

# Socialist Worker

FOR WORKERS CONTROL AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

185 5 SEPTEMBER 1970 4d

## BLACKMAIL THREAT TO STRIKERS

We  
did  
it!

A FLOOD of money in response to our appeal last week for £15,000 went right over the top of our fighting fund target.

When all the cash, in donations and loans, was added up this week the total reached the colossal amount of £16,231

Socialist Worker warmly thanks all our readers who responded so magnificently to the appeal. We can now buy outright the modern web-offset printing press that seemed in jeopardy when leading finance companies refused us credit to get the machine on hire purchase.

### Inspiration

The overwhelming reaction of our readers is a source of great inspiration to Socialist Worker and the International Socialists. It gives a clear indication of the importance which a growing number of people attach to the work of the paper and the organisation.

Once the new press is installed and the editorial and technical sides of the paper are improved, we will be in a position to produce a regular eight-page, two colour weekly paper, plus an increased flow of books and pamphlets.

### Reserves

Paying cash for the new press means that all our reserves will be used up. And we still have to pay for structural changes to our printshop to fit in the machinery. We also need to buy a van to improve the distribution of Socialist Worker.

So if you haven't sent off your cheque or postal order yet, or if you've just returned from holiday and didn't see last week's appeal, it's not too late to swell the fund.

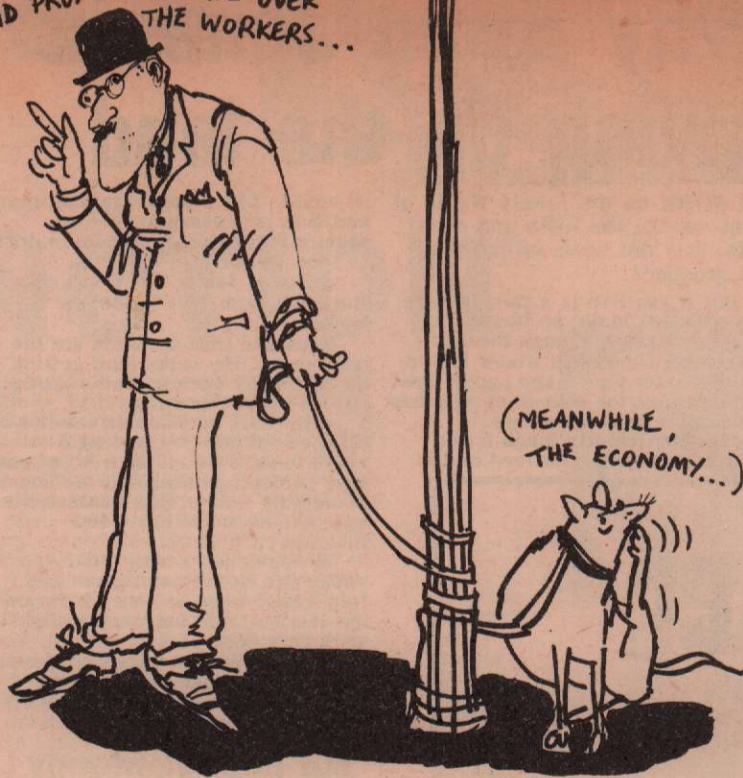
But we are over the hump. The collective action of our supporters has broken the political victimisation of the finance companies.

Once again, our sincere thanks to you all.

### Socialists in the 70s

Meeting to discuss the international revolutionary movement in the 1970s. Speakers from the United States, W Germany, France, Italy and Ireland. Saturday 12 September, 2.30pm Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq. WC1

IF ONLY THE UNIONS  
HAD PROPER CONTROL OVER  
THE WORKERS...



## New rents fight for London tenants

COUNCIL TENANTS in London, already reeling from 100 per cent bus and tube fare increases, now face staggering rent increases next March.

The giant Greater London Council, run by a Tory clique of landlords, property developers and businessmen, plan to put up rents of their 235,000 tenants by an average of 7s 6d a week.

This is the third stage of the GLC's three-year plan to bring in 'fair rents'. Behind the plan is the simple Tory desire to ease the rates paid by the better-off, house-owning middle class who will gratefully vote the Tories back into office next time round.

The council had intended to operate average rises of 11s 7d, 11s 8d and 9s 3d over the three years. This was too much even for the Labour government. Alarmed by the militant

last government restricted the 1969 increase to 7s 6d and refused permission for any rise last year.

Although the 1970/71 increase has been restricted to 7s 6d, tenants will also have to pay more for their heating when it is supplied by the council.

The lesson from 1968 is clear. Only massive organisation, with full trade union backing, linking up all the GLC estates, determined to fight any increase by threatening a total rent strike, will stop the reactionary bosses of the capital city.

### FRANK ROCHE

FRANK ROCHE, who is alleged to have thrown CS gas canisters in the House of Commons, is now in Brixton Prison awaiting trial.

