

A TRIBUTE TO CDE. MARTIN ANTHONY REDHEAD LABOUR EXTENSION /FIELD OFFICER

Written by GTAWU

Wednesday, 26 August 2020 12:30 - Last Updated Wednesday, 26 August 2020 13:10



TRIBUTE BY THE GRENADA TECHNICAL AND ALLIED WORKERS' UNION TO THE LATE COMRADE MARTIN ANTHONY REDHEAD, LABOUR EXTENSION / FIELD OFFICER OF THE UNION

The Grenada Technical and Allied Workers' Union, its Management Committee, Secretariat, General Council and Rank-and-File extend heartfelt condolences to the family and friends on the loss of our beloved Comrade Martin Anthony "Comrade" "Bro Marto" Redhead, Labour Extension/Field Officer of the Union.

Comrade Martin Redhead became a member of the Grenada Technical and Allied Workers' Union in September 1998, during his employment with the Grenada Broadcasting Network (GBN). He was from day one a militant fighter for the rights of workers employed at the GBN and by extension the workers of Grenada, Carriacou and Petit Martinique. As a trade unionist and activist in the struggle for the working class Comrade Redhead will be specifically remembered in the annals of the GTAWU for his selfless contribution, dedication, commitment,

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integrity and honesty during the Grenada Broadcasting Network battles of April and May 2000 among other activities.

This was a period (late 90's and early 2000's) of intense anti trade Union activities by the then Government against the Labour Movement with specific laser like focus against TAWU. GBN as a partially state-owned media house was of interest to the then Government administration. In April and May of 2000, the Union was locked in a battle with GBN over negotiations for a Collective Labour Agreement (CLA).

Comrade Martin was the Chief Shop Steward at the GBN and was the undisputed leader of the workers who all respected and admired his commitment and dedication. He was always one to lead from the front.

No mission was too risky for him to undertake. He was courageous and full of principle and integrity. He placed the struggle of the GBN workers and the working class above that of his family and personal material accomplishment. During that struggle he refused offers of bribe that would have resulted in him and family being better off today both financially and materially. He took a principled stand and opposed all attempts by senior officials in the then Government administration to get the workers to sign a petition to break the strike of April/May 2000!

Comrade Redhead was elected/elevated at TAWU's General Council in the latter part of 2000 to serve on the Management Committee of the Union. He attended his very first Management

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Committee meeting on Saturday January 20, 2001 and remained on the Committee until March 2004. He was one of the workers retrenched by GBN in 2003. However TAWU holds the view that he lost his job because of his militancy and outstanding leadership role during the GBN workers struggles of the early 2000's in the fight against injustice at the workplace.

Quoting from the minutes of the Management Committee meeting of Saturday January 20, 2001, it reads: "Bro. Martin Redhead was also welcomed to the Management Committee. It was said that he is a hard worker, committed to the workers' struggle and is firm in his principles, as was demonstrated during the workers struggle at GBN".

Comrade Martin joined the staff of TAWU on July 1, 2009 and served until his untimely passing on July 21, 2020. He did everything that was requested of him. He went beyond the call of duty. He served everyone. Nothing was too demanding or difficult for him. Nothing was too small for him to do. He was a servant, the one who did all errands. Even when he felt he was unfairly treated he never allowed that to prevent him from serving the Union.

Bro "Marto" was the main driving force in the establishing of the TAWU Youth Arm. He was totally committed to its formation and operations.

Bro "Marto" was a main driving force in the preparation and distribution of the TAWU May Day Food Hampers.

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His last official active engagement with TAWU and the workers took place during the recent GRENLEC Workers struggle of the week of July 13, 2020 in the fight against the Company's taking of workers Annual Vacation Leave during the COVID-19 State of Emergency Lock Down. As a matter of fact, on Wednesday, July 15, 2020, he had to be instructed to return home to rest since he was feeling tired. Little did we know or think that this would be the beginning of his permanent rest! Comrade Martin was very disturbed that he was unable to remain and serve the GRENLEC workers and Union during the struggle. Although tired and almost disoriented Comrade Martin Redhead reported to the Union's Secretariat collected the refreshment for the Striking GRENLEC workers and delivered it to them. This was despite him being told to leave the office and go home. He requested, in his own soft determined manner, that he be allowed to fulfill and accomplish this task.

How many workers will stand the test of time and refuse the offer and promise of money, land, and a house in exchange for selling out the workers struggle? How many workers will experience their family - wife, two (2) young children and self - continue to struggle financially every day, under trying living conditions and still refuse the offer and promise of money, land and house and not sell out the struggle? Comrade Martin Redhead did just that!

Comrade Martin was prepared and demonstrated his full commitment to the cause of TAWU and workers. He was courageous, fearless, committed and dedicated to the struggle. He was prepared to do everything and anything, even to risk his personal liberty and possible life! Remember no one could ever be totally sure of how the execution of certain missions may unfold.

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TAWU and the workers owe Comrade Martin an un-payable debt of gratitude.

Comrade Martin Redhead has certainly demonstrated the qualities of Che Guevarra in terms of his selfless service to all. He has followed in the footsteps of Doctor David “Doc” Lambert and Doctor Winston “Tommy” Thomas. He was a people’s person!

Comrade Redhead was a Union Organiser, Mobiliser, Counsellor, All-rounder, Friend, Brother and Confidant to TAWU members. We know that hundreds of Union members and workers wanted to be here today to pay their final respect, but due to the protocols for COVID-19, this is not possible. Our Union is flying its flag in combination with a black flag as a mark of respect and mourning to this stalwart of a human being.

Today our Union mourns the loss of a Co-worker, Comrade, Father, Brother, and Friend - Martin Anthony “Comrade” “Bro Marto” Redhead and once again expresses deepest heartfelt condolences to his Wife, Children and loved ones.

Our dear Comrade Martin, you were indeed a courageous, committed, dedicated, fearless and selfless champion servant to the working class. We in TAWU thank your family for sharing you with us. Well it was not really a sharing since you gave all or mostly of yourself to the Union and workers.

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We salute your memories.

Long live the memories of Comrade Martin Anthony “Comrade” “Bro Marto” Redhead.