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## A RESIGNATION LETTER FROM THE SWP CENTRAL COMMITTEE

FOR SWP MEMBERS ONLY.

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On Monday 4 February I resigned from the SWP central committee and from my role as a national student organiser for the party. I would like to outline my reasons for this decision, which was not one I took lightly.

As comrades may be aware, I have disagreed with positions taken by the central committee, and more recently by the national committee, over the handling of the dispute concerning Comrade Delta.

I made no secret of these disagreements at our national conference, and debates at that conference were in my view conducted in a comradely and fraternal manner. Despite misgivings, I agreed to serve on whichever CC slate was elected.

Since conference, however, there have been a number of developments that run against both the spirit and the letter of the decisions taken there. These developments have not just made my position on the CC untenable. They also threaten the integrity of the party. This has left me with no choice but to resign from my positions in order to voice my concerns to the wider party membership.

At conference we decided to “draw a line” under the dispute and move forward in a spirit of unity. Instead the CC has decided to “draw a line” right through the middle of the party. It

has misinterpreted the vote over the disputes committee report as an “exoneration” of [Delta] and as an expression of total confidence in the disputes committee process.

The effect of this, consciously or otherwise, has been to exacerbate the tensions that existed inside the party prior to conference. More worryingly, differences over the dispute are now being dressed up and rationalised as political differences. This threatens to severely distort both our perspective and our wider political practice.

What has happened in the student office since conference is a case in point. Up until the days immediately before conference, the CC did not express any concerns with the student office, its work or its political direction. Now the CC warns that students are “pandering to feminism and autonomism” and insists on the need for a sharp “ideological turn”.

This change in direction is based solely upon the CC’s position regarding the dispute. In my view, the charges of “feminism” and “autonomism” are baseless. Their aim, consciously or otherwise, is to split the party. Instead of addressing the widespread concerns over the way in which the dispute was handled, the CC has attempted to shut down discussion and create artificial political divisions over it.

Here’s just one minor example of this. One of our leading student activists was barred from standing again for his position on the NUS national executive committee. The only reason given for this decision was his disagreement over the dispute. This CC decision was sprung on him two days before the nominations deadline. It ignored negotiations with other left forces in the student movement.

We cannot dismiss the widespread and serious disagreements over the dispute, its handling and its fallout somehow amount to a “break with the IS tradition”. Nor can we pretend that these disagreements stem from a rejection of revolutionary socialism or of Leninist democratic centralism.

The new CC is set on a course that will do immense damage to the party and its work. If it pursues this direction further the inevitable result will be an irreparable breakdown in relations within the party and with wider forces on the left. This has already created huge damage among our student groups. It now threatens to spread much further.

I still believe it is not too late to reverse this course. I continue to be an active member of the Socialist Workers Party. I continue to fight for socialism from below and for the revolutionary party as a tool for working class self-emancipation.

In solidarity, Mark B

7 February 2013

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