As an immediate gesture of solidarity, readers are urged to send him cigarettes, cash and food parcels. Send care of HM Prison, Brixton,

## TORY THREATS TO CUT STRIKE PAY

by Valerie Clark

IF YOU read some of the wildly exaggerated stories in the press during recent strikes you might believe that, due to the over-generosity of the Welfare State, people are not much worse off when they're on strike than at work.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Whatever happens, the rent has to be paid, food bought and nearly every working class family has some HP debts

WHAT WE SAID LAST WEEK

THE GOVERNMENT is rushing ahead with plans to bully and threaten workers who take strike action to win increased wages. The Tories are determined to make ordinary working people scapegoats for the chaos of the big business capitalist system.

As we forecast last week, the first softening-up process may well be a move to cut back on the benefits workers' families can claim during strikes.

According to The Times Business News on Tuesday: 'Supplementary benefits paid out from public funds to strikers and their families are being reviewed by the government to see whether savings can be made without causing unnecessary hardship.'

By 'public funds', The Times means the money that working people pay every week through taxes and national insurance. All the benefits we can claim from the state are ours by right.

We finance them. They are not donated free by generous Tory well-wishers.

Apparently the scheme that finds most support in Whitehall is one in which strikers would pay back a proportion of benefits received on strike once they resume normal earnings. In other words, workers would be fined for going on strike.

### PUSH AHEAD

If the labour movement swallows this economic blackmail, the Tories will be in a strong position to push ahead with their Industrial Relations Bill, now planned for the end of the year.

This will make pay contracts enforceable by law, introduce a 'cooling-off' period before a strike can begin and attempt to weaken the closed-shop principle in which all workers in well-organised places of work are required to join a trade union.

What is at stake is the right to strike. It is one of the few weapons which workers have to fight with. It is the only weapon we have to grapple with soaring prices, rents and fares.

Last week, The Times, the 'top people's paper' demanded 'Why are we so bloody minded?' They were talking about the increased number

## Anti-union Bill planned for December

of militant strikes. By 'we' they meant workers, not the top people sunning themselves in the Bahamas, chalking up dividends or boosting prices in the 'national interest'.

According to the millionaire press it is only workers, millions of them on less than £15 a week, working out their lives in the roar and stink of factories, living in mean back streets, who are responsible for the state of the economy.

Ignore The Times. Go on being bloody minded. Working people produce all the country's wealth, in the factories, the mines, the shipyards, the offices.

And every day of our lives we are robbed by the system and the employers who take away most of what we produce in the form of profits.

### LOUD AND CLEAR

Above all, workers must band together to defend the right to strike. We must go onto the offensive and say loudly and clearly that we will strike and go on striking to win back just a little of the wealth we create.

Defend the right to strike. Demand all-out union action against cuts in benefits and the Industrial Relations Bill.

A £25 a week minimum wage for those with work—and those without. No productivity deals. Straight increases without strings.

Build and strengthen rank and file committees throughout industry.

THE 'WAGES EXPLOSION'— EXPOSING  
ANOTHER MYTH. BACK PAGE



# Cromwell: warts a-plenty, but a travesty of history

by Norah Carlin

**THE BATTLE SCENES** in Cromwell look marvellous. For them, director Ken Hughes had the assistance of the Spanish army—nice to know Franco co-operated. (Hughes is the director who plans to make two film versions of the Russian Revolution, with and without Trotsky.)

The main point of the film seems to be visual, for it is a travesty of an important and exciting period of English history. Oliver Cromwell has his warts, but there historical accuracy ends.

The minor inaccuracies are countless and grate maddeningly on anyone who has read even the basic history of the period. The Earls of Manchester and Essex, for example, are repeatedly shown sitting in the House of Commons, Cromwell is given a six-year retirement in the country (between 1649 and 1653, apparently!) and impossible confrontations between the main figures are constantly invented.

All this would be excusable if the purpose was to create a clearer and more meaningful picture of the conflicts of the period. A film is, after all, a work of art, not a chronicle. But Hughes distorts history in order to misrepresent it.

The aim seems to be to show Cromwell as a liberal man of conscience, with a belief in 'a more enlightened form of government, which is called democracy', enraged by the wrongs done to the common people. The other parliamentary leaders are shown as a bunch of fools, cowards and grafters who attempt to lead into the field an army of untrained ploughboys until taken in hand by the mighty Oliver.



It is also noticeable that when agitators in the army demand soldiers' rights, they are hanged on the spot. And when an orator tells the London poor that they ought to have the vote Cromwell mutters darkly of anarchy. It's clear that English democracy has its limits!

The truth is more complex and more significant. The English Civil War began with a split in the ruling class, with the parliamentary opposition claiming that 'the people'—by which they meant the middle class property owners—were being deprived of certain 'liberties' by the monarchy of Charles I. Prominent among these was the liberty to do as they liked with their property.

