

Bulletin #1 of the SA Minority Group

For a Democratic Debate on Principled Mass Work

June 20, 2018

Dear comrades,

The opportunities for revolutionary socialists are opening up in the U.S., which is still the world's strongest imperialist power. There is a search for socialist ideas, activism, and organization. Socialist Alternative has grown dramatically since 2011 – we are no longer just commentators on events but can have real influence on events at times. Given the weakness of the left, our organization can have a dramatically outsized impact if we have a correct political approach and offer the most effective strategy for combining the battles for reforms with the need for fundamental, revolutionary change.

As major events have developed recently, including the historic rise of Bernie Sanders, Donald Trump, and DSA, an internal debate has developed within SA. **These historic developments and the debate they have triggered within SA sharply pose the vital need for political clarity, a cornerstone of the CWI and Trotskyism, and a democratic culture for conducting debates within SA to achieve that clarity.**

Given the Executive Committee's undemocratic structuring of the debate so far, we have decided that in order to defend democracy within SA it is necessary to begin producing our own Minority Bulletin. This is unfortunately needed to answer the constant criticisms being made against us by the EC in their debate packets but which the EC does not allow us equal opportunity to respond in. Our Minority Bulletin is also needed to correct the litany of factual inaccuracies and omissions in the EC packets of documents, as well as being able to properly elaborate our views.

To receive future Minority group bulletins, please contact (206) 488-4723 or PrincipledMassWork@gmail.com

The Minority Bulletins will be for members and supporters of the Minority, as well as SA members who wish to find out more about the Minority's views. In the interests of full transparency, we have informed the EC that we are taking this step, and we asked them to circulate this first Minority Bulletin to the NC and all June NC invitees.

Many times in the history of the revolutionary socialist movement there have been organized groups, platforms, tendencies and factions. These groups, if organized on a principled political basis, can help clarify issues and contribute to a democratic debate on key questions facing Marxists.

However, what we have seen over the last year in SA is very different than this healthy tradition of open, democratic, political discussion. A majority of the EC formed a faction without openly laying out to the organization the political changes they wanted to make in SA. The Majority group has turned the leading bodies of SA into tools for their factional aims while avoiding even giving a basic report to the membership of SA for over a year about the major changes in the SA leadership they have undemocratically forced through and the political debates that have opened up.

We have formed our group, first and foremost, to fight against the extremely undemocratic measures which the Majority has carried out, which are completely unprecedented in the history of SA and contrary to the genuine traditions of Trotskyism. The Minority group is also conducting a struggle for

Marxist clarity on the underlying political disagreements that the Majority mistakenly tried to overcome with undemocratic methods. The underlying political disagreements revolve around how to engage in mass work *in a principled (as opposed to an opportunist) way* and also around the relationship between a revolutionary party and its elected officials.

From the start the Majority has attempted to frame this debate with very bitter and personalized attacks. But in our view at the core of this dispute are political questions flowing from a new objective situation and SA's growing pains as a result of our dramatic successes from 2011 to 2016.

New openings come with new political and organizational challenges. Winning major new positions, such as our Seattle City Council seat, inevitably comes with real opportunist pressures. On the other side, every organization – including our own – has a certain tendency to cling to old methods, even when times change. We believe this debate is about overcoming an outdated, propagandistic approach while taking a firm and principled stand against new pressures. That's what we have called “principled mass work.”

Over the past year we have seen two main political changes in SA. On the one hand, the national EC has moved away from the approach of principled mass work which guided our work when we made breakthroughs from 2011 to 2016, and instead toward a more abstract, propagandistic approach. For example, they have moved away from an engaging approach toward DSA and dropped our proposal to DSA to launch a new socialist party.

On the other hand, we have seen some bending to opportunist pressures by our Seattle leadership. The structures of the Seattle organization have been changed so that the priorities of branches could be shifted away from building our revolutionary party and cadre development, toward focusing more on the needs of the council work. There is also a resistance by the new Seattle SA leadership to

openly discuss and address opportunist pressures and mistakes that we make on the City Council.

These are political questions that a revolutionary party will inevitably need to grapple with in the course of its development. With an effective political lead and a healthy atmosphere that encourages democratic discussion, such experiences and debates can serve to enrich and raise the political level of understanding of the organization as a whole.

However, the Majority leadership has tried to avoid an open debate within SA about these questions.

