

The Newsletter

WEEKLY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

Vol. 9, No. 436

March 19, 1966

Price 6d.

B70SL FILE

KING'S 'MIRROR' : WILSON : GUNTER : HEATH : GRIMOND



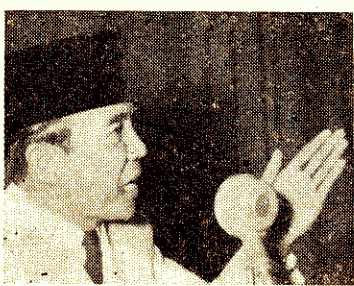
ALL attack unions to save the £

on the strength of . . .

THE 'NOOSE TRIAL' HOAX

by ROBERT JAMES

SUKARNO:



PRESIDENT BY PROXY

By MICHAEL BANDA

DESPITE the bland assurances of General Suharto, it is now quite evident that the coup to end all coups in Indonesia has resulted in the definitive ending of presidential rule.

President Sukarno still remains nominally the president by proxy.

After days of rioting by right-wing students and Muslims, following the exclusion of General Nasution from the Cabinet, the army, under the leadership of General Suharto, moved in on the presidential palace last Sunday and delivered the last humiliating blow to President Sukarno's tenure of office.

On Friday, while the Cabinet was in session, groups of the notorious Siliwangi regiment, led by General Agy, supposed to be until recently a supporter of Sukarno, surrounded the presidential palace and forced Sukarno and his inseparable Foreign Minister, Subandrio, to flee to the nearby town of Bogor in a helicopter.

MORE TROOPS

But when Sukarno reached Bogor he found more troops from the Siliwangi regiment in occupation of his residence.

While the president was in Bogor, General Suharto canvassed the military commanders for their support in installing a full-fledged military dictatorship.

Sukarno, long on rhetoric, but short on troops, capitulated completely to a deputation of three generals sent by Suharto to Bogor.

There were no negotiations. The president simply signed his power over to the general giving him authority to take in the president's name 'all measures required for the safeguarding of

(Continued page 4, col. 6)

PUBLIC MEETING SHEFFIELD

'The General Election and anti-trade-union legislation'

The Vestry Hall, Cemetery Road (Moor End) Sheffield

7.30 p.m. Sunday, March 27

Speaker: G. Healy, national secretary, Socialist Labour League

Slowly the barrage of lies and hysteria whipped up last week over the Cowley 'workers' trial' is breaking down under the pressure of statements about what really happened.

Desperate for a solution to the sterling crisis, Party leaders, aided by the more unscrupulous sections of Fleet Street, last week launched the most vicious witch-hunt in pre-Election history.

Facts were distorted. Facts were inflated. Facts were even invented. Both the press and television worked overtime to produce what can only now be called the great 'noose trial' hoax.

By weaving the fantastic tale of threats and violence and menacing demands for money, all the reactionary forces hoped to whip up public indignation and an atmosphere in which their plans for 'union reform' could be slipped through the new Parliament—be it Wilson or Heath in the chair.

At the same time more 'trials' were discovered and presented Wilson with a convenient diversion from discussing the pound at the hustings.

But the economy is the king pin of the 'noose trial' hoax and the big build up against the unions in the past two years.

Who else but semi-skilled car workers, pushing their earnings up to £40 a week—way beyond the 3½ per cent norm—are ruining the country's economy?

Who else but workers who continually defy their management, and even deal out their own justice, should be subject to a Prices and Incomes Bill passed by the government of the day?

Hysteria

This is the logic of the 'noose trial' hysteria.

But just as the Cowley workers, and especially the shop stewards' committee, has led a tremendous battle for higher wages and better conditions in the factory and attended the January 26 lobby of Parliament, so their strength puts an effective damper on the witch-hunting cretins of Fleet Street.

The inquiries by the unions and the joint shop stewards' statement of Wednesday are bringing out more and more facts to nail the lies of the 'noose', the 'M6 Cabinet', the threats, the fines, and so on.

The real story that the majority of 'reporters' missed is that by August, at least, BMC wants to cut the wages of the 1,400 men employed at the Cowley spares section by at least £5 to £10, and, it is claimed, lay off at least 500 men.

The section, which supplies the whole world with spare parts for BMC cars, is being modernised and semi-automated—the new £7 million Horspath Plant, under construction near the present plant, was supposed to be ready last July, but is expected to be in full operation by August.

Sales increase

Over the last year the sales of spare parts has had to keep up with the results of the production boom of two to three years ago. There has been a 10 per cent increase in gross sales, and, therefore, higher productivity in the sales plant.

At the same time, the strong shop stewards' committee has united the section in several actions to increase wages—in some parts they have increased by 100 per cent. In general for an average 27 per cent wage increase, there has been a 23 per cent increase in productivity.

Claiming that in the new plant 40 per cent of the work would be fully automated and 60 per cent semi-automated, the management called a joint meeting six weeks ago with the unions, to discuss a new wage agreement. This scheme would offer be-

tween £19 and £25 to replace the present wage structure of between £25 and £40.

A mass meeting of BMC workers decided to back any action taken by the shop stewards' committee over the wage issue. The stewards reported back to the company with the senior shop stewards and union officials. They pointed out that a national agreement stated that wages should not be changed by new working conditions.

The management said they would take the matter to York.

Already the management has attempted to introduce the new wage scheme for packers now working at the new plant.

Eighteen months ago, Morris Motors' repair shop workers were told they would be amalgamated with the BMC spares department. On the day that the new wage scheme was announced six weeks ago, the amalgamation went ahead, but the repairmen were brought in on the new wage scheme. It is claimed that when amalgamation was discussed 18 months ago, it was agreed the repairmen join the spares department at their own higher wages rates.

Two strikes

Two one-day strikes were called. The first, on February 24, was supported by the spares department. This was agreed unanimously at a shop floor meeting.

The second strike was to be on March 3. At a meeting of about 300 men, 30 voted against action.

On the day of the strike eight men disobeyed the vote of the meeting.

(Cont. back page, col. 1)

Gross distortions by press—union inquiry

COMMENTING on the 'noose trial', Harry Urwin, the Transport and General Workers' Union Midland regional secretary said on Wednesday:

'It appears that someone's twisted and vivid imagination has turned something much less sinister than a debagging ceremony at an Oxford college into a Reichstag Trial.'

Mr. Urwin headed a four-man inquiry team at Cowley this week.

There had been a 'gross misrepresentation of the

AN OPEN LETTER TO A TRADE UNIONIST

STERLING CRISIS WORSENS

See page 2

CP Election Manifesto

CP seeking more 'respectability'

By JOHN CRAWFORD

GO one better! Vote Communist! say the Communist Party election posters. A splendid slogan for a Party whose policy differs only in one degree from that of the Labour leaders.

And even this degree is not very great. The Party whose policy statement was once entitled 'For a Soviet Britain!' is now separated by only the finest political gap from Wilson and Brown, as its 1966 Election Manifesto shows.

Like Transport House, King Street puts much emphasis on 'modernisation'. Like any manu-

facturer of detergents, Gollan commends his wares as being 'new'.

Socialism is mentioned only in the most guarded terms as the 'eventual aim' of the Communist Party. The 'good' points of the Labour government's measures are carefully weighed against the 'bad' ones.

Far from calling for any fight against the Labour leaders, the manifesto merely suggests an improved version of reformism. Vote for one of the 57 candidates if you can, otherwise vote Labour and 'press this policy on the Labour candidates', is Gollan's message.

All that is claimed for voting Communist is that 'the new, different policy of peace and progress will be achieved more quickly if there are Communist MPs to work for it'.

APOLOGETIC

This apologetic tone is in keeping with the policies proposed. For example, on housing, the manifesto advocates the pegging of council as well as private rents, 500,000 new houses a year and an end to rate increases.

But all of this is to be accomplished without nationalizing the banks, simply by means of 2 per cent government loans to councils. When nationalization is proposed, it is steel which is pushed to the front.

Chemicals, building, aircraft and sections of engineering and shipbuilding, together with urban land, are merely suggested 'to go

on the nationalization list'.

As with the changes put forward for foreign policy ('make Britain a power for peace'), nothing is said about the reaction of the ruling class, either in Britain or abroad.

Apparently, the Queen is expected to call on Mr. Gollan to form Her Majesty's government, if only enough candidates can be elected.

REFORMS

This is the outcome of the 'British road' followed by the so-called Communist Party. While the historical basis for reformism crumbles daily, Gollan and Co. turn to reforms.

As class struggles of unprecedented ferocity are being prepared, these gentlemen decide the time has come for respectability.

When the bankruptcy of the Labour leaders is more clearly revealed than ever, Stalin's former spokesmen hitch their wagon on to the falling star of opportunism.

With gimmick heaped on cliché, the manifesto mocks the sacrifices and struggles of those who fought to build the Communist Party and the 'Daily Worker'.

However mistakenly, these workers thought that this was the way to smashing the boss class.

Now they find themselves selling a manifesto in which the power of the working class is never mentioned.

That is why increasing numbers of Communist Party members are reading The Newsletter and considering the policies of the Socialist Labour League.

Why we will vote Labour on March 31

The Socialist Labour League is confident that the British working class can successfully unite behind a Marxist leadership, which is today being built by the Socialist Labour League, to defeat the attacks of the Tories and the employing class. In the struggles against anti-trade union legislation, this unity and this new leadership are being built.

In the course of this battle against the legislation brought in by the Labour Cabinet of Harold Wilson, more and more workers have come to realise that the Labour leaders are carrying out Tory policies and must be opposed.

This raises the question: How do we vote on March 31? The answer must be VOTE LABOUR, because this will put us in the best position to remove Wilson, Brown, Gunter, Callaghan and Co. and unite behind socialist policies.

The fact is that many millions of workers will vote Labour, refusing to return to Toryism, but not yet understanding the extent to which the Wilson leadership betrays the interests of the working class. We must call on these workers to go with us through the experience of Wilson's betrayals. But this experience must be made in a fight against Wilson's policies.