Thus it was not Cromwell, but the King, who claimed to be defending the common people against land enclosures, while the parliamentary party defended landlords', not tenants' rights.

### Radical wing

Cromwell represented the more radical wing of the parliamentary opposition, those who were prepared to fight the King to a finish. Other leaders, such as Manchester and Essex, hesitated, but not because they were buffoons who preferred their breakfast to battles, as in this film. They held that the King, though wrong, was necessary to law and order—a view which triumphed at the Restoration in 1660.

Cromwell and his closest friends were prepared to play along for a while with more radical allies, the democratic faction of London craftsmen and small property owners known as the Levellers. Cromwell would have hesitated to use the word dem-



Cromwell at the battle of Drogheda in Ireland where thousands of Roman Catholics were slaughtered.

ocracy (which to the 17th century ruling class meant mob rule), but when the question of soldiers' and small proprietors' rights was raised in the army and in the streets in 1647, he was prepared to discuss the matter for as long as it seemed to give him a political advantage.

The Army Debates of 1647 were one of the most dramatic and significant events in the Civil War. The questions raised included sovereignty of the people, the right to vote, the role of servants and wage earners (who were not reckoned to be 'free men'), and the responsibility of parliament to the electorate.

The result was that Cromwell and

Ireton quickly closed down their 'democratic experiment', cut their connections with the Levellers, and finally aligned themselves on the side of big property, on whose behalf Cromwell went on to rule. It is a pity that Hughes did not see fit to include this episode in his film—the dialogue might have been more entertaining and the film more truthful.

As the epilogue says, 'England was never the same again' after Cromwell's rule—but it was the rule of property and free enterprise, leading to the industrial revolution and the reign of capitalism, that he prepared, and not the sentimental nonsense of 'English democracy'.

## Why Brian Jones is giving up the land

**TO WORK** on the lovely Weald of Kent, among the hills and orchards, may not seem an unpleasant prospect.

But if you live in a farm cottage the situation is not so ideal. The dampness seeps through the walls, everything freezes in winter including the water pipes, and people are isolated from the warmth of an urban area, miles from the shops.

It is particularly tough if you have a large family to feed on the

miserable £13 a week average wage and it is necessary to take on demoralising, part-time jobs in order to keep a family.

Mr Brian Jones, 40, works on a Headcom farm near Maidstone in Kent.

Hops and fruit orchards are the main crops. He works hard, getting up at 6 every morning and working till late in the evening.

After work he often drives in his clapped-out Mini, which took him years to save for, to do a bit of part-time gardening, usually at the homes of wealthy ladies. This enables his wife, Eileen, 36, to buy a few luxuries each week.

Mr Jones had a very difficult young life. He was an orphan, and left school when he was 14. He did not learn a trade, but went straight to work on a farm.

He said that he never felt he was intelligent enough to do a white-collar job. 'I can't afford a suit like they wear,' he says.

### No pocket money

Of the £13 a week that Mr Jones earns, supplemented in the summer by £8 a week which Mrs Jones earns from fruit picking, £8 goes on food and general housekeeping, £5 on gas and electricity, £4 on shoes and clothing for his three children and his wife, leaving £4 for miscellaneous items, transport, petrol and cigarettes.

The children don't get any pocket money. They earn it themselves.

When they were small, and he was earning £10 a week, Mr Jones used to make his children's birthday and Christmas presents. One year he couldn't afford to buy any presents, so he made his sons, Brian, 16, and Steven, 15, little wooden guns, a present which the boys value above everything else.

Now Mr Jones has decided to break away from the farm before it's too late. The union he belongs to, the Agricultural Workers, is badly organised in his area. The members are isolated and there is a feeling in the union of demoralisation and resignation, says Mr Jones.

He is moving to a council house in Maidstone next year. He hasn't got a job in the town yet, and he is very worried.

He has no savings to spend on decorating the house, but he feels that unless he moves now he will never break away from the drudgery of the farm.

A brilliant report from America by CHARLES LEINENWEBER on the brutal repression of the black community — and how the blacks are fighting back...

**WHEN** one revolutionary dies, many are born. In Oakland, California last month there was a funeral for two revolutionaries. They arrived for the funeral in long, brown caskets and passed through a crowd of 2000 people.

The people who saw the caskets thought about the men inside. They thought about the sacrifice and the necessity for revolution, made real by the death before their eyes. They were born, 2000 for two.

The revolutionaries who died were William Christmas and Jonathan Jackson. Christmas was a prisoner of the American state, in San Quentin for six years, and had spent most of the previous seven years in jail.

Christmas had never been convicted of a serious crime, but was kept inside as a 'problem inmate'.