Instead, they have resorted to unprecedented violations of the basic democratic norms of our organization to avoid debate and push through changes in SA. In the last year this has included:

- Rapidly firing a full-timer in December 2017 in the midst of the debate in a way that suggested it was due to their political sympathies with the Minority
- Driving out another full-timer in the spring of 2018 after she raised criticisms of our councilmember and EC
- An “election” of a new Seattle EC in June 2017 where the City Committee (which elects the SEC) were lied to about what they were voting on by the National Organizer of Socialist Alternative. Comrades who disagreed with the proposed slate were not allowed to raise their disagreements or move an alternative proposal to the City Committee
- The EC administratively removed another comrade from the Seattle EC at the beginning of 2018 without a vote of the City Committee. Neither the EC nor the SEC reported this to the City Committee; only Minority comrades informed the City Committee.
- Denying the basic democratic right of minority representation on the Seattle EC after 30% of the 2018 Seattle City Convention voted to support an opposition leadership slate (with 62% voting for the Majority slate and 8% abstaining)

- Locking out minority views from meaningful participation on the national EC for a year
- Making unsubstantiated allegations against Minority members to discredit their views – or “character assassination” as EC member Ty M. described it (as quoted in the *I.S. Letter on the Internal Situation*).
- Over the last year the EC has hidden these debates from our national membership; no Members Bulletins have been distributed since April 2017.

These unprecedented violations of our internal democracy have led us to form an organized group to systematically build support for our group’s ideas among SA members. The questions of how to engage in mass work in a principled way are important, complicated, and need time to be discussed and tested out. But most of all they need to be discussed in a democratic atmosphere where comrades can raise their views and engage in the debate.

If we can re-establish a democratic open atmosphere, we are confident that both sides of the current debate in SA will be able to work together to seize the huge opportunities to build the forces of Marxism in the U.S. and internationally.

Clarifying or Mystifying the Debate?

The immediate spur for our decision to begin publishing a Minority Bulletin was the factional and undemocratic way the EC organized the circulation of the debate documents to the National Committee (NC) and June NC invitees.

The EC Debate Packets were organized in a biased, non-chronological order which mystified rather than helped comrades clarify the issues under debate.

A number of documents that we believe are important to the debate were excluded by the EC. However the EC *did* include new factional material from the Majority (i.e. the introduction to the IEC, NC and CC resolutions and the introduction to the *EC Majority Reply* in Packet #2, and the Introduction to Packet #4). Yet the Minority was not

provided with the same opportunity to produce its own new material or to respond to the new Majority documents.

All of this was decided unilaterally by the Majority without an attempt to reach agreement with the Minority. This is not how to organize a debate in a democratic, inclusive fashion.

We therefore produced an *Alternative Guide to Reading the First Two Packets of Debate Documents* to answer this one-sided, undemocratic presentation of the written debate. We requested five times starting May 30th that the EC send it to the NC and the NC invitees to allow members to fully hear all sides of the debate. Unfortunately, the EC rejected our five requests to circulate the *Alternative Guide*.

In their Introduction to Packet #4 the EC took the liberty to issue a number of false and misleading criticisms about the *Alternative Guide*, but they did not even include the *Alternative Guide* in the packet so all comrades would be able to see for themselves what is being criticized. We also wrote to the EC demanding they immediately send out corrections and clarifications regarding the numerous errors and omissions in their careless and factionally edited Packets #4 and #5.

The EC also created a secure online location for sensitive material. We welcome this new approach of the EC, which was a change from its original position that this material would only be made available at the NC meeting itself. However, *once again the EC excluded important material written by Minority comrades*. Whether this is just extreme carelessness or factionally motivated, we do not know, but the effect is certainly favorable for the Majority and unfavorable for the Minority.

Given the clear pattern of the EC’s one-sided, undemocratic, and inaccurate approach to organizing the debate packets, **the Minority has produced this first bulletin to make the *Alternative Guide* and our corrections to Packets #4 and #5 available for members and supporters of the Minority, as well as SA members who wish to find out more about the Minority’s views on these issues.**

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1. Introduction to the *Alternative Guide to Debate Documents*

The Minority asked the EC five times starting May 30th to send this letter to the NC and June NC invitees to allow our views to be fully included in the debate. Unfortunately, the EC didn't circulate it.

Dear National Committee Comrades and Invitees, Unfortunately we believe the Executive Committee (EC) has not compiled the first two packets of written material for the June 2018 National Committee (NC) meeting to allow the best political understanding of the internal debate. Our concerns include:

- The key line of political arguments and counter-arguments is hidden by presenting them out of chronological order. The main political arguments of this debate unfolded in a series of political documents which respond to one another -- Philip and Stephan's *Update on the US Political Situation and Our Tasks*, the *EC Majority Reply to Document from SK and PL*, and the *Response to EC Majority Reply*. These documents are separated into two different bulletins with no clear explanation of how they were structured. Unfortunately, the new document by the Majority, *This Conflict is about Methods of Leadership*, does not answer most of the political arguments in our *Response to the EC Majority Reply*, but instead attempts to shift the debate onto new terrain. In our view, presenting the documents in a scattered way serves this purpose, by obscuring the political

issues that were debated in the previous exchanges.

