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## **Historic Conference Held in Chertsey, Quebec in 1989**

# **Unfolding Events Further Reveal Importance of Chertsey Conference**



**Hardial Bains addresses the historic 1989 meeting of CPC(M-L) in Chertsey, Quebec.**

On August 19, 1989, the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) held a historic conference in Chertsey, Quebec. Hundreds of CPC(M-L) members and supporters along with family and friends participated in a week-long social and political gathering in Chertsey held to discuss unfolding events, celebrate the work of CPC(M-L) and reaffirm its line of march. The events were presided over by the National Leader and First Secretary of the Party's Central Committee Hardial Bains.

Today, as events continue to unfold within the context of retreat of revolution, the Party continues to boldly stand firmly grounded, taking up the tasks which are needed by the workers' and communist movement to open society's path to progress by making way for renewal. The importance of the Chertsey conference becomes increasingly evident with the passing of time. The national and international developments which have unfolded since the Chertsey conference confirm the retrogression and dark reaction predicted by Comrade Bains at that time and, equally, the determined resistance of the working class and people all over the world and the inescapable need for the Party's revolutionary political leadership, organization and theory to realize the aims of the movement.

At the time of the Chertsey speech the world was in a period of transition from flow of revolution to retreat of revolution. Within a short while the world saw many changes, including

the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the bipolar division of the world.

"On this important occasion, we celebrate the victories of the past quarter of century, we celebrate the victories in the immediate sense and most importantly in this respect I would like to highlight the victories which we have since 1985 which we characterized as a year of turning point. This is when Gorbachev ascended the scene of history at the beginning of the year and the Party took some important decisions," Comrade Bains said. He pointed out that in no way was the Party stymied by the brutal anti-communist offensive led by the Anglo-American bourgeoisie. On the contrary, it was fully prepared and rose to the challenge of affirming its line of march under the new conditions. Comrade Bains said:

"The Anglo-American bourgeoisie is leading the offensive against communism, but this is not new. Since the 1840s, the bourgeoisie is inherently, in terms of its instincts, opposed to communism and has carried out an anti-communist offensive since that time. It renewed the offensive in the 20th century in the form of the Cold War. But what is specific, what has to be emphasized and underlined at this time is that the Anglo-American bourgeoisie is inciting and egging on the reactionary groups, the reactionary regimes, and egging on the fascist elements who were overthrown in Poland, in Hungary and various other countries. It is playing coy with the lives of the people in the same fashion it did when it encouraged Hitler to attack the Soviet Union and to invade Czechoslovakia as a starting point and then Poland and other countries. It does not understand that these are terrible things which can have terrible consequences, because the rise of Gorbachev, the rise of the new czars, the restoration of capitalist forms, is not a debacle for communism -- which took place when Khrushchev took over power. This is a debacle for humankind, because these are not the forces who anyone can say are democratic and that now they can go to sleep because the world is no longer in danger on any front, that there is no longer anything to fear.

"Within this counter-revolutionary situation, on the basis of the offensive against communism, the rise of fascist remnants is being permitted all over the world, especially in Eastern Europe where the criminality of Anglo-American imperialism is most pronounced and the reaction is the most rabid.



"But, also within this situation, our Party has held its head high, it has taken up the work to give the Party a mass character by winning the workers over to the positions of the Party. As in the past, so too today, the Party is vibrant, healthy, vigorous, very much alive and well."

A celebration has a meaning when progress is made in the political sense, Comrade Bains pointed out. "Today we have gathered together to celebrate the Party's achievements since the turning point in 1985 and, most importantly, the spirit the Party has given rise to, the spirit which imbues the movement the individuals which comprise the Party are part of. We are together to celebrate the creation of this spirit," Comrade Bains said.

Addressing the role of individuals, he counted himself as "just one of those individuals,"

saying, "Of course, it is not possible to have any progress whatsoever without the role of individuals. Some individuals play a positive role, some individuals play a negative role. It is

hard to believe that there are individuals who play no role, even though this is oftentimes suggested, especially in the society we live in where it is generally propagated that there is a position which is benign, a position which is harmless to the society. This is not the case. In determining who plays a positive role, our Party knows very well and cherishes the sons and daughters of the working class who come forward to take up the task of the Party. It is these individuals who are immortal in the sense of our revolution, in the sense of our new society. It is they who are really the architects of all the victories." The significance of each individual, he said, has to be found only in this context, not in isolation from it, not in any way distinct or separate.