Jackson was outside, but his soul was inside. Jackson's older brother had been sent to Soledad Prison for a petty offence 10 years ago, when Jackson himself was only seven. The brother is still in prison and is currently awaiting trial as one of three inmates accused of killing a guard last March.

The American system of justice will never free Jonathan Jackson's



Chained hands and feet: Soledad brother Fleeta Drumgo

brother. And it will never free tens of thousands of other black prisoners who circulate forever through the nation's prisons.

These are political prisoners. The Black Panther Party recognised this, and so called for the release of all black prisoners. But first of all black prisoners themselves recognised this, and began to make America's prisons schools for revolution.

In its ceaseless dragnet of black communities, in its unending quest for security, official America created one element of the revolution.

### Graduates of school for revolution

Malcolm X and Eldridge Cleaver were both graduates of prison schools for revolution. So was William Christmas, and so were two other San Quentin inmates, James McClain and Ruchel Magee.

McClain, 37, had spent most of the last 16 years behind bars. He was inside San Quentin for assaulting an Oakland policeman. Magee, 31, had spent five years in San Quentin and several more in Louisiana prisons.

On 7 August, James McClain was taken from San Quentin to a nearby

# Socialist Worker

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**CAPITALISM** has nothing to offer mankind but exploitation, crises and war. The ruling classes of the world — a tiny minority — subordinate the needs of the vast majority to the blind accumulation of capital in the interests of competitive survival.

Imperialism condemns two-thirds of mankind to famine and calls forth movements of national liberation which shake the system and expose its essential barbarism. The constant and mounting preparations for war and the development of weapons of mass destruction place the survival of humanity itself in the balance.

The increasing intensity of international competition between ever-larger units drives the ruling classes to new attacks on workers' living standards and conditions of work, to anti-trade union and anti-strike laws. All of these show capitalism in deepening crises from which it can only hope to escape at the cost of the destruction of all its independent organisations.

The only alternative is workers' power — the democratic collective control of the working class over industry and society through a state of workers' councils and workers' control of

# WHERE WE STAND

production.

Only thus can the transition be ensured to a communist society in which the unprecedented productive forces thrown up by capitalism can be used to assure an economy of abundance. Only the working class, itself the product of capitalism, has the ability to transform society in this way, and has shown its ability to do so in a series of revolutionary struggles unprecedented in the history of all previous exploited classes.

The working class gains the experience necessary to revolutionise society by constant

struggle against the ruling class through the mass organisations thrown up in the course of that struggle.

To overcome the unevenness with which this experience is gained, to draw and preserve the lessons of past struggles and transmit them for the future, to fight against the pressure of bourgeois ideas in the working class, and to bond the fragmentary struggles against capitalism into a conscious and coherent offensive, a revolutionary Marxist party of socialist militants is required, embracing the vanguard of the working class.

The struggle to build such a party is only part of the wider struggle to create a World Revolutionary Socialist International, independent of all oppressors and exploiters of the working class, whether bureaucratic or bourgeois.

International Socialists therefore fight for:

Opposition to all ruling-class policies and organisations. Workers' control over production and a workers' state.

Opposition to imperialism and support for all movements of national liberation.

Uncompromising opposition to all forms of racialism and to all migration controls.

Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of the paper.

GINNY WEST



# History took a leap when Jonathan Jackson walked into court with a satchel of guns

# 'WE ARE YOUR ENEMIES AND WE HAVE THE MEANS TO ENFORCE THE DISTINCTION'

courthouse, to be tried for knifing a prison guard. Authorities also took Christmas and Magee as witnesses.

Jonathan Jackson walked into the trial with a satchel full of guns and history took a leap. 'Everybody freeze,' he said and passed out the guns to the prisoners.

William Christmas walked over to a guard and held out his manacled hands. 'Take these handcuffs off me,' he said. 'I've been in San Quentin for for years, and I want to be a freeman.'

Jonathan Jackson and the freed prisoners took five hostages — a judge, a prosecutor, and three jurors. They slowly made their way towards the courthouse parking lot. A newspaper photographer saw them and began taking pictures.

## Tactic of massive retaliation

'Take lots of pictures,' Ruchell Magee said, 'we are the revolutionaries.' Jonathan Jackson told the photographer, 'We want the Soledad brothers (the three, including his older brother, accused of killing a Soledad Prison guard) released by 12.30 today.'

The revolutionaries and their hostages reached the parking lot, climbed into a waiting van and began to drive away. A large assembly of police, sheriff's deputies and prison guards, hiding in ambush, suddenly opened fire.

Theirs was the tactic of massive retaliation. Jackson was killed. So were William Christmas and James McClain, after 20 minutes of freedom.

Ruchell Magee was critically wounded, the judge, too, was dead, and the prosecutor and one juror wounded.

Jackson and the freed prisoners had said, 'We want no shooting.' They had not counted on the blind viciousness of the police.