- A number of documents that the Minority proposed to include were excluded by the EC.
- The EC's introduction to the resolutions and votes that took place contains omissions and a one-sided presentation of some of the votes.
- The EC did not engage in a discussion with the Minority to try and reach agreement on word limits or deadlines for new material.

This is part of an ongoing pattern of the Majority leadership acting in a unilateral and undemocratic fashion. This heavy-handed approach is not conducive to bringing the organization together to agree on a process that is viewed as fair by all sides.

The EC needs to lead the organization and structure the debate. The EC also has an obligation not to abuse this by organizing the debate around its narrow factional interest of "winning" an argument. We urge the EC to work in a collaborative fashion with us to seek the maximum agreement on how to organize the debates and narrow down the remaining issues where agreement cannot be found. This is a healthy method to avoid an unnecessarily polarizing, divisive debate.

To help comrades better understand this debate, we have attached an alternative guide to reading the material. It organizes the material by subject matter and also highlights documents which were omitted from the first two packets emailed out by the EC on May 11, 2018.

2. Alternative Guide to Reading the First Two Packets of Debate Documents (including documents omitted by the EC)

From the Minority Group, May 30, 2018

The Minority requested five times starting May 30th that the EC send this Alternative Guide to the NC and June NC invitees to allow our views to be fully included in the debate. Unfortunately, the EC did not circulate it.

Key Political Documents

1. [Update on the US Political Situation and Our Tasks](#) by Philip L and Stephan K (8/17)
2. [EC Majority Reply to Document from SK and PL](#) by Kelly B, Tom C, Alan J, Bryan K, Calvin P and Kshama S (10/17)
3. [Response to EC Majority Reply](#) by Philip L, Stephan K, Ramy K, Sarah WK, Bryan W (2/18)
4. [This Conflict is about Methods of Leadership](#) by the Majority (5/18)
3. [Response to “Worsening Situation in Seattle” Letter to IEC](#) by Ty M (11/17) **[Omitted by the EC]**
4. [Appeal to the IEC to Intervene in the US Leadership Crisis](#) by Ty M, Patrick A and Kailyn N (11/17) **[Omitted by the EC]**
5. [My Concerns about the Election of the Seattle Executive Committee and My View of the Internal Debates](#) by Ramy K (12/17)
6. Material on Whitney James Kahn's allegation that he was fired for raising political criticisms of aspects of Kshama's work and being perceived to be sympathetic to the EC Minority (If you don't have this material yet, please ask the EC for it. See note below for more info.*)
7. Material on Rebekah Lieberman's allegation of being driven out of the Council office because she raised political criticisms of aspects of Kshama's work (If you don't have this material yet, please ask the EC for it. See note below for more info.*)

Sanders Tactic Debates between the International Secretariat and EC Members

1. [Some Points on the Discussion in the US Leadership on the Sanders Tactic](#) by Philip L and Stephan K (11/17) **[Omitted by the EC]**
2. [I.S. Statement on Sanders \(3/16\)](#) **[Omitted by the EC]**
3. [2016 Debate in the U.S. Organization on “Safe States”](#) by Philip L and Stephan K (11/17)
4. [I.S. Letter on Safe States \(4/16\)](#) **[Omitted by the Seattle EC in the version distributed to Seattle members (this note added here on 6/20/18)]**
5. [Debate with ISO for SA and ISO Publications](#) by Philip L and Stephan K (11/17)
6. [I.S. Letter on ISO \(4/16\)](#)

Conflicts and Changes in SA's Leadership Bodies

1. [I.S. Letter on Internal Situation](#) (5/17)
2. [Concerns Regarding Worsening Situation in the Seattle Leadership](#) by Kshama S (10/17) **[Omitted by the EC]**

*** Note on Items 6 and 7:** This material is essential to our criticisms of the EC's undemocratic actions. In their introduction to Part One of the May 11th bulletins, the EC wrote “material that would be extremely damaging if made public will not be provided electronically, but only as hard copies at the meeting itself. We have had internal documents published on reddit several times in the past, and we are currently engaged in a battle with Jeff Bezos and the ruling class in Seattle. Therefore, these security measures are necessary.” While understanding these security concerns, we believe this material is critical to this debate. For an informed June NC meeting, all those attending should receive this material in advance to have time

to properly consider it and discuss it. We encourage comrades to ask the EC for it (email ExecutiveC@googlegroups.com). We will also discuss with the EC to find a way to have it circulated in advance of the NC meeting.

June 20th Update: On June 10th Kelly, on behalf of the EC, informed comrades attending the June NC that the EC had created a secure online location for sensitive material. We welcome this new approach of the EC, which was a change from its original position that this material would only be made available at the NC meeting itself. However, once again the EC excluded important material written by Minority comrades, which we have asked them to correct.

