a member of USU, or perhaps person, was ultimately a facade for the worries around optics. My main reason for believing this is that this is not something that the press org became aware of suddenly.

In a twitter group chat Comrades Pariah, Z, and I were all in, Pariah and I's relationship status was hinted at several times. Many of the members of this group chat were at least suspicious that something was going on. Cde. Z, being a member of this group chat, had several occasions to see others referencing something occurring, see for himself what caused these suspicions, and still did not reach out. I have no way of knowing if Cde. Z was suspicious of a relationship at the time, but I also have no reason to believe he did not. Especially because he did not refute my mentioning of this in a one-on-one conversation about the topic.

Regardless, this brings me to another part of the same concern. Pariah reached out to several press org members during the end of our relationship. He talked about my relationship status, explained his own, and was very forthcoming with his personal life. This included the romantic nature of the relationship we had. At the time, it appeared press org members were concerned for him, weighing in on what he should do, gossiping, and engaging with what he was saying in a non-judgemental manner. Some members seemed to indicate they presumed something was going on as well. None of the concerns were levied to Pariah or I, in dms or otherwise, until weeks later.

It is possible that it took weeks for the concern around this to ferment. That the editors and other members needed to take time to marinate on the moralistic concern they had for Pariah's conduct and concern for my perceived victimhood. Despite our age difference being readily available and at minimum something all investigating members were partially aware of. It seems more likely to me that there was a sudden panic around optics once the relationship was officially confirmed to the aforementioned twitter group chat.

I have critiques for how the investigation itself was handled. It was not portrayed to me as an investigation that would ultimately lead towards discipline, if there was an attempt to deliver that message it fell flat.

I was under the impression that this was an information gathering pursuit so that, if there should be attacks, the org was able to have all the facts in order to address it. The lack of clarity I had going into that phone call seems fairly dishonest and likely would have affected the messages I had to send. Perhaps it was meant to be obvious, but because of the aforementioned awareness of the situation with no moralistic outrage, I was not under the impression that Pariah was at risk of substantial punishment.

The phone discussion itself is not of particular concern to me. However, I do feel that the consistent theme throughout the entire conversation was that I was fine with the relationship that we had. I found it to be consistently casual, supportive, and any annoyances I did have were not oppressive and were able to be worked through. My parting message, notably, was that I did not believe Pariah engaged in any wrongdoing, and that we are close friends once more today. I also said that I had zero concerns about Pariah and I both attending the conference. The phone call ended with editors telling me that their main concern was me. I believe this was not fully truthful as I believe it was overwhelmingly a PR concern. This is integral as it is crucial to remember that there was no complaint, no self affirmed victim, and nobody alleging abuse that risked being "swept under the rug."

What occurred after the phone call is one of the most offensive parts in this investigation. It seems to me that everything I said in that phone call was disregarded. I will not delve too much into my perceptions of the relationship because I understand it is generally considered unreliable due to the age difference. However, I do not take on the label of victim in this circumstance. There was no complaint levied. I was of legal consenting age and in no way a member of USU at the start of the relationship. My passion and pride in USU derived from my appreciation of Pariah, I did not appreciate Pariah because of USU. This is an integral difference that fully shifts my relation in the structure of the org and Pariah's position within it. While there may be concerns about the age difference I believe that this has nothing to do with the functions of the press org.

Ultimately, I feel that my agency has been denied. I was not consulted on if I thought punishment was appropriate, I was not consulted on what sort of punishment I would like, and I was not consulted on if I thought there was any improper conduct. In fact, I repeatedly stated that I felt that there was none. The infantilization thrust upon me is both uncomfortable and suffocating. If this truly was a process for me, it has done the opposite of the intended effect. I do not feel liberated, heard, protected, understood, or respected. In fact, I feel as though the most reliable and protective member of the org, whom I felt most comfortable with, has been removed. The result of this investigation and

thereby publication has been very alienating and has left me feeling vulnerable, unheard, and in many regards, shamed.

[Criticism of Cde. Z] In light of new information I have a third complaint, it is one that is targeted specifically at Cde. Z' mishandling of the situation. Though personal matters will be reserved for a separate critique. It has come to my attention that in part, or perhaps in whole, this investigation was not triggered for my benefit. As I have made clear, this is something I suspected. Rather, it was started in fear of retaliation against the organization.