Despite the tragic failure of their escape, Jonathan Jackson and the freed prisoners, in one dramatic flash, swept the whole course of

struggle in America to another plane. Huey Newton, founder of the Black Panthers and himself temporarily out after three years in prison, called the escape attempt 'a colossal event'.

'The revolutionary fervour of Jonathan Jackson' he said, 'changed the whole relationship between the oppressed and his oppressors.' The immediate future is clear: American revolutionaries will now take hostages to free political prisoners.

This is a declaration of war. It says to the ruling class: 'For centuries you have called us criminals. We are not criminals. We will not stay in your prisons. We are your enemies, and we now have the means to enforce this distinction.'

The message has got across. The entire American system of justice was already tightening up, largely as a result of an unending broad wave of bombings and shootings against police. Now, struck also at its heart and brains, the prisons and courts, American justice is flailing for a quick solution.

The Walt Disney characters who run California politics found one. They charged Angela Davis, a black militant and, most of all, a Communist Party member, with murdering the judge who died during the attempted escape.

## Reagan's bloodhounds on the trail

Not even the police claim that Angela Davis was anywhere near the escape attempt. In fact, the 'closest' they place her is Los Angeles, 400 miles away. But at this time of writing, Angela Davis, black Communist, is At Large and Wanted for Murder, with Ronald Reagan and his bloodhounds tracking her down.

They are kicking in doors all over the state. The newspapers are running front-page photos of Angela Davis and Jonathan Jackson, taken at a demonstration last June.

Police claim Davis bought the guns that Jackson took to the courthouse, and so the newspapers are



Jonathan Jackson and Angela Davis (top) picketing in defence of the Soledad brothers. Angela Davis (right), now in hiding, seen in her study at Los Angeles

also running pictures of guns 'like those' Davis bought. In the meantime, major courts, police stations and prisons around the state have become so security-conscious that everyone who enters, including judges, is being searched for weapons.

Two blocks from the funeral of Jonathan Jackson and William Christmas, an ordinary American Ford, dark blue, sat parked in front of a hamburger stand. Three men, not so ordinary, were inside the car, two in the front, one in the back.

The two in the front were big men, with swollen beer bellies. They wore loud-coloured summer suits, unbuttoned so their bellies could stick out. From time to time, one of them wrote some things down on a small pad.

The man in the back, who was

tall and skinny and wore horn-rimmed glasses, held a camera with a telephoto lens. The lens was very long, and it had a peepsight above it. Whenever some person or group of persons came away from the funeral, the skinny man would shoot them — with his camera. The man and his partner were, of course, police.

Back at the police station they develop the pictures. Then they put the pictures on a wall.

Ten years ago there were maybe a dozen pictures. Now there are thousands.

Ten years ago there were two cops on the Red Squad. Now the Red Squad is abolished, everyone is on it.

The wall is getting too heavy, there are too many pictures. Soon it will come crashing down.

## Fleet Street's cuckoo sings

THE CUCKOO in the traditionally militant nest of Fleet Street has been the journalist and his union. While printworkers became a by-word for high wages and organisational toughness, the National Union of Journalists remained timid, conservative and anxious to identify with the interests of profit-hungry press barons.

Now, at long last, the cuckoo has found its voice. Last week journalists on the Daily Mirror stopped publication of all the London Thursday editions.

The first edition of the same day's Sun was a 'scab' edition, produced by executives while the journalists held an emergency chapel—office branch—meeting.

And NUJ members at the Daily Mail are balloting on a call for strike action to win a £10 a week pay increase.

In the past, journalists have accepted redundancies and inadequate staffing with a shrug of the shoulder. Now they are fighting such issues.

## Vital struggle

The Mirror dispute concerns the refusal of the management to find jobs within the IPC empire for journalists sacked from the now defunct Mirror Magazine. The Sun men are demanding that a casual sub-editor, who had been employed on a day-to-day basis for 12 weeks, should be taken on permanently.

A successful outcome to both these struggles is vital to all workers in Fleet Street. With decreasing profit margins and major technological changes on the way, the press barons are anxious to drastically reduce staff.

Rupert Murdoch's re-vamped Sun has existed for many months now on a largely casual staff. This weakens union organisation and means that, if a journalist is sacked or the paper collapses, the management avoids forking out redundancy money.

The journalists' struggle is very much a rank and file affair. NUJ executive member Eric Blott (comment is superfluous) ordered the Mirror men back to work last week and the leadership is terrified of a showdown with the Fleet Street bosses.

## Shaken leaders

Changes are coming in the union. An influx of militants into the two key branches—Central London and Magazine and Book—has shaken the normally arrogant and paternalistic leadership. Demands for greater union democracy—particularly the election of full-time officials—are being voiced and a fierce fight on such issues is likely at the next rules revision conference.

But a successful policy for journalists means first and foremost linking up with the mechanical unions at shop-floor level in Fleet Street.

The creation of federated house chapels, uniting all print workers on each paper, is the first step towards forging a militant programme that must demand cast-iron guarantees against redundancies and annual 'no-strings' pay increases instead of productivity package deals stretching over two and three years which are made a nonsense by the soaring cost of living.

ROGER PROTZ



### A MESSAGE TO UNION LEADERS FROM THE MILITANTS OF THE SOUTH WEST TOLPUDDLE GROUP:

# 'The scenery is lovely - but you can't eat it...'

by Granville Williams  
WHEN TRADE UNIONISTS in Newton Abbot, Devon, set up the rank and file Tolpuddle Group to raise the living standards of workers in the South West, they chose a name which has a grim relevance for workers throughout Britain today.

The original men from Tolpuddle were the victims of repressive government laws which forbade them to join trade unions. They were sentenced to deportation in 1834 as a result.

Trade unionists, housewives, unemployed youth and older workers have to face up to the fact that a Tory government will have little in its policies to ease their problems.

#### Hard fact

Rising unemployment—the worst in any post-war August—rocketing prices—up in the first six months of the year by more than 8 per cent—and anti-union legislation cannot be ignored.

When workers demand wage increases, the press shrieks about a 'wages explosion'. The hard fact is that unless workers press for real wage increases, inflation will eat away living standards.

The press, employers and Tory government are bunched together to divide and confuse sections of workers. The only effective answer is the creation, locally and nationally, of rank and file groups which can link together around policies and demands aimed at going on the offensive. For this reason, it is worth know-

**THE TOLPUDDLE GROUP SAYS...**

It seems most things in the West country - excepting wages - keep growing to record heights... Especially the cost of living and the highest level of unemployed since the big slump of the 1930s!

\*\*\*\*\*  
PRICES have risen 25 per cent in the past five years; low wage families in the SW have been hard-hit by 50 per cent increases in the cost of school dinners, welfare milk, dental and optical treatment.

And Mrs Castle tells us Mr. 'Average' earns £24 16s. 9d. per week...  
**YET THE BEST ONE STRIKE-BOUND DEVON FIRM CAN OFFER ITS LOWER PAID WORKERS IS £15. 0. 0d p.w!**  
And that's not until Dec. 1970 and with 'productivity strings' when in industry after industry strikes are breaking out **AGAINST** government-based productivity deals!

**WE SAY defend the trade unions right to bargain wage increases without strings and to bargain independently of government and state.**

A Tolpuddle Group leaflet

ing something about the way the Tolpuddle Group came into existence and the type of activities it has developed.

The South West, with its isolated pockets of industry, its tourists and agricultural countryside, had a slight history of militancy until 1200 Centrax workers went on strike at the end of 1969 for 22 weeks. They demonstrated to workers in the South West that militancy brings better wages.

Members of the Centrax Strike Committee felt that the experience of how to develop a strike should be available to other workers. This would strengthen the impetus which their victory gave to the campaign for higher wages in the area.

Founder members of the Tolpuddle Group were from Centrax, local power stations and buses.

A steady stream of leaflets from the Group emphasises the way in which unemployment acts as a brake on the fight for better wages and conditions. They also spell out the dangers of productivity deals and stress the need for rank and file initiative against all those who peddle productivity - whether union officials, employers or government.

Since its formation early in 1970, the Group has established a real presence in the South West. Strikers from Plymouth came over to Newton Abbot for advice and assistance and the Group has been involved in many other disputes in the area.

The message from the Tolpuddle Group is a clear one and its influence is spreading.

When TUC secretary Vic Feather spoke at the annual Tolpuddle Rally in July, strikers from Ottermill Switchgear and Fine Tubes Plymouth, saw clearly that he had about as much insight into the problems facing workers in the South West as a tourist down on holiday.

Time and time again, strike placards carry the same message - 'The



scenery is beautiful—but you can't eat it.'

The intervention at the rally, the organisation of marches in Exeter and Newton Abbot on the theme of ending low wages, the recent publication of the monthly 'South West Worker' and the formation of the Exeter Tolpuddle Group last week - all this has shown that the policies and activities of the Group meet the needs of workers in the area.

Any genuine rank and file movement has to allow open debate on the areas of work and activity it will initiate. Three areas have become central to the activity of the Tolpuddle Group:

#### Maximum unity

1. Support for workers in dispute in the area through leaflets, financial appeals, advice and addresses of contacts in other areas able to assist delegations.

2. Publicity and activity around the vicious circle of low wages, high unemployment and the attacks on welfare spending.

3. Work among sections of the community such as housewives and unemployed who bear the brunt of the situation in the South West alongside industrial workers.

In this way, the Group aims to build the maximum unity of workers to oppose the government and employers.

