

IN COMMEMORATION OF COMRADE HARDIAL BAINS

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COMRADE HARDIAL BAINS, National Leader of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) passed away on August 24, 1997. His untimely death is an immeasurable loss to all revolutionary and progressive forces the world over.

On September 20, the Central Committee of RCPB(ML) held a Memorial Meeting to pay tribute to Comrade Hardial Bains. The commemoration was held at Marx House in London. Over 100 people filled this historic hall to capacity in gathering to pay their personal and collective respects to Comrade Bains.

At the centre of the platform, beautifully displayed next to a cascading floral tribute of reds, yellows and greens, was a large smiling portrait of Hardial Bains, behind which rose the red flag of RCPB(ML). A backdrop of red completed the setting. A condolence book was placed at the side of the hall in which many wrote expressing their deepest feelings on the passing of Comrade Bains.

Among the many who joined the members and supporters of RCPB(ML) were members of his close and extended family resident in Britain, the many comrades who worked closely with him in the political, cultural, scientific and other fields through the years, and comrades from organisations from the national minority communities and National Liberation Fronts with offices in this country, as well as individuals and representatives of communist and workers' organisations both from Britain and abroad.

Chris Coleman, representing the Central Committee of RCPB(ML), gave the opening address. After remarking how appropriate it was to be gathered in the square where Marx had held meetings, in the building where Lenin worked and in the very room where Comrade Bains himself had given a number of important speeches of a theoretical and organisational character in recent years, the Party representative welcomed everyone in paying their respects to his memory and to commemorate, in the forward looking spirit which infused all his immense activities, his outstanding life and work. The speaker referred to the immense and incalculable contribution to the cause of communism and the national and social liberation of the working class and peoples which Comrade Bains had made throughout his entire life, and of the great legacy which he had left in Canada and for the whole movement of progressive humanity, and of the inspiration that his actions and ideas have and will have, especially for the younger generation. To our Party, as to others, he said, his proletarian internationalist support and guidance has been of incalculable value since our earliest origins, and gave examples of Comrade Bains' selfless assistance, criticisms and encouragement which, he said, were to us the essence of proletarian internationalism, the embodiment of the social love the true communist should feel towards their comrades, the example we should strive to emulate. Even in our grief his memory inspires us to carry on the work with greater strength.

The representative especially drew attention to the hours that Comrade Bains devoted to the young people whenever he visited Britain. The speaker referred to the internationalist work of Hardial Bains for the struggling people of the whole world. He considered the dawn for humanity was about to break, that the retreat of revolution would turn into the flow of revolution sooner rather than later. Our best tribute to his memory, said the speaker, will be to carry on fighting for those great causes, for the future of progressive humanity, to which he devoted his entire life.

The comrade then called on everyone to observe a moment's silence in honour of the glorious memory of Hardial Bains. After the silence came an instrumental medley of revolutionary songs arranged and played by members of the cultural workers' group with whom Comrade Bains had been working closely. The Irish song "Revolution's Dawn Is Breaking" was followed by the Sonnet in Tribute to the Memory of Comrade Hardial Bains read by its author.

The representative of the Central Committee, after reporting on the huge number of messages of condolence that had been received by CPC(ML), then introduced various of the many organisations and individuals that wished to give tributes to the meeting. These included Rod Eley of the Communist Party of Ireland (Marxist-Leninist) who read out the message of condolence of CPI(ML) and Zafar Khan of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front who spoke of the internationalist support for the liberation struggle of the Kashmiri people. A guest from India, Siddharth Varadarajan, in his tribute spoke of the deep influence of Comrade Bains from his days as a student in the 1980s. It is a mark of the far-reaching influence of Comrade Bains in the communist and workers' movement that other communist organisations in Britain also asked to speak. Messages in tribute were given by Andy Brooks of the New Communist Party of Britain and of their paper, the New Worker, Hugh Stephens of the Communist Organisation of Britain and Keith Bennett, journalist and friend of Korea, who all spoke of the seminal motivation of Hardial Bains in the period of the early 1970s. Ajmer Bains, General Secretary of the Indian Workers' Association (G.B.), and a close comrade and friend of Hardial Bains since childhood, brought to life his multi-faceted and towering talents. Tributes also came from a comrade speaking on behalf of the Punjabi publication "Eh Din" and the Indian Progressive Study Group (London), and on behalf of the African and Caribbean Progressive Study Group. A moving tribute was given by an old friend who was a student of Hardial Bains at Trinity College, Dublin, and an original member of the Irish Internationalists, which was immediately followed by a tribute from a representative of the new generation of youth whom Comrade Bains encouraged and inspired to take up the progressive cause. Speaking on behalf of the youth, she spoke of his mighty voice and powerful words of sincerity, truth and wisdom, and of his understanding, patience, warmth and love for everyone, of his qualities as a true teacher, and how proud the comrade would be to see the continuation of the work which he inspired. Tributes were also given by comrades with whom Hardial Bains had worked with very closely in the cultural field, as well as other friends and comrades who had known him. Messages were also read from friends and other progressive forces who were unable to attend.