Resolutions

1. [Minority Record of Resolutions and Votes at the International Executive Committee, National Committee, and Seattle City Committee](#) (5/18) [**New Material**]
2. [Resolution adopted by the IEC on the US](#) (12/17)
3. [Proposal for De-escalation of the Factional Divisions](#) by Patrick A (12/17) [**Omitted by the EC**]
4. [Resolution adopted by the National Committee March 3-5, 2018](#) (3/18)
5. [Moving Forward and Democratic Norms resolutions and Statement on the Internal Situation](#) for the March 2018 National Committee by Philip L, Ramy K, Sarah WK, Stephan K, Whitney JK, and Bryan W (3/18)

Debate about Seattle SA's Organizational Structures

1. [Some Issues Related to the Seattle Organization](#) by Tony W and Jeremy P (10/17)
2. [Successes and Challenges in Building Seattle SA](#) by Ramy K and Sarah WK (11/17)
3. [Seattle EC Response on the Seattle Structures Debate](#) (1/18)

To read all of these documents as one compilation, here is a single PDF:
<https://tinyurl.com/ya52p7nr>

Explanatory Notes from the Minority on Various Documents, Particularly Ones Omitted by the EC

Key Political Documents

The *Update on the US Political Situation and Our Tasks* for the July 2017 NC meeting (revised in August 2017) was written by Stephan and Philip under some constraints. The EC Majority had opposed our proposal to report to the NC the changes made to the Seattle and national leadership bodies and the disagreements about them. The EC Majority also insisted that there was no political basis to these changes, in contrast with what the EC Minority argued.

Stephan and Philip drafted the *Update on the US Political Situation and Our Tasks* to clarify if there was political agreement on the EC regarding a number of key developments in the U.S. such as DSA, the character of the Trump resistance, the mass discussion around impeachment, the battle against Trumpcare and for Medicare for All, our approach to “Berniecrats,” and how to build SA in this new period. The *EC Majority Reply to Document from SK and PL* makes clear that there were, indeed, political differences over a number of issues.

Sanders Tactic Debates between the International Secretariat and EC Members

In December 2017 the International Executive Committee (IEC) discussed the debate in the SA leadership. Before the meeting, the International Secretariat (I.S.) chose to circulate three documents and letters they had written in 2016 on political disagreements within SA and within the EC as

background material. Philip and Stephan then asked that the material that the I.S. letters were responding to also be circulated along with some comments from Philip and Stephan on all three items.

The I.S. clearly believed that this material - showing political debates between the I.S. and Philip and Stephan in the period leading up to this crisis - was important for understanding the current conflict. The I.S. had urged the EC to adopt a more cautious approach toward the Sanders campaign and a debate with the International Socialist Organization (ISO). Yet the debates at the IEC, NC, and Seattle City Committee did not focus on politics but rather on personalized attacks on Stephan and Philip and their supposed organizational methods.

The EC excluded from the bulletins they circulated for the June 2018 NC one of the more important documents, *Some Points on the Discussion in the US Leadership on the Sanders Tactic* by Philip and Stephan. This was written in response to the I.S. circulating to the IEC their *Contribution to the Sanders Debate in the US*, which the EC also omitted from the bulletins.

Conflicts and Changes in SA's Leadership Bodies

We have included in this section three documents that the EC excluded from the bulletins.

Appeal to the IEC to Intervene in the US Leadership Crisis by Ty M, Patrick A, and Kailyn N was circulated to the December 2017 IEC meeting and the December 2017 NC meeting. Since then, the EC Majority has refused to circulate it further because Ty and Kailyn withdrew their support for it.

Concerns Regarding Worsening Situation in the Seattle Leadership is a letter Kshama sent to the December 2017 IEC meeting. *Response to "Worsening Situation in Seattle" Letter to IEC* was Ty's response to Kshama, which was also circulated to the IEC. Despite requests from the Minority, the EC refused to circulate Kshama's and Ty's letters after the IEC, saying that Kshama and Ty had asked that they not be circulated any further.

While Kshama, Ty, Patrick, and Kailyn have every right to revise their views (and we invite them to openly explain why they changed their positions), we believe comrades should be able to read these documents for themselves because they are part of the written record and help shed light on the breakdown in working relations on the Seattle and national ECs.

In our view the exchange between Kshama and Ty show Kshama raising inaccurate allegations widely without first checking directly with the comrades she is criticizing. This is a method that undermines building collective leadership teams and contributed to the breakdown in working relations on the Seattle and national ECs. We believe this method has continued with numerous false or highly exaggerated allegations against Stephan and Philip.

This exchange also exemplifies how, from April through November 2017, when Ty was aligned with the EC Minority and openly raising criticisms of Kshama, Kshama and Calvin only cooperated with Ty in a limited way on the Seattle Executive Committee (SEC). Only when Ty changed his opinion and stopped raising strong criticisms of Kshama, were Kshama and Calvin prepared to cooperate with Ty in a serious way on the SEC. In contrast, Philip continued openly raising criticisms of Kshama and the EC Majority, and the Majority responded by undemocratically removing Philip from the SEC in January 2018 without a vote of the Seattle City Committee. This method also undermines building collective leadership teams.