The Secretary of the Tolpuddle Group is Bill Groves, 28 Powderham Road, Newton Abbot, Devon. The address of the South West Worker is 35 Fore Street, Kingsteignton, Devon.

### 'Dear Brother Feather'

AN 'open letter' to Vic Feather was given out at this year's Tolpuddle rally in Dorset by members of the Tolpuddle Group. Addressed from 'Threadbare Farm, Poverty Lane, South West England', the letter said:

'Dear Bro Feather, we hope this time you leave our "glorious West Country" you will carry away with you more than a memory of superb views. Of course, we enjoy them too, but we cannot eat them and they are no substitute for work and decent wages.'

'The South West is in the twilight zone of poverty where a man still takes home £10 a week - else he works 60 hours and more a week to make ends meet. And that is if he is "lucky" to have work at all.'

'After repeated trade union and government promises, we are becoming worse off as time drags by. Unemployment is as bad as in the great depression of the 1930s. The Devon County Council's children's officer reports on the hundreds of local children forced to live a mere existence because of low wages and tourism. And still the talks go on...'

'We are tired of watching our families suffer - the pot is coming to the boil in the South West. Take this memory away with you, Brother - the views are for holiday makers.'

## DEATH OF AMADEO BORDIGA

AT THE END of July, Amadeo Bordiga, one of the founders of the Italian Communist Party died near Naples, his native city and the base of his political activity in Italy.

Bordiga was already identified with the left wing of the Italian Socialist Party in 1912 when he campaigned against reformism and the social patriotism which had led some Italian socialists to support Italian imperialist expansion in Libya. He worked throughout the first world war to keep the party on the road of the class struggle and free from compromise.

In 1917, when the Russian Revolution triumphed, the problems confronting revolutionary socialists were to understand and recognise the revolutionary struggle taking place and to organise the working class in its fight with the ruling class.

Bordiga supported the Russian Revolution and founded a newspaper in Naples called Il Soviet as part of his attempt to fight the reformists and help to create a revolutionary party.

By 1919 the class struggle in Italy became particularly fierce. Bordiga organised a faction within the Italian Socialist Party based on abstention from participating in elections and on expelling the reformists.

His group remained a small minority of the PSI which refused to expel the reformists although it supported the Third (Communist) International.

Another part of Bordiga's activity at the time was to argue against the factory council movement which had spread so quickly in Turin where Antonio Gramsci and the group around the paper Ordine Nuovo saw the factory councils as part of the spontaneous organisation of the class in the revolutionary struggle.

by Anne Shuster

Bordiga argued that it was a question of either taking power or simply setting up institutions which were bound to be limited to the sphere of the factory, ignoring the question of the seizure of power.

While Gramsci and others failed at the time to understand all the aspects of the need for a revolutionary party, Bordiga failed to understand the part the councils had to play in the revolutionary struggle or their relationship to a future socialist state.

In addition, his insistence on abstaining from election activity incurred the harsh criticism of Lenin who considered this policy to be an example of 'ultra leftism' which ignored the need to fight the concepts of parliamentary democracy which were so deeply planted in the workers in Western Europe.

#### SECTARIAN

Because of Bordiga's standing as a leader of the left of the PSI, the organisation of his faction, and the disorientation of the Ordine Nuovo group after the defeat of the occupation of the factories, the founding of the Italian Communist Party in Leghorn in 1921 was very much under Bordiga's leadership. The party which began as a minority split from the PSI quickly took on a very sectarian complexion.

In the period of the rise of fascism and after Mussolini's march on Rome in 1922, the Italian Communist Party refused to work with the other socialist forces to help to organise the defence of the working class. Bordiga and the whole of the leadership of the party at the time refused to see the need for a united front policy as a tactic to overcome the decline of the revolutionary

movement and to fight fascism. Bordiga considered social democracy to be the prime enemy, a policy which was to be repeated later by Stalin with equally disastrous results.

Bordiga's position on the relationship between the party and the class was that the duty of the party was to retain ideological purity in the conviction that in a revolutionary period the class would automatically rise to the theoretical level of the party and accept its leadership. He ignored the vital relationship between the spontaneous struggle of the class and the leadership of the party.

In 1923 Bordiga was arrested by the fascists. He was released but Gramsci and the old members of the Ordine Nuovo group had begun a campaign to change the leadership of the party with the support of the International.

By 1926 and the party congress in Lyons, Bordiga had clearly been placed in a minority, but by then it was too late to fight fascism openly. With the 'exceptional laws', Mussolini placed Bordiga, Gramsci and many other anti-fascists in prison and effectively defeated any open opposition to the regime.

Bordiga was expelled from the Italian Communist Party in 1930 and continued his political activity very much in isolation both from the Stalinist parties and from the Trotskyist and socialist anti-fascist groupings. After the overthrow of fascism and the end of the second world war, Bordiga took up political activity once again in Naples with a small but very active group.