Chris Coleman ended by saying that the gathering had heard the most moving tributes expressing love and respect for Hardial Bains and their resolve to carry on. He was sure that these tributes and the memory of Comrade Bains will prove an inspiration to march on for the causes to which he devoted his whole life. The formal part of the programme concluded with the playing and singing of The Internationale, and as many raised their fists the slogan rang out, "All Glory to the Memory of Comrade Hardial Bains!"

As refreshments were served, comrades and friends spilled out onto Clerkenwell Green outside Marx House, and there and amongst those remaining in the hall the spirit of determination to march on along the path he charted and which many joined him in taking up was evident throughout the conversations and reminiscences which carried on for well over two hours.

Tribute of the Central Committee of RCPB(ML)

Dear Comrades and friends,

We have gathered today to mourn together the sad and untimely passing of our beloved comrade and friend, Hardial Bains, the National Leader of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist), to pay our respects to his memory and to commemorate, in the forward looking spirit which infused all his immense activities, his outstanding life and work. Though a little cramped, it is most appropriate to gather here, in the building where Lenin worked, in the square where Marx held meetings of the International Working Men's Association, and in the room where Comrade Hardial, a loyal implementer in the concrete conditions of today of the scientific principles revealed by those great leaders of the working class, made a number of important speeches in recent years in this very room, the last only last December when he delivered, in commemoration of his and our comrade, Cornelius Cardew, a most important speech assessing Cornelius's contribution and setting out important guidelines on the question of culture.

Our comrade and friend, Hardial Bains, as we all learnt with the deepest sorrow and shock, passed away in the early hours of August 24 after a determined fight against a cancer which had been diagnosed only as recently as May this year. We have been told that, true to his character, to his very last breath his thoughts and his sympathies were with all of us here and in other countries and that his words urged us not to be sad but to march on for the great causes to which he devoted his entire life.

We are very pleased to be joined today by members of his close and extended family resident in Britain and friends of the family including friends from his boyhood days in the Punjab. To them, once again, we extend our deepest condolences and, through them, to all their relatives

and family circles on the loss of such a beloved family member, one who so devotedly provided them with such strength, direction and assistance.

We are pleased too to be joined by so many comrades who have worked closely with him in the political, cultural and other fields down through the years stretching right back to his days as a lecturer in Trinity College, Dublin, from 1965-67, during which period he founded the Irish Internationalists and organised the Necessity for Change Conference in London from which work our, and other, organisations stem. We welcome particularly comrades from organisations who defend the interests of the national minority communities and fight against racism and discrimination, promoting their national cultures and mobilising their communities to participate fully as part of the polity in this country, and to whom Comrade Hardial provided the greatest assistance and guidance over the years. We welcome too individuals and representatives of other communist and workers' organisations in Britain, some who knew him for a long time, some of whom met Comrade Hardial only recently, some of whom did not have the privilege of meeting him, but all of whom have expressed a desire to pay their respects to his memory and to acknowledge the great contribution of his life and his work to the cause of the working class and progressive humanity.

We welcome too representatives of fraternal parties and countries, from the Communist Party of Ireland (Marxist-Leninist), from Jammu & Kashmir Liberation Front, whose parties and heroic people found in Comrade Bains a steadfast and true friend. We welcome guests from India and from Pakistan.

