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CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY

**Council Meeting 25<sup>th</sup> January 2007**

**Annual Library Tariff revision**

I had the opportunity to make use of the library services in England during December, and found the library a source of pleasure and information. In England any member can have 2 hours of computer use at no charge. One also does not need to pay to become a member of the library, but only pays for extra services or for penalties.

Education is one of the most important elements in a successful society, and the library services as a source of knowledge is invaluable in enhancing the community. It is a long-term investment and our communities need to be properly instructed on how to benefit from this service. The computer services are a source available to students for research and to residents that do not have personal access to computers. In one library I visited in England, there were at least 20 computers and they were used constantly, with people waiting their turn. The library was vibrant and a positive influence in the community of that area.

This could be considered in the future as part of the development of our own people.

**Annual Programme**

Having pondered on the possible implications of having Solomon Mlangu mentioned on the same day on the Municipal calendar as Good Friday (which is the most solemn of days on the Christian calendar), and on the day on which the majority of South Africans celebrate the death of Christ on the cross, I have come to the following conclusions:

- The matter has NOT been well thought out, as the possibility of causing offence does not appear to have been considered. The whole undertaking could have been handled with greater sensitivity. Separate mention could have been made of the fact that Solomon Mlangu day (as per the previous Council resolution would be on April 6th), thus not linking it or confusing it with the significance of Good Friday.
- My concern is that too often (in societies ruled by a Secular Government), attempts are being made to diminish the importance of Christian norms and values and to deliberately undermine the immense influence and affect Christianity has in the world.
- It would appear that Secular Humanists are more challenged by Christianity than any other religion! Hence the deliberate reaction by them of a new interfaith religion that places all religions on a same footing. I am therefore using my democratic right of Freedom of Speech to highlight this issue, knowing that you cannot allow things to happen that you feel strongly about without commenting on it.

The Secular Government has already taken away an important day such as Ascension Day (17th May 2007) as a holiday from our calendar. Who knows when their audacity would reach the stage where they remove Good Friday and Christmas all together.

### **Payment of Managers Performance Bonuses**

This item is undoubtedly a cause of great concern to many responsible councillors. Certainly one does not hear of such large incentive bonuses every day. The upper limit for some of the employees is **more than R150,000**. It would be interesting to note how the "Council as a whole" would fare should its' overall performance be rated!

My question is: Should individuals receive bonuses if the Council as a whole has failed to meet acceptable standards? Team work is a vital requirement for success. **How can we even consider paying out such large amounts of rewards when as a Council our performance is unacceptable?** It would appear to the CDP that officials are being payed a 13th cheque and excessive bonuses for just doing their job in an acceptable way, while those that are under-achieving are not penalised for it at all.

### **Spatial Development Strategy**

There seem to be mixed views on this plan. I noted that only 2 scenarios had been considered. There is a third that has not been mentioned at all. The suggestions of bringing those living on the outskirts into the centre in order to make them more a part of the economic hub through densification, only offers a short term solution. The fact is that the population is continually increasing and that land is becoming an increasingly scarce commodity. In the long term population growth will render this plan obsolete. The same thing was attempted in another first world country in the 1960s. 40 years down the line however, they have encountered some serious problems. What is missing in this report is the scenario spelling out the negative effects out of the plan, and alternate recommendations as to how to deal with them.

The CDP feel that the most workable solution is not to just attempt to bring all of the people to the work, but rather to take the work to the people. In other words, companies should be encouraged to develop factories and economic hubs in the areas close to where the people live at present. Incentives should be offered to these companies to entice them to do so.