Let me be clear, I told the Twitter group chat with express permission from Pariah. I would never and have never considered weaponizing the relationship's existence against Pariah or the org. My loyalties have always been with Pariah and in extension the org. I have a deep understanding of how much USU has meant to him and how much work he has put into it. Even if he permanently removed himself from the organization, I would still never discredit or try to destroy something he loved. I am not and have never been a loose cannon. I have been known to retaliate, but most often it is for people I care about, not myself. For example, USU. For the majority of my time with the organization this has been seen as a positive. Furthermore, there is a Twitter user whom Pariah and I both believe to have behaved poorly in regards to sexual conduct with me. I have never considered retaliating against this Twitter user by making that information public.

I think that this is frankly a revolting display of a lack of trust, and revealing of a deeply flawed investigation. I believe other members' past experiences and fears were utilized to betray comradery with Pariah and ultimately the organization in order to "save" the org, which was never under threat, at least not by me. Any criticisms I have of USU or any specific members are discussed solely in private messages or private spaces, any reference to the relationship Pariah and I had was done in the same manner with trusted individuals.

This investigation has damaged the organization, my relationship with members, members relationships with Pariah, my own relationship with Pariah, and its reputation with other organizations. This was incredibly mishandled, has exacerbated contradictions within the org, and has displayed that there was a fundamental lack of trust given to me. I will note that this lack of trust is despite my repeated and unprompted promotion of the organizations Patreon/Cashapp and real life agitation, as well as months long crusades to push and promote USU.

An addendum made post submission in response to Cde. W's comments:

Cde. W made it known to me post submission that they believe Pariah was not punished by the org, and reiterated that the resignation was voluntary. They have also said that there will be an opportunity to discuss punishment, that I may participate in with everyone else in the struggle session. Finally, they reiterated that the statement first



expressed to me was that the situation could be utilized by wreckers and that it was intended to be a fact finding investigation for this reason.

My response is as follows:

[Criticism of the EB] The idea of wreckers utilizing the relationship against the org seems predicated on the idea that there was misconduct or inappropriate behavior, the conversation around this has continued to circle back to the idea that I cannot consent. If there was no finding of victimhood then there would be a response to wreckers, not Pariah. Moreover, references to sexual abuse, an inability to consent, sexually predatory behavior, and more, pervade almost all critiques and findings.

At the end of the call it was reiterated that there was concern for me firstly, and that I could reach out if needed with concerns. While the mission statement of fact finding to combat wreckers was the initial message, it has been obfuscated throughout the process, perhaps via poor communication between members. In fact, this likely led to my perception that there was no risk of substantive punishment given to Pariah.

In one-on-one conversations Z related this to other organizations sweeping sex abuse scandals under the rug. If there is no sex abuse scandal there is nothing to sweep under the rug. This is a peculiar case in which there is no victim, no complaint, and no abused plaintiff, yet still somebody penalized. This is a ghost of a concern, and perhaps an exercise in making an example of what could happen if something like this ever truly happened. Regardless, my perceived victimhood is the underpinning of all of this, so if it is true that that was the lowest concern of the press org, and optics were first and most pressing, I think that actually reveals the investigations failures. If we abandon the politics of the conduct and focus solely on the perception of the conduct, we reject the material reality of the situation in favor of the optics. The material reality of the misconduct is not of concern, then, but rather the optics of perceived misconduct.

If this was not true, then, and the press org was worried about the politics, about the true nature of the conduct, about what materially occurred, then surely they would have waited for a struggle session before recommending Pariah step down from the press fully. A recommendation without truth finding via struggle session seems improper and a reaction out of what I can only assume is fear. They also did not suggest or recommend stepping down until a struggle session occurred, but rather an exit without a definite ending. This does not seem to follow what was an expected order of actions by the EB, and may have been pushed by a lack of trust and fear imparted by Z.

I reject the idea that Pariah was not punished outside of the struggle session that has yet to occur. The de facto punishment was given via recommendation. We as marxists are meant to understand coercion, and indeed that is one of the main topics of conversation in this discussion. The editorial board recommending Pariah step down fully and go on an undefined hiatus before a struggle session occurred implies express disapproval and indicates problems and trouble down the road. It is a threat of conflict even if it is not

explicitly said. Pariah expressed why he felt this was not a freely made decision, but rather a de facto punishment given by the EB in his own critique. I agree with this, and am willing to elaborate more in the forthcoming struggle session.

I still stand by the contents of this critique and my perception of the mishandling of the investigation.