The broad character of this gathering today, as of the memorial meetings which we know have already been held in Toronto and in Delhi, as well as of the memorial service itself held in Ottawa on August 30, which a number of comrades and friends from Britain attended, attest to the love and regard in which Comrade Hardial was held by countless people throughout the world whose lives were touched by his work and his activity. What has become clear, even in the few sad weeks since his passing, has been how many people who knew him in various ways or worked with him in different fields thought of him as their closest friend, the one to whom one turned to discuss the most serious problems of life and struggle, who saw him as a selfless and unsparing friend and guide and a force for unity.

From his earliest days in India, and then in Canada from 1959, Comrade Hardial Bains devoted his entire life and work to the cause of communism, for the emancipation of the working class and the social and national liberation of the peoples of the world. He was the greatest champion of the working class as a class in itself and for itself, setting the course to lead society forward into the twenty-first century on the high road of civilisation. He stood as one with all women, national minorities and oppressed peoples in their struggle to affirm themselves. He reserved his greatest love and attention for the younger generation whom he never failed to encourage to rely on their own convictions and abilities with utmost confidence and to kow-tow to no one.

As leader of The Internationalists in the sixties and as national leader of the CPC(ML) since its founding in 1970, Comrade Bains has made an immense and at this time incalculable contribution to the cause of communism and the national and social liberation of the working class and peoples. Reviled and persecuted by the bourgeois agencies, slandered or ignored by the bourgeois media, denied citizenship in Canada for 27 years and barred right until the day of his death from entry to the US on the basis of fabricated evidence, forced out of his career in scientific research and university teaching, we are sure that he will come to be seen as a towering figure of the people's cause of the second half of the twentieth century, whose name will be on the lips of millions. The great tragedy of his passing at the age of 58 and the only regret he expressed to his closest comrades was that so much of the work he had planned was still left to do. He had said that he was about to enter his second life. He had planned to do significant theoretical work crucial to the international workers and communist movement, already having begun summing up the achievements of the twentieth century in the fields of science, philosophy, political economy and culture. Who else at this precise time could do such work?

But in his first life he did and accomplished so much! He had done immense work in solving the most important problems facing society at this time with the aim of creating a new society and, on the basis of maximum political mobilisation, building institutions to bring this about. He had made important strides in clarifying the character of this period of retreat of revolution, the tasks of the communist and workers' movement, the need for democratic renewal, the importance of the human factor and social consciousness, the type of Party needed as vanguard of the working class in leading the solution of such problems, and on many other important questions.

His great legacy is the Party, CPC(ML), and the mass organisations he built; the economic and political programme put forward by the Party in Canada which makes it the standard bearer of the working class; the huge body of work towards the development of modern communism which we see not just as significant to a few close parties but of significance for the whole movement of progressive humanity; the guidelines for a way forward in countries beyond Canada; the inspiration of his actions and ideas which have and will in the future enthuse countless thousands, especially the younger generation, to carry forward the work he initiated, to bring forth new titans to take to fruition the work he was unable to complete.

To our Party, as to others, his proletarian internationalist support and guidance has been of incalculable value since our earliest origins. It was Comrade Bains who led the Necessity for Change Conference organised by The Internationalists in London in 1967 from which our Party traces its origins. He personally inspired generations of our comrades to become active communists. He was immediately at our sides giving support and assistance on the tragic death of our General Secretary John Buckle in 1983. It was his and his Party's views on the character of this period following the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the period of retreat of revolution, and thus the tasks of the communist and workers' movement in those circumstances, which he put forward at the Coventry International Seminar at New Year 1994, at a time when all communist parties were faced with the

challenge of finding their bearings in the new circumstances, which created the conditions for us to produce our draft general line "There is a Way Out of the Crisis" and later our draft Programme for the working class. Again, in more recent times, it was with his assistance and guidance that we took up the programme to focus all our work around our paper and gave the fighting call to "Stop Paying the Rich - Increase Investments in Social Programmes." He was always available for advice, in good times and bad. He thought nothing of travelling thousands of miles at short notice to discuss some pressing issue or to speak at an important meeting. Like a real friend, he did not hesitate to deliver criticism if he thought us in error, sometimes gently mocking, sometimes scathing, but always pointing a way forward out of the problem at hand, enabling us to stand on our own feet. And always the first to congratulate us on any advance. To us this was the essence of proletarian internationalism, the embodiment of the social love the true communist should feel towards their comrades, the example we should strive to emulate. With his passing we have lost our dearest comrade and friend, our mentor and guide. It is a great loss made even heavier by its suddenness. But even in our grief his memory inspires us to carry on the work with greater strength. And so we will spare no effort in following his last advice to us too: Tell them, he said in his last days, don't be pessimistic, don't be sad, you must carry on, march on!

