
Communist Federation of Britain (ML)

Chile: Ballot Box Revolution

Source: *Struggle*, Number 11 October 1970

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Chile: ballot-box revolution?

In Chile another doomed experiment in 'Socialist' parliamentary politics has just started. Salvador Allende supported by pro-Moscow 'Communists' and an odd assortment of 'socialist' and nationalist groupings has just won the presidential election there. The 'Morning Star' acclaims Allende as representing 'the ideas of Socialism' while Fidel Castro calls it a "victory for all the peoples of Latin America."

Chile, a country about three times the size of Britain with a population of just under ten million has had an unusually stable parliamentary 'democracy' for almost the whole of this century. At the end of the 30's there were even Communists in the Cabinet, but this made no difference to the U.S. control of the dominant copper industry, and the 'latifundistas' (large farm-owners) having all the best land.

It is difficult to understand the optimism relating to Allende's road to socialism. His coalition is united only by pledges to reduce the control of U.S. business, and a supreme faith in the constitution.

There are enough lessons in Ghana, Indonesia and Algeria to show that attempts to lessen foreign imperialist influence and build up a mixture of 'national' capitalism and a larger 'nationalised' State sector, have nothing to do with building a society controlled and run by the workers. Why should Communists support a candidate who stated in the campaign that he partly relies on 'enlightened capitalists', and that his programme was "neither Socialist (he founded the Chilean Socialist Party!) Communist or Radical". Allende, who moves in the 'best' society, is close to the Freemasons, and has an impressive private art collection in his large villa in a fashionable suburb, is an unlikely *Socialist* leader, although our very own British Labour Party provides many such specimens.

If Allende gets confirmed as President by Congress on October 24 there is unfortunately no doubt that he will fail to in any real way remove the oppressive system in Chile. 'Communists' who shared a coalition much closer to home in Finland recently helped implement a wage freeze on Finnish workers and they now control the post of Minister of Justice - making certain the police and the courts do their job and protect the bosses' property.

The ultra-right "Economist" hastened to comment on Allende's victory in the following way. "For the leaders of the Chilean Communist Party and for their patrons in Moscow, Dr. Allende's triumph is a complete vindication of their faith in revolution through the ballot-box, and a resounding slap for more militant rivals who have chosen the path of armed struggle." With friends like that you don't need enemies.

Note: Allende has received the highest compliment that can be awarded by his friends in Britain. 'Tribune' has just proposed that he be invited to Blackpool for the Labour Party Conference!