# [Cde. Z] A Criticism of Cde. AP in the Matter of the Pariah Affair

8-22-24

Before I begin, a note: this criticism was solicited by Cde. AP. I had made some remarks indicating I would be writing one, and had begun to draft one as a part of the larger criticism already submitted in the Pariah Affair, but I determined that it would be counterproductive and "nitpicky" about what were relatively minor manifestations of political underdevelopment. However, Cde. AP approached me this evening and indicated that she wanted the criticism and that she felt it would be worthwhile for her development to be criticized.

The background of the Pariah affair should be well known to all members of the Press Organization by this point, and for that reason I will not recapitulate them here. She is obviously involved in that process, and further criticisms may arise as the process continues; this is not meant to foreclose other criticisms or to strike too early, should they become more pronounced or easier to identify, nor is it intended to deflect the criticisms of my own behavior that Cde. AP has indicated she will be making.

It should be understood, then, that none of these criticisms are intended to indicate a presently-debilitating political deviation. They are, as I said, relatively minor manifestations, to the point where they may not merit full consideration. Nevertheless, because such criticism was sought, they are here presented. It should be borne in mind that the very fact that they are being presented "prematurely" so to speak may cause them to appear to loom larger than they actually are. I stress that they are, as it stands at this moment, not major, and may very well be cured by the simple passage of time and may not need any corrective action.

## I. Liberal Individualism

The most prevalent deviation, which underlies not one but two of the expressed errors, is probably also the most common in Communist organizations: that of liberal individualism. Indeed, Comrade Mao wrote an entire pamphlet on this issue, which is well known in left/ultraleft circles online. These are the most pernicious attitudes and behaviors to purge, as we inherit them with our upbringing and then are continuously exposed to their social-reproductive sources during our daily lives.

In this instance, there are two notable manifestations of liberal individualism that should be combatted which were displayed in Cde. AP's interactions with me and the wider investigation into the errors of Pariah. The very baseline of this liberal-individualist expression is the idea that the process of investigation should be in some way beholden to Cde. AP's sense of whether or not she was a "victim," or "victimized" by Pariah. The

mistaken belief that this is equivalent to a bourgeois process in which there is some moral (or, more accurately, property) breach that must be healed by "justice" is a wrong-headed way to understand criticism and investigation. Indeed, Cde. AP is, in a certain sense, totally extraneous to the process, because it is one of rectifying the political errors of Pariah.

#### A. "Friends before comrades"

When it became public that Pariah was being criticized and he had resigned, Cde. AP came to me individually through Discord and lambasted me for "allowing" Pariah to resign. This rapidly devolved into a name-calling and insult-hurling round-robin between the two of us in which, although she was given the information that I had no idea what had happened, had no structural authority to act, hadn't been at any of the investigative meetings or in the meeting that resulted in Pariah stepping down, I was still to blame for not acting as an intermediary and stop-gap.

Repeatedly in this conversation, Cde. AP used the telling words that I was "friends" with the Executive Editors and that I had committed a breach in the code of ethics by which friends treat one another.

This is a fundamental misunderstanding of our role as revolutionaries. This deviation can be classified as "friends before comrades," when in actuality our duty is exactly the reverse. To be clear: to the extent that we are friends with any other revolutionary, that is a relationship which is second (and a distant second) to our role as revolutionaries. Our friendships are unimportant. We do not act to protect friends, we do not vouch for people because they are friends, we act as revolutionaries for revolutionary ends. This is, after all, what Combat Liberalism is all about.

#### B. Individuals before class

Cde. AP's focus on whether anyone was "hurt" evinces a typical bourgeois liberal-individualist understanding of political harm. This is the attitude of the policeman who merely wants to make sure there are no breaches of social etiquette before he goes back on patrol. "Well, no one was hurt, so everyone can safely go home," he says, declining to enforce the bourgeois law, because in this instance it would be more work for him to do so than he deems necessary. After all, why do they criminalize victimless behavior anyway? the pig asks himself.

Because, despite their protestations, the bourgeoisie actually understand the class standpoint. This is something that it is critical that Cde. AP learn. Whether she considers herself a victim is unimportant. The "crime" in this instance is a political crime. She has privileged her own internal viewpoint over the class question. Pariah may or may not have committed a breach in moral behavior against an individual; he without question

committed a political crime against a subaltern class. He acknowledges this, and it is actually a mark against him that he knew this was the case before he engaged in the errors that led us to today.

This is not a question of agency. This is not a question of empowerment. This is a question of a member of an oppressor class acting in a way to further the oppression of a subaltern class. Even should we agree that Cde. AP was in no way injured by Pariah's knowing manipulation of her traumatized psyche — by his own admission — even if we could construct such a counterfactual universe, Pariah would still have been reproducing a structural iniquity against an oppressed gender. By his actions he was still creating the social basis of oppression. Worse, he brought that social basis of oppression into a revolutionary organization and continued to enact it for months inside that organization, potentially compromising its principled opposition to the hierarchical domination of oppressed genders and sexualities.

## II. Undermining Press Organization Process

Related to the liberal-individualist tendency to privilege friendship over revolutionary comradeship, Cde. AP asked me repeatedly to interfere with the proper operations of the Press Organization and to wield my position as a founder of the Press to bypass the normal channels of inquiry and censure.

Formal and informal procedure stand in opposition to one another. Any attempt to leverage the personal sway of a member of a revolutionary organization to "cut through" the formal procedures undermines the integrity of those procedures. Sometimes this may be necessary, if the procedures are bureaucratic or stultifying, if they prevent growth or proper response, but this must be only as a measure of final resort. Every blow to the established and collectively-determined procedure disorganizes an organization and undoes some of the work that was done to produce it.

Thankfully, this error already seems to have been addressed by Cde. AP's adoption of the formal method of adjudication.

## III. Uncomradely Behavior

Lastly, Cde. AP broached her attempt to chasten me for failing to step in and do a solid for a friend by intervening in the proper duties of the Executive Board with a continuous stream of invective which began in private, then continued publicly within the press, and finally manifested in a twitter group chat. When she was denied one avenue to vent her anger, she found another, then another, then a third. Obviously this is not the correct way

to struggle; opening the door to personal attacks immediately and directly is juvenile, counterproductive, and results in being attacked in return.

Thankfully, as with the second major error addressed above, this appears to have been handled by Cde. AP, although not through any form of self-criticism, and if there is any censure to be had as a result of this longer criticism, I would propose a deep and searching self-criticism addressing all of the above points.

# [Cincinnati Community Aid and Praxis] Statement on the Pariah Affair

8-23-24

Upon review of the investigation published by the Unity-Struggle-Unity Editorial Board on 8/22, it is the unanimous opinion of the Central Committee that Pariah has committed an act of gross sexual misconduct and grooming of a younger comrade. We consider the entire investigation including Pariah's own justification and the response of the affected individual as evidence of this fact. We recommend that the USU Press Organization take immediate action given the following considerations:

WHEREAS Pariah, as a 34-year-old man, has engaged in romantic and sexual relations with a 19-year-old comrade and fellow member of the Press Organization, knowing full well that doing so was wrong including an explicit acknowledgement of said comrade's inability to consent to this relationship due to difference in age, experience, and said comrade's own history dealing with abuse and exploitation,

WHEREAS Pariah has abused his position as a Communist, member of the Press, and member of the EB by failing to uphold his commitment to combating sexual chauvinism within the Communist movement,

WHEREAS the socialist left has heretofore collectively failed to adequately address rampant sexual misconduct within the movement, leading to the dissolution, destruction, and discrediting of socialist organizations including, but not limited to, the Party for Socialism and Liberation, the International Marxist Tendency/Revolutionary Communists International, Socialist Alternative, the Democratic Socialists of America, and the Communist Party of Canada,

WHEREAS CCAP as well as the USU Press has members of oppressed genders and sexualities,

WHEREAS the USU Press operates a Discord channel that does not exclude participation based on age,

WHEREAS the USU Press seeks to engage in agitation among the student movement for Palestine and student organizing in general,

WHEREAS the USU Press is not located in one physical place and accountability measures to rehabilitate, if even possible, cannot be kept track of and ensured to be completed,

WHEREAS according to CCAP's Bylaws and Criticism Protocol, a member found engaging in behavior such as this would be immediately expelled without question,

NOW, THEREFORE the Central Committee of CCAP strongly recommends that the Editorial Board accepts the resignation of Pariah, that he be removed from the organization's Discord channel, and that he be barred from rejoining the organization indefinitely. Due to our own Bylaws and positions on the handling of sexual misconduct, the continued partnership between CCAP and the USU Press is contingent upon the Press taking the appropriate action to combat the continued pervasiveness of sexual misconduct among left organizing spaces.

Passed by the General Body:

Unanimous vote (11-0) 8/23/24