It has been said many times and we repeat that he reserved his greatest love and attention for the younger generation. This was the case when he visited Britain also. He devoted hours to the young people in our circles and was always concerned about the welfare and progress of even those he rarely if ever saw. And it is that younger generation, here as elsewhere, we are sure, who will most enthusiastically and vigorously respond to his call and carry forward his work. He will live in them.

In the last few weeks since his passing, we have heard from or heard of an astonishing number of political figures in many countries far and wide who have known Comrade Hardial over the years, respect him and acknowledge his influence. There was not a freedom movement which did not know him. Nurtured in India, moulded in Canada, his love and generous hearted sympathy was for the struggling people of the whole world. Barred from visiting his native India literally for decades by imperialist intrigue and persecution, with all the pain that caused him, he worked tirelessly from afar for the unity of the Indian communists and for the triumph of the Indian revolution, to lift the pall of oppression and poverty from his homeland. It was his call in the late 70s to the Indian young people studying and working abroad in Canada, the United States and Britain, to return to India, that played a crucial role in the founding and building of the Communist Ghadar Party of India. And even in his very last months of illness he produced in time for the 50th anniversary of formal independence an important thesis on what was required to liberate India.

In his travelling to give internationalist support, as we well know, he was indefatigable and unstinting of himself. It is typical of him, and of great significance, that in April, greatly in pain from the as yet undiagnosed cancer that was to take his life, that still he answered the request of the Workers' Party of Korea and journeyed to Pyongyang to deliver the main

fraternal speech at the 5th anniversary celebrations of the Pyongyang Declaration - a declaration now signed by some 240 parties and organisations affirming socialism. In what was in fact to be his last public speech, he declared "socialism lives in the present and in the future of humankind. It shall triumph!", to which the mass rally responded with standing ovation after standing ovation. Comrade Bains was indeed a true internationalist and a great force for unity in the workers' and communist movement. We are sure that his influence for unity on the international movement will continue, in this new situation where the old divisions which paralleled the Cold War have disappeared and new opportunities open up, even in a complex international situation and with revolution for the moment in retreat, for the building of one communist movement.

As was said in the immensely moving Eulogy delivered at his memorial service in Ottawa, our beloved comrade and friend Hardial loved the dawn. And we know that he considered the dawn for humanity was about to break; that the retreat of revolution would turn into the flow of revolution sooner rather than later. While we grieve his loss, we know from the world outlook he encouraged in us all and of which he was the outstanding embodiment, we know from his own last words not to be sad but to march on, that our best tribute to his memory will be to study seriously the great body of work he bequeathed us and to carry on, in our varied ways, fighting for those great causes, for the future of progressive humanity, to which he devoted his entire life.

We will march on. We will carry on the work.

To the memory of our beloved comrade and friend, Hardial Bains.

Let us stand for a moment of silence in that glorious memory.

**Message of condolence from the Central Committee of RCPB(ML) to the
Central Committee of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist)
August 26, 1997**

To the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist)

Dear Comrades

It is with great pain and the deepest sorrow that we have received the sad news of the untimely passing of our beloved comrade, Hardial Bains, national leader of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist). On behalf of our entire Party and all progressive, democratic and revolutionary forces in Britain who are acquainted with his work, we send our most heartfelt condolences to his closest comrade and companion, Sandra, to all his Party comrades and to all family members and friends.

As leader of The Internationalists in the sixties and as national leader of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) since its founding, Comrade Hardial Bains has made an inestimable contribution to the cause of communism, of the emancipation of the working class and the social and national liberation of the peoples, to the cause of all progressive

humankind. To our Party, as to others, his proletarian internationalist support and guidance has been of incalculable value since our earliest origins.

The passing of Comrade Hardial Bains, in such complex times for the communist movement, is a great blow to the cause of the Canadian working class and people and to the struggle for enlightenment and emancipation worldwide. But the inspiration and the immense contribution of his work will live on. We are sure that comrades and sympathisers in Canada and elsewhere will turn deep sorrow into strength in carrying on the struggle for those great causes to which he devoted his entire life.

As ever, we stand with you in this time of sadness.

Central Committee Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist)