

Greetings NC members and observers,

Unfortunately, I feel the need to inform the NC of recent actions taken by Stephan and Philip that I believe violate the intent of the resolution passed by the NC and the IEC regarding the internal crisis in the leadership of the US section.

The resolution states **“The discussion on differences on political, organizational and methods of party building must be conducted in a structured manner through the established structures of the organisation.”** It also explicitly “reject[s] the allegation that comrade KS is in anyway unaccountable” and expresses “concern about PL and SK’s approach to the break-down of relations in the Seattle and national leadership”. Finally, it appeals to **“all comrades to conduct discussions and debates over any differences which exist in a comradely and responsible manner taking into account the need to defend the interests of the US organization and strengthen it and not to do anything that will damage it.”**

Raising Allegations of Political Retaliation in Violation of Structures

As comrades are aware, in December two Seattle full-timers (Sasha and Freeman) returned from extended visits to other cities, requiring the Seattle party building team to decide which 5 of the 7 full-timers we would keep on for Seattle party building work. One of the last things I was asked to do by EC comrades before leaving work for the holidays in December was offer my views on who should be on that team of 5, which I did, based on my general assessment of the political strengths and weaknesses of each comrade and their dynamics in relation to the rest of the team. At this time I was also informed that Whitney would not be kept on in his part-time position in the council office in the new year (hopefully comrades have read the documents from Whitney and Adam regarding the reasoning for this decision, which I won’t get into here). I had no concerns about that decision, as it was my understanding that it is the purview of the EC and NC comrades leading the Council work (Kshama and Adam) to make decisions about staffing for that office, and that they need to be free to create a team they have the utmost confidence in to work within the extremely high-pressure, fast-paced, politically complicated environment of City Hall.

Upon returning back to work after the winter holidays, I met with Emily and Ty to discuss our immediate priorities for January. In that meeting, Emily related a conversation she had recently had with Stephan, at his request, in which he raised allegations that Whitney had been “fired” from the council office as “political retaliation” by the EC majority for raising questions and sympathizing with the minority. Emily was surprised that this was being raised in the discussion, and did not share Stephan’s view that Whitney being let go was a factional move. I also learned that Stephan had raised the same allegations with Sasha, who’s reaction was much the same as Emily’s.

Ty and I quickly agreed that it was imperative to talk with Stephan and Philip immediately to register opposition to this allegation being raised with comrades outside of the EC. Ty spoke with Stephan within 24 hours of us learning of the allegation, and other EC members were also informed of what was going on. All EC members except Stephan and Philip agreed that raising such extremely serious allegations with non-EC members like Emily and Sasha without the

knowledge of the EC was a clear violation of the right of the elected structures to organize the discussion around the internal crisis, and also a clear violation of the intent of the IEC/NC resolution, which was to cease the stoking of factional suspicions based on a lack of adequate political disagreement to justify factional behavior.

Stephan and Philip acknowledged holding the belief that Whitney being let go from the council office was political retaliation by the EC majority. They have explained that in their view, since the NC had granted comrades the right to discuss the issues raised in the NC's internal session with NC observers, they had a right to raise new concerns regarding what they perceived to be factional behavior by the EC majority. I do not believe that the NC resolution intended to allow EC members to raise such serious new allegations of factionalism by the EC majority with NC observers without bringing those allegations to the EC and allowing the EC to organize the discussion, as is it's right.

In a discussion with Stephan where I raised these concerns, he raised with me that in his view, the EC majority had undemocratically rushed through the decision to let Whitney go. I learned from discussions with other EC members that, while Philip did raise concerns about procedure and perception, neither he nor Stephan made a case against letting Whitney go, nor did they raise questions to find out more about the City Council comrades' reasons for the decision before beginning to discuss their concerns with non-EC comrades. Adam's letter was sent to the EC on Nov 7, and the decision to let Whitney go was made on December 15th. Philip had raised concerns on the EC, and then with comrades in Seattle, that the decision could be interpreted as factional retaliation by other full-timers who would feel uncomfortable raising questions or disagreements with the majority due to a perceived threat of losing their jobs. Neither Emily nor Sasha had concerns about retaliation or internal democracy relating to Whitney being let go when Philip and Stephan raised these concerns with them. In my view, Stephan and Philip are stoking concerns about retaliation by raising these concerns in the minds of NC observers without notifying the EC, depriving it of the chance to respond or organize the discussion in a responsible way.

The one full-time comrade I know of who does share their concerns is Rebekah, who also works in the council office. Rather than trying to help deescalate Rebekah's concerns by explaining the reasons given by Adam and Kshama for Whitney being let go, Philip and Stephan both added to her concerns, telling her that the decision was indeed factional retaliation without notifying the SEC or EC that they were doing so.

I believe it was inappropriate of Stephan and Philip to raise their concerns about political retaliation by the EC majority against Whitney with members outside of the EC. I believe this violates not only the general democratic rights of our elected bodies to organize discussions on contentious issues, but also the resolution passed by the IEC and NC just weeks before which emphasizes the need to carefully observe the right of our elected structures to organize this discussion and to carefully consider the potential damage to the organization when making decisions about how to conduct discussions on the NC internal session. Spreading serious allegations of "political retaliation" without first discussing with the EC is the opposite of that.

Raising Demands Relating to Kshama's Defense Campaign in Violation of Structures

Another issue I encountered upon returning to work after the holidays was a high degree of concern from Whitney (expressed in a proposal to the SEC and in one-on-one discussions) that the organization was doing nothing to organize a campaign to defend Kshama against the police lawsuit. I explained to him more than once that this lawsuit was absolutely a high priority for the EC, which was energetically discussing with legal experts to start drafting the outlines of a defense campaign, but that the process was taking time due to complicated legal questions and developments, and that to rush to begin a public defense campaign without being clear on the legal risks of such a campaign would only further jeopardize Kshama and our ability to fight the lawsuit. I was unclear as to why he continued to bring this up over and over, apparently not accepting my explanation of the need to wait for direction from the EC.

Then, at our first City Committee meeting of the year on January 13th, during an agenda item where we were supposed to be discussing the political character of our upcoming interventions at MLK Day and J20, Philip made a long contribution chastising the EC for moving too slowly in organizing the lawsuit defense campaign and urged the Seattle CC to move forward in planning for a local, boots-on-the-ground public defense campaign. Ramy and Whitney came in to the discussion to back-up Philip's proposal. This required SEC members to respond and clarify that it was not only incorrect to allege that the EC (which CC comrades are well-aware Philip is a member of) was failing to take the defense campaign seriously, but that pre-empting the EC with a local defense campaign would in fact be dangerously irresponsible. This topic ended up dominating the entire discussion, preventing the City Committee from weighing in on the political character of our citywide interventions on MLK Day and J20.

More than one member spoke with me after the meeting to express confusion and frustration at receiving two different characterizations of the EC's activity from EC members themselves, in addition to frustration that an EC member had raised a controversial point under an unrelated agenda item which violated the right of the CC to organize its own discussions.

I raise all of this out of concern for the organization in the face of what appears to be a doubling down on factional behavior by Philip and Stephan and because I feel the NC has a right to know that the expectations we set at the December meeting are, in my view, being violated. I hope we can find a way to move forward that will minimize the damage to the organization both locally and nationally and allow us to intervene successfully in the huge events and opportunities facing us this year.

Comradely,
Kailyn (NC elected alternate, Seattle EC member)