

# On a rape accusation and accusations of rape apologism in Tjen Folket

During christmas 2016, an activist (A) accused another activist (B) of rape. The accusation was made to a third (leading) activist (C) who notified the leadership of Tjen Folket. The day to day leadership (Executive Committee) promptly suspended activist B from all activity in our organization and notified B about this.

This is the first time we have experienced such a case, and we did not have rules and guidelines for how to treat accusations of sexual abuse. We have wanted to make such guidelines for a while, we had some brief discussions earlier on this, and we wish they were in place before this case. We think it would have made our process better and swifter, even though such cases always will have a tragic side to them.

The political line of Tjen Folket is for revolutionary women struggle against patriarchy. Rape, sexual harassment, the power of men over women's bodies, are ways in which patriarchy manifest itself and exercises its dominance. But this political stance does not solve all specific cases. It does not make a concrete analysis of the concrete situation for us, as Lenin urged us to do in all cases. We need to investigate an accusation when it is made, before we conclude. Investigation first, conclusion later. This is a scientific and proletarian approach to all phenomena.

Some internet activists and foreign comrades should also have applied this method. They could all have sent us formal messages or questions. Some friends have asked our activists in Facebook chats, and we welcome that, but we even more welcome messages and criticism sent to our formal contact channels, for them to be treated by our elected committees.

Such cases are always bad, but we hope to build a culture in our movement so that we will not have more of them in the future. Such a culture cannot only be built through activity and resolutions from a leadership. It needs to be built through unity and struggle in the organization, and amongst our closest friends and allies.

In a case of abuse, the most important consideration to take is the interests of the alleged victim. Sexual abuse is a heavy burden for victims, and can potentially be life threatening. Our organization has no professional apparatus to take care of people who are subjected to abuse. We therefore strongly recommend professional help as victim shelters, health care, psychologic and medical treatment and the like, which have experience and expertise in this field – and of course comrades, family and friends who can support and help, if possible.

In this specific case we have offered a “victim’s advocate” for the accuser. The accuser accepted the victim’s advocate as their representative and supporter. We have suspended the accused for the period of the investigation (from day 1). We have put an investigation in place (from day 2) and activists have talked with both A and B. Person A has been recommended to seek professional help several times.

A says there has been a rape, B says there has not been a rape. Internet rumours claim B has admitted to rape. This is wrong. B has systematically, all throughout the process admitted to no sexual abuse of any kind, nor to any kind of pressuring into sex. The chat log is no proof of B admitting rape.

But even as A claims there has been a rape, and B claims there has not, what they concretely have told representatives from Tjen Folket is not in direct opposition to each other.

**Some points about the case:**

- A and B had been in a relationship for 2.5 years.
- A says there was an incidence 1-2 years ago.
- A says this was a rape.
- On our question about when it happened, A replies: "dont know. 1 year maybe. Im neuroatypical and one of the symptoms is a very bad concept of time."
- A says there was no force used, "only manipulation and guilt tripping".
- A did not verbalize before or during the episode that A did not want to have sex. A says A becomes non-verbal in traumatic situations, but A says that A cried.
- A says A does not know if B noticed that A cried or became mute.
- B says B became unsure during sex one time, unsure if everything was alright, and asked 2 or 3 times if everything was alright. B says A said nothing was wrong.
- A says A does not think B asked and got this answer, but A says A does not remember and that A has tried to suppress memory of this episode.
- A says earlier traumas makes the trauma of this episode worse.
- A has put forward a chat log as proof and accuses B of abuse in the chat. B says in the chat that B wants to make amends for something B has done, but B does not say what B has done and absolutely does not admit to rape.
- A was recommended to press charges, but A did not want to do so.

Tjen Folket upholds clearly that:

- No means no.
- Sex must always be voluntary also in a relationship.

But many sexual encounters between people and in relationships will start in nonverbal ways. We therefore don't think voluntary always must be "verbal consent". Consent can also be non-verbal.

In summation:

- B says sex was initiated and carried through with non-verbal consent and that B asked several times, and also got verbal consent.
- A says A doesn't remember much, and don't remember if B asked.

Both have said a lot more, but the above mentioned is essential to the particular incident, and the core argument that led the Executive Committee (EC) of Tjen Folket to lift the suspension on B. We also made a lot of investigation and analysed the information we had, from our own experiences and conversations - and from others that know both A and B. Our

final decision is not only based on one part of this, but the whole body of evidence. And our final decision is that we believe B is innocent and victim of a false accusation.

Before the conclusion from the EC was distributed to all branches of Tjen Folket, the accuser (A) went public with a carefully edited online attack on the accused (B) and other named activists. The snippets and translations regarding this case, made for international (mainly U.S.) audience, are extremely biased and flawed. They are made purposely to make some activists look bad. We have no intentions to make full conversations or translations public, due to the sensitive character both personally and politically. This is also for the sake of all of the involved, and to show our activists that we will treat confidential conversations with respect now and in the future.

Furthermore, North-American anonymous accounts online - among them an individual named Sam Erbs that is outed for extremely dangerous and damaging behaviour in his city and online - have "supported" A, attacked B, named B, sent B death threats and also spread accusations against Tjen Folket and B, saying things like "B admitted to rape and Tjen Folket defend him anyway" and that known maoist activists in Norway have said "pressuring someone to sex is not rape". This is totally false accusations, and is only the tip of the iceberg of slander. It is also false that A was at any time suspended during the process.

**We are also going to expose three additional points regarding this case:**

1. Fall 2016 Tjen Folket Media posted an anti-US-drawing on its Facebook page. The drawing was made by the cartoonist Latuff. This was attacked on the page - by amongst others a sock account of Sam Erbs. Soon, A joined in on the attacks. A attacked Tjen Folket Media publicly on the page, and in several PMs to some activists on Facebook. A did not make self-criticism for this public attack and disregard of correct channels of discussion. There were also some other contradictions locally. At one point, the local leader told others that he was afraid that the local organization would be splintered (because of A). There also seems to be some serious political contradictions between A and our league, that A kept hidden to leading activists, never once engaging in open internal debate on such questions.
2. We have been warned about Sam Erbs from comrades we know are activists in real existing MLM organizations. They have sent us an article that exposes Sam Erbs' disruptive anti organization and abusive behavior. This is a close friend, maybe the closest friend, of person A. The article claims Erbs weaponizes identities and uses them to avoid criticism for abusive, threatening and even racist activity. Erbs is now using this rape accusation case to attack groups in the U.S.(!). Erbs is not alone, Erbs is an example of a cultish internet political tendency of identity opportunism with the political line of dividing who can be divided, and branding revolutionary organization in unprincipled attacks. Mao speaks of some of this activity in Combat Liberalism where he address the fifth type of liberalism: "To indulge in personal attacks, pick quarrels, vent personal spite or seek revenge instead of entering into an argument and struggling against incorrect views for the sake of unity or progress or getting the work done properly."

3. Just prior to our investigation of the case, another activist told one of the investigators about a disturbing encounter they had with the accuser A, where A was emotionally and sexually abusive towards Z. Z said A had tried to pressure him into sex, and tried to make Z feel guilty for not consenting. Z has on several occasions characterised this week with A as the worst week of his life, with constant harassment, manipulation and guilt tripping from A. Z alleges that A tried to make him feel uncomfortable about not wanting to have sex through a number of disturbing means, including non-consensually exposing themselves to Z for nearly the entirety of their time together. Several other activists have confirmed both that he told them this, and that they witnessed parts of this mistreatment.

We think this case is not only a case of false accusation to hurt an innocent person, but also, at least partly, politically motivated to create maximum damage against Tjen Folket in hope of splintering it and isolate us internationally – not for the sake of a rape victim, but for the sake of political disagreements over several issues and for attention. We also think the real abuser in this case is A – and not only an abuser against B, but probably a serial abuser as well.

After the investigation from the EC, and the lifting of the suspension, there has been a lot of debate internally, both in branches and in the National Committee.

By now, our decision has the full support of local organization in the area where A and B has been active, and the National Committee of Tjen Folket has decided not to expel B, after having seen the basis of our conclusion and the proof in the case and heard our reasoning.

In the aftermath, the person A and As network has as mentioned posted death threats against B on Facebook. And the person A has tried to sabotage the facebook pages and web groups of 20-25 of local branches of mass organizations and campaigns, such as Nye SOS Rasisme (anti racist), Anti Pegida, Anti Soldiers of Odin and similar groups. One of the methods was gaining some temporarily control of these and blocking all members from some of them. Such wrecking is not only hostile and harmful to anti fascist organizing, it is also - again - in breach of the most basic forms of security. This activity was stopped swiftly, but - again - shows the reckless willingness to harm third parties and the cause, clearly exposing the dangerous nature of this person and their fringe political tendency.

We did not want to make this statement. We wanted to protect both A and B, their health and privacy. We did not want to give in to the reckless behavior of anonymous online “activists”. And we did not want to give in to foreign people or groups that think it is their business to supervise the inner workings of an organization which they are not part of. But we do this in part defend the accused activist B – an innocent victim of abuse and slander – and partly to give some support to the comrades abroad that have been targeted for not jumping to conclusions and joining the attempt to isolate us online.

The anonymous attacks on Tjen Folket are clearly in breach of the MLM-method. And we bring in mind the words of Chairman Mao:

*The reed growing on the wall--top-heavy, thin-stemmed and shallow of root;  
The bamboo shoot in the hills--sharp-tongued, thick-skinned and hollow inside.*

Executive Committee of Tjen Folket