Our purpose in ensuring the return of a Labour government is to strengthen those millions of workers who will vote Labour and

who will be faced, immediately after the election and the budget, with ferocious attacks on their living standards and their organisations.

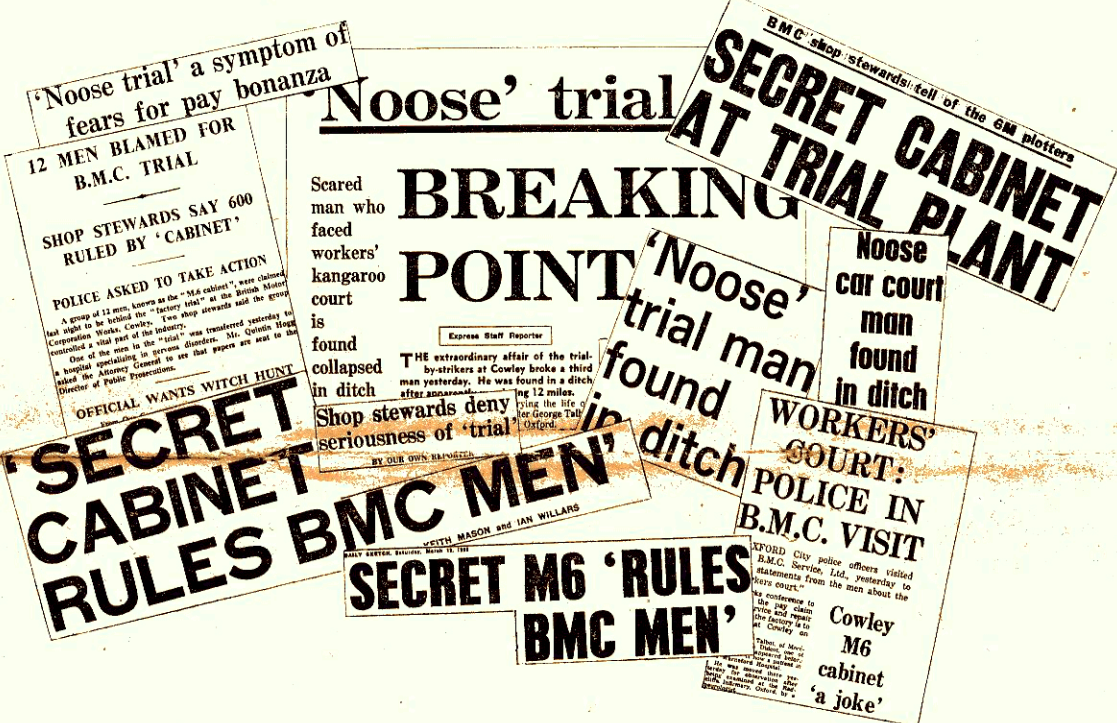
A Tory government means the exclusive and direct rule of the monopolists themselves under conditions where they are strengthened by a Labour defeat, their way to laws against the trade unions prepared by Wilson, Brown and Gunter.

We vote Labour to deprive the Labour leaders and Parliamentarians of any excuses; we warn them in election meetings and lobbies that in voting for them we do this as part of a campaign to build a new leadership and to remove them.

If there are millions of workers who still think that voting Labour is the only alternative, we will lead them in struggle against right-wing policies in order to go with them through the necessary experience.

We vote Labour on March 31 to keep the Tories out; to strengthen the ranks of the working class; to strengthen the bonds between the Socialist Labour League and the working class; to settle accounts with the Labour leaders on the working class's own terms.

Our vote on March 31 is a Labour vote which will strengthen the fight to defeat Wilson and his policies in the fight for a new socialist leadership.



A sampling of the week's scare headlines—thought up for the exaggerated stories now being exposed by the true happenings in the 'noose trial' at Cowley

WATTS ERUPTS AGAIN

ONCE again, Watts, the Negro quarter of Los Angeles, has become the centre of Negro frustration of life under American capitalism.

Faced with increasing unemployment, discrimination and shack housing, hundreds of Negroes ran riot in Watts on Tuesday night.

As in the famous Watts' insurrection of last August, youth, who bear the brunt of the worst features of US society, were to the fore in the street battles with the special riot squads trained to club and arrest as many as possible.

Two people—one Negro and one white—died, 30 were injured, and there were many arrests.

Like the previous riot, Tuesday night's incident began when police attempted to arrest a Negro who had thrown a stone at a white school teacher's car. Crowds quickly gathered and began shouting and threatening the police.

Then about 600 Negroes began smashing shop windows and overturning cars. The special riot squads were sent into the crowds. After six hours officials said things were under control with scores of police stationed on rooftops and tear gas squads at many strategic points.

There are reports that many Negroes were shouting 'down with the white man'.

This is a result of the discrimination that continues, the failure of the civil rights' dogooders to achieve any concrete results, and the incapability of any so-called workers' party to channel the frustration of the Negro workers into a struggle against capitalism around socialist policies.

There is a dire need for such a party, and a Marxist revolutionary leadership, in the United States today.