As was the case in 1989, today too, the Party is carrying out its work, pushing forward the general line to make way for renewal, as well as carrying out the specific projects it sets for itself from time to time to meet the needs of the times, the need of the workers' movement for emancipation. In this respect, most importantly, it is dealing with the obstructions to its work and clearly showing that this is a Party that cannot be in any way paralyzed or eliminated.

On the occasion of the 33rd anniversary of the historic meeting held in Chertsey, Quebec on August 19, 1989, we once again celebrate this great event. It is incumbent on Party members within their organizations at every level to lead the workers and youth in discussion on the significant of unfolding events today so that together the people can find their bearings and discern the way out of the crisis in a manner which humanizes the natural and social environment and thus favours their interests. The work of people's empowerment is what makes way for the renewal of the political process by putting the individual on par with the collective as one, responding to the general interest of society at this time. Just as in 1989 when the Party led the people to analyze the significance of unfolding events, so too today when all those events have come to a head, the Party is encouraging the people to analyze the significance of unfolding events and take a stand which favours them.

Speaking five years after the Chertsey Conference, Comrade Bains pointed out:

"A great movement of the peoples demanding deep-going economic transformations was still in the making and was gaining momentum in various parts of the world, especially in Eastern Europe as well as in some other places. However, this movement turned against itself. It was manipulated by world imperialism and revisionism. From a flow of revolution, the situation turned into one of retreat in a matter of a few months after the Chertsey conference.... the Chertsey conference was for us a statement on the part of CPC(M-L) that not only will the Party not be manipulated by world imperialism and revisionism but that it must continue to carry out its work."

Comrade Bains' elaboration of the nature of that period prepared the Canadian revolutionary forces for what was to come by analyzing precisely what was unfolding nationally and internationally at that crucial turning point. He spoke of the historic world victory led by the Soviet Union and Joseph Stalin against Nazi-fascism and of the social programs created by the socialist societies. He warned about the grave dangers posed by Anglo-American imperialism and described the great tragedies unleashed on the world's people by U.S. imperialism, the numerous wars, invasions, coups d'état and medieval violence against the peoples striving for independence and social progress. He warned of greater tragedies to come.

The prediction of Hardial Bains that the anti-communist hysteria being whipped up by reaction would bring about an assault on the peoples of Europe and elsewhere became a reality. The old world shouted with euphoria that "communism is dead" and "history has come to an end." He predicted that this euphoria would turn into darkest revenge and reaction. He led CPC(M-L) to prepare for the treachery arising within all forces which persisted in acting in the old way, including within our own ranks. He led CPC(M-L) to stand steadfast and true.

With the Party's 5th Congress having been held a year earlier, Comrade Bains gave a summation of the work being carried out by the Party to implement the Congress decisions and the consistent work of the Party to answer the needs of the movement.

"...This is a celebration of the birth of a movement which the Canadian working class and people gave rise to, and that movement is more than a quarter of a century old. I personally as an individual do not matter because individuals do not set the course of things. It is the social force. You see, history has a cunning, anybody who rises above the masses today, history chops his or her head off, socially speaking [...]. This is not the era of knights and individual heroes. It is an era of the collective work of the working class and its allies. It is the era of the Party, the era of imperialism and the social revolution of the proletariat, as Comrade Lenin said. So in this meeting we celebrate the developments, the progressive movement, the strengthening, stabilizing and consolidation of a political movement. And we have that political movement here: our Party, its allies, its mass organizations, especially the Mass Party Press of which we are very proud."

Comrade Bains militantly set out what the communists should do next to further build CPC(M-L) as the political party of the working class so as to realize the political unity of the people. He predicted with certainty that the youth, despite all of the anti-communism promoted by reaction, would answer the call of the communists to take a stand for a just cause. He declared, "We say very openly that we want the rule of the working class and no one else... because it is the working class which is the producing class and is the most thoroughgoing revolutionary class whose aims cannot be achieved without overthrowing capitalism through revolution.... Today it does not matter which question is taken up... the bourgeoisie cannot find a solution. Only the working class can find a solution. It is the working class which is at the centre, and our views are the views of the working class."