Resolutions

A key argument of the Majority is that the political differences do not justify the extent of factional tensions. The Minority has agreed with this all along. We argued that disagreements over analysis, tactics, and priorities were entirely normal, and should be resolved democratically through political discussion and organizational compromises.

However, the Majority leadership acted to overcome these differences in an administrative, undemocratic fashion. This included:

- changing the composition of the SEC in an undemocratic fashion on two separate occasions
- launching a campaign of “character assassination” against Minority comrades (as Ty M described it, as quoted in the *I.S. Letter on the Internal Situation*)
- locking out Minority views from meaningful participation on the national EC
- firing a full-timer in a way that suggested it was due to his political sympathies with the Minority
- driving out another full-timer who raised criticisms of our councilmember.

We wrote in our *Statement on the Internal Situation*, “we believe the sharp divisions in the SA leadership have developed further than what the current political differences justify, and are the result of the mistaken way these differences have been handled... [We are] deeply concerned about what we perceive as unprecedented violations of SA’s internal democracy. Given this, we believe it is necessary for us to be organized to defend not only our own democratic rights, but the democracy of SA as a whole.”

We are reiterating these points here to emphasize why we think it is necessary for comrades in the Minority to function as an organized group within SA at the present time.

We have also included in this section Patrick A’s *Proposal for De-escalation of the Factional Divisions* that he presented to the December 2017 NC meeting. Despite requests by the Minority to circulate it, the EC has refused to on the basis that Patrick withdrew it at the end of the December NC meeting. We fully respect Patrick’s right to withdraw a resolution. However, we believe the resolution is part of the written record that put forward a balanced, collaborative approach which Minority comrades strongly supported.

While the Majority claims that the Minority has continually tried to escalate this crisis, we supported the approach of Patrick’s resolution, that “the political, methodological, and organizational questions under dispute, while important, are not

significant enough to justify the current scale of factional tensions.” It called for “an agreed framework to wrap up the factional organizing now taking place on both sides. A key goal should be to reach mutually acceptable agreement on the immediate organizational issues posed, including at least: (a) roles and functioning of the EC; (b) hiring, firing, and roles of full-timers; (c) which aspects of the present disputes should be brought to the wider membership; and (d) how to structure the political debates on these issues.”

Patrick’s resolution outlined how both the Minority and Majority could work to re-establish a collective leadership on the basis of a collaborative and democratic basis. It also correctly recognized political factors in the breakdown in SEC working relations.

However, the EC Majority argued against Patrick’s resolution and towards the end of the discussion Patrick withdrew it. Unfortunately, at almost every turn the Majority acted in an intransigent fashion. After the December NC, rather than working to de-escalate, the EC Majority fired a full-timer in a way that strongly suggested it was due to his political sympathies with the Minority, undemocratically removed Philip from the SEC, and drove out another full-timer due to her criticisms of our councilmember. These leadership changes have, and will, affect SA’s political direction.

Debates about Seattle SA’s Organizational Structures

When this dispute broke out in April 2017 Stephan and Philip argued the approach of the EC would weaken SA’s oversight over our city council work. Stephan and Philip argued this would lead to changing the priorities of the Seattle organization away from building SA and cadre development, towards focusing more on the needs of the council work.

At the time the EC Majority vigorously denied this, arguing the changes to the SEC were solely due to a breakdown in personal relations. They argued that their change to the SEC would not lead to any

substantial alteration of the political or organizational direction of Seattle SA.

However, after the EC Majority removed Stephan from the SEC, they started arguing that Stephan and Philip had previously run Seattle SA in a top-down fashion, driven by full-timers.

After the EC Majority changed the SEC again, this time by removing Philip without a vote of the City Committee, the new SEC argued “there has been an exaggerated separation between our work in the Council Office and the rest of the organization. We urgently need to overcome this politically, and we feel a part of this should be through a shift in our structures ... to encourage greater participation and responsibility for branches in the campaigns and coalitions currently centered around our Council Office” (*Seattle EC Response on the Seattle Structures Debate*).

Both the SEC document and Jeremy and Tony’s document stress that the Seattle branches should be more involved in campaigns led by the council office. This is consistent with the concerns the Minority raised in April 2017, that the approach of

the EC Majority would weaken the organization’s political oversight of the council work and that Seattle SA’s priorities would be increasingly set by the needs of the council office.

This underlines our view that a key factor in the tensions on the SEC was a desire by the council comrades to mobilize branches more behind council initiatives, which Stephan and Philip had disagreed with at times.

The comrades have every right to advocate such changes, but this should have been done openly, with Seattle SA making a democratic choice about which direction to take when it elects its SEC. The EC acted in the opposite fashion, first making changes to the Seattle leadership in a non-political way by administratively removing Stephan and Philip, and then using the new SEC to carry out a new approach. This is a top-down undemocratic method, despite being done under the banner of empowering the branches and running things more democratically.

3. Letter to EC Demanding Corrections to Packets #4 and #5

June 20, 2018

Hi EC comrades,

Like with the earlier debate packets, we believe you have presented Debate Packets #4 and #5 to the NC and NC invitees in a one-sided, inaccurate, and factional manner. We insist that you send out the following corrections and clarifications regarding the most important (though by no means all) errors in Packets #4 and #5 to the NC and NC invitees immediately:

1. **Please include this editorial comment from us regarding our political views on the series of errors detailed below:**

“We outline below in detail a startling number of inaccuracies, falsehoods, and omissions from the EC’s Packets #4 and #5, as well as the outright exclusion once again of documents by Minority comrades. Whether this is a result of extreme careless or intentional we cannot say. At the very least it indicates a lack of regard for accuracy and for only employing scrupulously democratic methods. What is striking is that these oversights and omissions never benefit the Minority, but they are consistent with the interests of the Majority.

Throughout the Introduction to Packet #4 there are various factional arguments and criticisms of the Minority. However, there is no equal opportunity for the Minority to be able to respond or make its own arguments.

A leadership that is politically confident in its ideas would have no need to work in such a fashion. Instead it would go out of its way to make sure the debate is organized in a thoroughly fair and democratic manner, with its critics having equal opportunities to argue their case.

A strong leadership would rely solely on strength

of its arguments to politically convince the membership and would in no way need to use its organizational power to tip the scales of a debate in its favor. The leadership would have no fear of the truth if they had strong arguments and a clean record.

Instead, the evidence detailed below is the latest example, in our view, of a regrettable method by the current EC. We hope this can represent a turning point away from such methods in favor of inclusive, accurate, and democratic methods of debates going forward. *A minimal step would be for debate bulletins to be jointly edited by representatives of both the Majority and Minority to ensure an end to these one-sided errors and omissions.”*

2. **Circulate the *Alternative Guide to Reading the First Two Packets of Debate Documents* to the NC and June NC invitees.**

In your introduction to Debate Packet #4, you took the liberty to raise a number of criticisms of the *Alternative Guide*, yet you did not include the *Alternative Guide* itself in the Packet. We are sure you would agree that all comrades should be able to read the *Alternative Guide* to see for themselves what is being criticized. When you send it out, please include the following statement from us responding to several points:

- a. In the Introduction to Packet #4, the EC writes, “The minority group has been circulating an ‘Alternative Guide to the Debate’ to some comrades attending the June NC (but not to others).” *We asked the EC five times since May 30th to circulate the Alternative Guide to all NC members and NC invitees. Unfortunately, the EC rejected our five requests and did not circulate the Alternative Guide until now. Circulating it now, only days before the NC is highly inadequate. The suppression of*

this material was blatantly undemocratic, not allowing the Minority's views to be fully included in the debate.

The EC also appears to have one set of rules for distribution of Majority material and another for the Minority material.

In a letter to the EC on June 6 we explained that Bryan W and Ramy K “sent the *Alternative Guide* to some NC invitees [they] had discussed with ... We are also aware that at least Chris G, Andy M, and Ty M sent the Majority document *This Conflict is about Methods of Leadership* to NC invitees before it was distributed to the NC and even before the EC sent it out on May 11 to NC invitees. When Chris G, Andy M, and Ty M sent the *Methods* document to NC invitees they did not even include any material from the minority. This is a undemocratic one-sided way to bring the debate to the NC invitees.”

“When Bryan W raised these points with Chris G and Andy M, they both argued it was fine for them to directly distribute debate material to NC invitees before the EC circulated it.”

“Given these precedents and practices the Majority has established, we believed we were within our rights to also circulate debate material to NC invitees we were discussing with. Do you agree that there cannot be one set of rules for a majority and a different set of rules for a minority?”

The EC never answered to this question. We again ask the EC to respond.

- b. The EC wrote in their Introduction to Packet #4 “Unfortunately, this ‘alternative guide’ provides PDFs of potentially damaging material in an insecure way and originally included dropbox links to sensitive material as well.”

This claim gives a false impression. We have no links to any of the sensitive documents in our *Alternative Guide*. All the links in the

Alternative Guide were previously included by the EC in Packet #1 sent out on May 11. This included *Response to the EC Majority Reply* which had all of the links that are included in the *Alternative Guide*. The EC made no request to the Minority to remove these links at that time.

When the EC asked us on June 3rd to remove links to sensitive documents, we complied with their request by removing those documents that were linked to the *Response to the EC Majority Reply* (but not in the *Alternative Guide*).

