

Cde Dexter suspended for a year

In the course of today's regular meeting, the SACP Political Bureau afforded National Treasurer, Cde Phillip Dexter, the opportunity to explain and contextualise the document entitled "Working Class Leadership, Political Power and Hegemony in the NDR", parts of which have been published in the media in the past two weeks.

Cde Dexter accepted responsibility for the document. He stated that it was a "very rough draft" and that he had no intention of publishing it in the public media, or, in its present version, in any Party publication. While denying that he had personally circulated it to newspapers, he accepted responsibility for having circulated it to a range of individuals over the last several months.

The PB unequivocally reaffirms the commitment of the SACP to robust, comradely debate within our ranks. We are proud of the traditions of internal debate, much of which we publish in our various publications. The PB was, however, unanimous in its view that Cde Dexter's document strays far beyond the bounds of the acceptable in its tone, its general hostility, its uncomradely and destructive views, in its implicit targeting of fellow comrades, and in its individualistic disowning of programmes, policy perspectives and campaigns for which we all bear collective responsibility. No organi-

sation which takes itself remotely seriously would allow for this. Cde Dexter's errors of judgement are all the more serious given his very senior position within the Party leadership.

After careful consideration of all of the above, the PB unanimously agreed to strongly censure Cde Dexter for his behaviour and to suspend his Party membership for a period of 12 months. Cde Dexter himself did indeed apologise for his mistakes at this Politburo meeting and offered to issue a public apology.

In taking this serious step – unprecedented in the recent history of the Party – we are emphatically not sending out a message to our 51 000 members that they should be timid, uncritical followers of a monolithic line. In the run-up to our 12th Party Congress in mid-July, there are many important matters up for debate and discussion. In taking the present step we are seeking to defend the space for constructive debate, which can only be compromised by tendencies towards factionalism, intolerance, media leaks, and uncomradely personalisation of problems and collective challenges.

Cde Dexter has made an important contribution to the SACP over many years. We trust that he will use the 12 months suspension period to reflect on and correct his mistakes and error of judgement. ●

Monorail plan is pie-in-the-sky

The CC discussed the Gauteng provincial government's ill-considered announcement of a monorail between Soweto and Johannesburg. It fully endorsed Cde Minister Jeff Radebe's intervention to block this attempt at creating a fait accompli. The proposal was out of step with three pieces of legislation, and it cut across careful and important integrated transport planning that is now beginning to shape up promisingly for the citizens of Johannesburg and Gauteng.

The SACP believes that it is important to clarify to the people of Soweto that the blocking of this project is not driven by inter-governmental turf competition, or

merely on technical and procedural grounds. This monorail proposal, which ludicrously promised to transport 1,5-million Sowetans a day, is complete pie-in-the-sky. The monorail is a low-density technology most suitable to theme-parks. If it were to be allowed to go ahead, it would end up being a disastrous white elephant costing the tax-payers of Soweto, Johannesburg and South Africa millions to bail out. This is exactly what has just happened in Malaysia with the self-same consortium.

The SACP will continue to intensify its campaign for safe, affordable and efficient public transport system especially for the workers and the poor of our country. ●

Special Browse: seeking answers

The SACP received from Cosatu a copy of an alleged intelligence document, "Special Browse 'Mole'". The SACP does not know the origin and status of this bizarre but potentially gravely dangerous document.

If this is indeed a product of any of the state security and intelligence agencies, this constitutes a gross abuse of state organs. We therefore expect that the relevant state entities in South Africa will get to the bottom of this document and expose those forces behind its compilation and circulation.

For its part, the SACP will be formally writing to the Inspector General and the parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on Intelligence to ensure that the origin and status of the document are explained, and those responsible exposed.

While we do not know its status and origins, the SACP notes that it has all of the features of the disinformation, "Comops" documents that were prepared by the apartheid intelligence networks in the 1980s and into the 1990s, and notably in the year before the assassination of cde Chris Hani. In 1992, for instance, a "black propaganda" document purporting to be an "intelligence" document claimed

that cde Hani was organising a renegade army opposed to the negotiations, and which was supposed to have included disaffected MK and even Apla and Azapo forces.

Our experience of the past compels us to call, now, on all SACP members, and on our Alliance partners to close ranks, to keep cool heads, and not to allow counter-revolutionary forces to deepen mistrust and division within our ranks.

For its part, the SACP has nothing to hide, and if there is a legitimate interest from any relevant and authorised state organs in SACP activities, we are ready at any time to share information and to cooperate.

What we would totally reject any attempts to try to clandestinely collect information about our activities. ●