Comrade Bains declared, "The most important problem in terms of specific work is to win the mass of workers over to the side of the Party.... One should go with a passion, like one goes towards a loved one because this beloved of ours, the working class, it is the only social force which can save the world, save humankind. With the grave danger posed by Anglo-American imperialism and world reaction, there is no other way to save the world from the crisis which is looming.... The working class can lose battles but not the war."

"A new communist has come into being on this soil of Canada which is nurtured by the Marxist-Leninist spirit of our Party. With such a new personality they think they can smash us, destroy us?! I say to you... we will become millions, you watch us -- because we represent what the working class wants, we represent what the oppressed masses of people on the world scale want. We are people without prejudice of any kind. We do not divide ourselves on the basis of race, on the basis of religion, on the basis of national background or gender or lifestyle. We unite ourselves on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, a common ideology for the working class of all lands. We unite ourselves on the basis of proletarian internationalism with the working people of all countries."

This new personality was not left to chance. To make sure a modern democratic personality emerges from the work to settle scores with the old conscience of society, achieving this was put on the agenda, a line of march was set to nurture it and the task was taken up to carry out everything consciously and with a plan.

Addressing the deed of the Party five years after the Chertsey Conference, Comrade Bains pointed out, "In August 1989 on behalf of CPC(M-L) I had declared that new men and women have come into being on the soil of Canada. Who are these new persons, new human beings that came into being? Those who had lofty ideals, honesty and sincerity, a clear conscience and they sacrificed everything they had. They trail-blazed a new way of living under the conditions of

capitalist decay. Such a colossal achievement is now coming under fire of those who want a part-time revolutionary lifestyle. They are telling us we are extreme to demand that one should watch one's words and deeds, that CPC(M-L) will not, in any shape or form, conciliate with the filth and rottenness capitalist society in its decay is bringing forth. They are trying to suggest that communists should divide their lives in two: one dealing with the way they carry out politics and the other with the way they live. If we degenerate into such a kind of 'communist' we will become two-faced, we will be a bourgeois decadent force and we are not going to become such a force. We have never recognized imbecility or sterility in terms of our overall work, nor do we accept impotency in the face of the situation. Our Party speaks with the deepest convictions on every front. There is no ocean in the world which is deeper than that. Its ideals are loftier than the highest peaks of the Himalayas and its resolve is such that nobody can define it."

In the period following the 1989-91 counterrevolution, there were not a few parties that collapsed, unable to find their bearings within the new and complex conditions. The Chertsey conference is an event that assumes greater significance with each passing year because Chertsey stood then and stands larger still today as the symbol of strength, maturity and vitality of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist).

The speech delivered by Comrade Bains provides crucial guidelines which enable modern human beings to take control over their lives. It provided the guidelines which allowed the Historic Initiative and its first five-year plan of action to be launched in 1995 and subsequent plans of action since then, year after year identifying the crucial task to be accomplished in order to achieve the aims the Party sets for itself. It led to the adoption of the program *Stop Paying the Rich -- Increase Funding for Social Programs!* in 1997 and, in spite of the monumental loss of Comrade Bains on August 24, 1997, to the success of the 7th Congress held in 1998 which adopted the Historic Initiative and its line of march, to the success of the 8th Congress held in 2008 under the theme "Laying the Foundations of the Mass Communist Party" and, today, under conditions when working people the world over are taking stock of the consequences of the vicious anti-social offensive and unfolding events show that everything is coming to a head, to the successful preparations for the 9th Congress under the theme "Make Way for Renewal." The renovation of the Party's internal and external life as set by the 8th Congress is giving rise to remarkable results which will enable the Party to meet its obligations in the coming period. This is a rare historical juncture whose outcome will be decisive for humankind. As it has always done, the Party places its confidence in the working class and the youth and enlightened forces.

Comrade Bains concluded that historic conference at Chertsey with the exclamation, "... we will march together and realize the tasks which we have set for the present time. Watch us -- we will win!"