- c. The EC also wrote in their Introduction to Packet #4 “At this point, all the background documents linked to in the ‘alternative guide’ have been made available to all those invited to this NC by the EC but in a way that takes into account the security risks we face.”

This again gives a false impression.

While a number of the documents relating to Whitney and Rebekah have now been made available (though not all) and the links are available to four additional documents in *Response to the EC Majority Reply* (see paragraphs 30, 38, and 42), this is not adequate. A clear notification needs to be sent to all comrades calling their attention to the additional documents (separate from the “sensitive material”) that were excluded by the EC in their various packets. This would be accomplished by circulating our *Alternative Guide*, which highlights the documents the EC excluded and has explanations for why we think they are relevant.

3. **Immediately circulate the documents excluded by the EC in the “sensitive material” folder relating to Whitney.**

- a. Please immediately add to the “sensitive material” subfolder “Council Staffing: WK” Philip L, Ramy K, Sarah WK, Stephan K, and Whitney JK’s February 9th *Response to*

Kailyn's Letter and Philip L and Stephan K's January 24th *Response to the Letters sent to the NC on 1-21-18*.

- b. Please immediately send an email to all the comrades invited to the June NC meeting notifying them of these additional documents.
- c. Please immediately send the following explanation to them from us:

“When the EC circulated the material relating to Whitney they left out two documents from the Minority.

 - i. While the EC chose to include the *01/24 KN Letter to NC*, it excluded the February 9th response to this from Philip L, Ramy K, Sarah WK, Stephan K, and Whitney JK (titled *Response to Kailyn's Letter*). This response included corrections to blatant factual inaccuracies in Kailyn's letter, which the EC failed to correct when it re-published Kailyn's letter.
 - ii. The EC also excluded Philip L and Stephan K's January 24th *Response to the Letters sent to the NC on 1-21-18*. This includes responses to points that the EC repeats in its “01 Explanation & AZ Proposal” document and explains Philip and Stephan's views on this controversy.

Once again the EC excluded important material in a one-sided and factional manner. Whether this is just extreme carelessness or factionally motivated, we do not know, but the effect is certainly favorable for the Majority and unfavorable for the Minority. This ongoing pattern of the EC in organizing the debate in a one-sided, factional manner must stop. The editorial decisions in the distribution of material and debate packets must be done on the basis of at least attempting to find mutual agreement between the Majority and Minority. If agreement cannot be reached, equal space should be made for both sides to present their views.”

4. Notify all comrades of the additional documents in the “sensitive material” folder.

Please immediately send the following to all comrades invited to the June NC:
“On June 10th Kelly, on behalf of the EC, informed all comrades attending the June NC that the EC had created a secure online location for sensitive material. We welcome this new approach of the EC, which was a change from its original position that this material would only be made available at the NC meeting itself.

In her email, Kelly wrote “When new documents are released, we will continue to send them out via email if they do not contain extremely sensitive material. Even then, *we will alert comrades via email that a new document has been added to the google folder*” (emphasis added).

On June 15th the material relating to Rebekah's allegations was added to the “sensitive material” Google folder as a subfolder called “Council Staffing: RL.” On June 15th a new document from Whitney (titled *06/14 WK Statement to June NC*) was also added to the “sensitive material” Google subfolder called “Council Staffing: WK.”

However, **the EC did not “alert comrades via email that [these new documents had] been added to the google folder.” The Minority asked that this be corrected immediately.** Again, we do not know if this was a careless oversight or factionally motivated. But the effect is to make it less likely comrades will read material unfavorable to the Majority.”

5. The EC Introduction to Packet #4 says Rebekah “produced a contribution to the discussion that is nearly 3 times the agreed 1,500 word count for contributions, but we are still making it available to comrades.”

Please send Rebekah's response to all comrades who received Packet #4: “I emailed the EC on June 11 with my contribution detailing my personal experience being driven out of the council office and with the very unhealthy methods of the Majority leadership. I wrote ‘it is

longer than the 1,500 words you were requesting, but I ask you to allow it to be included as my experience and account are unique in this debate and they are important for the organization to hear in full.’

I did not get any response from the EC answering my request. Instead, I was surprised to first see this remark about my statement from the EC in its Introduction to Packet #4.

As I said in my email to the EC, I believe my experience working in the Council office and with the Majority leadership is unique and should be allowed space to relate in full. The comment from the EC does not indicate if they agree to this, but instead appears to indirectly criticize the length of my statement.

I do not think this is the best method our leadership should use. **I would expect our leadership to raise points first directly with comrades, and if they have a criticism to make it explicitly rather than by implication.**

Finally, **I am troubled by the failure of Kshama, Calvin, Ty and the EC Majority to give any substantial reply to the serious allegations and criticisms I have elaborated in my previous letters and now this statement.** Does their silence indicate that they agree my account is correct? If so, do they think their conduct was appropriate or not? Either way, I believe the organization deserves to know and hear their reasoning.”

6. The EC Introduction to Packet #4 says “The contributions from majority comrades--even when they come from multiple authors--are all less than the 1,500 words that the May 1 EC agreed would be allotted for each document. The document from Stephan, Ramy, and Bryan W contained in this packet is over 4,000 words ... The two documents from Whitney (one in this packet and another in the “June 2018 NC Documents” folder) amount to just under 3,000 words total.”

a. Please send to all comrades who received Packet #4 Bryan W, Stephan, and Ramy’s

response: **“When we submitted our contribution on the DSA we explained to the EC that ‘we combined our 1,500 word contributions that we were each allotted to submit this combined contribution of 4,500 words.’** The EC did not raise any objection with our doing this. In our view it would have been inefficient to break up our contribution into three separate 1,500 word submissions from each of us, but if the EC had raised their objection with us, we would have broken up the document accordingly.”

b. Please send to all comrades who received Packet #4 Whitney’s response: “I sent the EC two contributions (each under the 1,500 word limit). In my email I wrote ‘I ask you to please allow me to share my experiences [about being terminated from the city council office and as an SA part-timer] which I feel are important to this debate without that counting against my ability to share my political analysis of this debate.’

If the EC did not agree with my request, I would have expected them to at least have the courtesy to let me know directly and ask me to choose one document to submit. Unfortunately, I did not receive any direct response from the EC. Instead, the EC chose to respond to me in their Introduction in Packet #4. They remark about me submitting two documents without an explanation of the reason I made this *request* to the EC. This appears to me as a factional point-scoring approach, which I am disappointed that the EC would adopt.”

7. Explain why Packet #5 on our Sanders tactic is relevant to this debate. Why should comrades take the time to read it?

Please send the following explanation to comrades: “In December 2017 the International Executive Committee (IEC) discussed the debate in the SA leadership. Before the meeting, the International Secretariat (I.S.) proposed to circulate three documents and letters they had written in 2016, two of which addressed political

disagreements they had with Philip and Stephan in particular, as background material which they believed was important for understanding the current conflict. Philip and Stephan then asked that the material that the I.S. letters were responding to also be circulated along with some comments from Philip and Stephan on all three items.

Why did the EC not provide a simple explanation along these lines as an introduction in Packet #5? We can only guess. However, regardless of their intentions, **the effect is consistent with the political agenda and method of the Majority in this debate which is to downplay disagreements over political substance and instead argue that the debate is about methods of leadership.**”

8. Acknowledge that Packet #5 is being circulated now to correct the exclusion of documents in previous packets.

Please send the following explanation to comrades: “With no reason given, the EC circulated documents about the Sanders tactic in Packet #5, many of which they had already circulated in Packet #2, without acknowledging that they were adding documents they had previously excluded. The EC left out from Packet #2 *Some Points on the Discussion in the US Leadership on the Sanders Tactic* by Philip and Stephan, which was written in response to the I.S. circulating to the IEC their *Contribution to the Sanders Debate in the US*, which the EC also excluded from the packet.

The *I.S. Letter on Safe States* was also left out by the Seattle EC in the version distributed to the entire Seattle membership. The Minority brought this to the attention of the EC and asked that this be corrected.”

9. A correction to the Table of Contents of Packet #5

Please send to comrades the following alternative Table of Contents for Packet #5 along with the explanation below:

1. Some Points on the Discussion in the US Leadership on the Sanders Tactic by Philip L and Stephan K (11/17)

2. I.S. (CWI International Secretariat) Statement on Sanders (3/16)
3. 2016 Debate in the U.S. Organization on “Safe States” by Philip L and Stephan K (11/17)
4. I.S. Letter on Safe States (4/16)
5. Debate with ISO for SA and ISO Publications by Philip L and Stephan K (11/17)
6. I.S. Letter on ISO (4/16)

We are circulating this correction because:

- a. The Table of Contents in the EC’s Packet #5 fails to indicate that three documents were written by Philip and Stephan, whereas the three contributions from the I.S. are clearly marked as by the I.S.
- b. The order of the documents is corrected to allow a more understandable reading of the material as a back-and-forth exchange on each topic.

Regardless of their intentions, the EC’s decision to not indicate which documents were written by Philip and Stephan and to order the documents in such a confusing way has a clear effect. **Rather than to help illuminate the issues, it obscures them. This serves the political agenda of the Majority** - to downplay that there were political disagreements between the I.S. and Philip and Stephan in the immediate run-up to the current debate which broke out in April 2017.

Comradely,

Bryan Watson
Jeremy Thornes
Manuel Carrillo
Mark Rafferty
Philip Locker
Ramy Khalil
Rebekah Liebermann
Sarah White Kimmerle
Stephan Kimmerle
Whitney Kahn
Stan Strasner
Stuart Strader