

Condolence messages on the death of Dave Hyland from India, Europe and the United States

15 January 2014

David Edward Hyland passed away on the night of December 8, 2013. He was the leader of the faction of the old Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) of Britain that declared its support for the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) and opposed the attempt of the party's leadership, Gerry Healy, Cliff Slaughter and Mike Banda, to liquidate the Trotskyist movement in Britain and internationally. Following the split of the WRP from the ICFI in 1986, he became national secretary of the British section, a position he held until he retired in 1998 due to ill health. (See: David Edward Hyland: March 7, 1947—December 8, 2013)

Within hours of Dave's death, letters of condolence began to arrive from all over the world, sent to his wife, Eileen, and his children, Julie, Tony, Claire and Paula, and to Dave's comrades in the Socialist Equality Party of Britain. The letters testify to the esteem in which Dave Hyland was held by comrades in the UK and internationally.

Below, we publish a selection of condolences sent by some of Dave's comrades from India, Europe and the US.

Dear Julie, Tony, Eileen and the Hyland family,

I would like to express my and other WSWs/ ICFI supporters' sincere condolences to you on the death of our comrade and your father, Dave Hyland.

I had the privilege of working closely with Dave, especially during and in the aftermath of Workers Revolutionary Party split. When the totally disoriented majority of the WRP membership went along with one or the other nationalist factions of the WRP renegades--led by Healy, Banda and Slaughter--comrade Dave Hyland stood up for principles.

Inspired by Comrade David North, the national secretary of the Workers League, the predecessor of the SEP (US), and his comprehensive Trotskyist critique of the nationalist political degeneration of the WRP leaders, Dave, to his credit, spared no time in rallying the WRP minority behind the ICFI majority in defence of a Trotskyist program.

In the course of this principled struggle one could not fail

to see his determination and dedication.

The founding of the SEP was a great achievement of the British Trotskyists. Dave, despite his ill health, contributed important analytical articles to the WSWs, confident of its immense and increasing political influence among advanced layers of the international working class, youth and intellectuals.

Yours fraternally

Arun Kumar, on behalf of supporters of the ICFI in India.

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Dear Eileen, Julie and Tony,

It is with a profound sense of loss that I heard today of the death of Dave, and I feel great sympathy for you, who have to mourn a husband and a father of whom you can be immensely proud.

He will be remembered particularly for the fight he carried out for the continuity of Trotskyism in Britain, alongside the comrades of the ICFI in the break with the degenerate leadership of the WRP.

In his work in London, and then as secretary of the Yorkshire area committee during the miners' strike before the split, he had already shown his revolutionary intransigence, and even in the last period of his life, when very ill, he made outstanding contributions based on his knowledge and experience as a fighter for Trotskyism.

My thoughts are with you and the family as well as his comrades and friends and I'm sure I will want to say more when I see you.

As a comrade and friend I wish you strength to overcome the loss and continue the work to which he gave his life.

Tony S

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With great sadness I got the message that Dave passed away last night. I can imagine how sad you are and would like to send you comfort, if I could.

Dave was an outstanding person, both in his role in the fight against the old WRP leadership as well as in his

articles. The latter really give insight into important developments of the British working class.

They are of great worth and will assist younger comrades as well, who did not know him personally. I'm very sorry he had to go now.

With love, Marianne

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Dear Comrades,

My deepest sympathy and respect for the loss of a husband, father and comrade whose courageous fight for socialist principles will always be an example for others to follow.

Mick P

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Dear Comrade Chris,

Please extend my deepest condolences to comrades Eileen, Julie, Tony and all the members of the Socialist Equality Party in Britain on the death of Comrade Dave Hyland.

It is clear from the response of the international movement to the news of his passing that Dave had a profound impact on everyone who met him. Many comrades have referred to his energy and tenacity. Those characteristics were very much in evidence in 1985 and 1986 as he rallied the best elements of the WRP to the revolutionary stance taken by the International Committee of the Fourth International. I consider it a privilege to have been able to work with the comrades in Britain for part of that time.

When the petty bourgeois tendencies in the leadership of the Workers Revolutionary Party were attempting to stampede the membership of the WRP with subjectivism in order to complete their break with Trotskyism, the IC fought to cut through the histrionics to the questions of perspective and political line and lay bare the nationalist degeneration of the British leadership. This was an essential step in providing a revolutionary orientation to the cadre and preserving the continuity of Marxism.

Comrade Dave committed himself fully to that struggle.

Warmest regards,

Thea

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Dear Eileen, Comrades and friends,

With big sadness and melancholy we have heard of the death of our Comrade Dave. We have been always proud to know Comrade Dave, whom we met in the early 1990s, and to have fought together with him against all forms of nationalism. Often, we listened to his reports and stories from the historical fight against Healy, Banda and Slaughter.

As Comrade Chris Marsden writes in the obituary on the WSWS, he is the best the British working class produced in the last decades.

Angela and Andy from Berlin

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Dear Julie,

I was so saddened to hear about your father's death. I know it wasn't unexpected, but he had such extraordinary determination to live that one imagined he could will himself to continue for a long time. But I guess he had already done that. He was a remarkable man and revolutionary.

I remember when I lived in England and would hear him speak at meetings and conferences. He was truly a worker-intellectual and leader--very charismatic. And when I first met you, at the school in Derbyshire, I realized he (and your mom) had to be exceptional people.

Dave was truly an historic figure who will be recognized by generations to come. My sincerest sympathy to you and your family.

Warm regards,

Jeannie

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Joanne and I are so sorry to hear the news. Dave, you and your whole family mean so much to all of us, from every point of view, political, cultural and human, more than you can know.

David W

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Dear Julie,

Please accept my sympathy for the loss of your father.

I was honored to see Dave and exchange a warm embrace with him at the public meeting in Manchester in September 2012.

Dave represented all of what is best in the British working class and Trotskyist movement. Having met him, I understand where you and Tony get your compassion, intellect, wit and the fire that burns inside of both of you.

With love and deepest regards for your family,

Jerry White



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