He wrote many books and articles setting out his programme which had in fact changed very little from the time of his activity in the early PCI.

Whatever the weaknesses in these ideas, he remained a militant in the working class movement and was very much a part of the international revolutionary tradition.

# The Employers' Offensive

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# HARSH WINTER AHEAD FOR THE JOBLESS



Victims of deliberate Labour and Tory policies

**THE COMING WINTER** may see the number of jobless people in this country reach one million or more. This seems quite probable on the basis of the worst mid-August unemployment figures for 30 years. If the winter weather proves really harsh, the number could be even greater.

On 10 August there were no less than 645,000 persons registered as unemployed with the Department of Employment and Productivity. But this certainly understates the true number on the dole.

Since the big 'shake out' in industry started by the Labour Government in 1965, the total labour force, allowing for school leavers, has fallen by more than the increase in unemployment.

In some of the worst hit regions, many women laid off work do not register at the Labour Exchange because they know that the chance of finding a new job is hopeless. Taking this into account, we should probably add on another 25 per cent to the official unemployment figures which would place the true August total at nearer 800,000.

The most serious aspect of the present steady growth in the numbers of unemployed is the increasing proportion of those who have been without jobs for more than six months. The Tories (and Labour before them) have attempted to explain this away by saying that workers are 'becoming increasingly choosy about the jobs they take.'

## by John Palmer

This is an insult to all those men who have been told that unless they accept the jobs offered them by their local exchange they will have their unemployment and social security benefit cut off.

It ill becomes the Tories to talk about the idle unemployed. Anyone who has seen the three-hour lunch 'breaks' of the City financiers, the three-month vacations of senior industrialists, and the well-dressed crowds attending the mid-week jamborees at Ascot races or Henley will know that idleness is no stranger to the ruling class.

The only difference is that the unemployed are in enforced idleness and acute hardship.

What hope do the unemployed have of finding new jobs? The answer involves first asking two other questions.

What are the prospects of resumed economic expansion and what chance will the unemployed have of filling any job vacancies which become available when the economy does turn upwards again?

### DELIBERATE

The present level of unemployment can be no surprise to the politicians. They deliberately created it. That has been the most important result of the four-year policy of credit squeeze, high interest rates and increased taxes on consumption.

Both parties have also operated their economic policy on the assumption that they have got to maintain some reserve pool of unemployed

labour in order to hold back wage increases. This part of ruling class strategy has proved a failure in recent years thanks to the militancy and organisation of trade unionists on the shop floor.

Another factor which has encouraged governments to maintain a higher level of unemployment than in the past has been the persistent British balance of payments deficits. The argument here is that by a higher level of unemployment the level of consumption—and so the total import bill—can be controlled.

The trouble is that this policy can also be followed by every other capitalist nation in the same situation. It has been followed in several European countries and above all by the Americans.

The result is that the world market for industrial exports is also growing more slowly. The result is that Britain is back where she started.

Underlying all the international economic problems of the capitalist system and behind the periodic dramas of currency scares and devaluations lies the slow but relentless decline of the imperialist arms economy.

A fairly high level of employment and economic activity has been possible in the past two decades because the military rivalries between the two imperialist power blocs forced a high level of waste production onto the capitalist system.

Waste is waste in any man's dictionary, but in the capitalist dictionary it is a way of maintaining profit levels, investment and economic activity.

The insane logic of the international nuclear arms race now threatens the very basis of capitalist stability. On the one hand fewer jobs are now 'purchased' for every \$ or £ spent on armaments.

But the injection of inflation into the economy is all the greater because the nuclear weapons of today hog a massive and growing proportion of the skilled labour and scarce resources of even the largest capitalist economies.

### UNPLANNED

In the past, capitalism was either in a state of accelerating inflation or in a recession with rising unemployment. Today we get the worst of both worlds. Inflation is a worsening international problem and at the same time there is creeping unemployment.

The crisis is made even worse because of the unplanned nature of our society. Unplanned technological innovation and modernisation is killing the kind of jobs for which people have been trained.

But the educational system is incapable of turning out young people for the jobs which industry will require tomorrow. A frightening proportion of today's unemployed are literally unemployable, not because they are idle or lazy but because capitalism has denied them the work skills necessary to compete for the jobs which are available

### CHAOTIC

The prospect for the next few years is not reassuring. Growth rates have slowed down in the major industrial countries. At the same time balance of payments troubles are leading some countries, notably the United States, to impose import controls and quotas—thus making the international problem worse.

The financial relations between the advanced capitalist countries are as chaotic as ever. The period ahead is likely to see more devaluation and monetary alarms.

The danger is not so much a sudden, dramatic economic slump. This is most unlikely, if only because military spending remains sufficiently massive to provide a floor underneath the capitalist economies.

But there are more and more cracks appearing in the floor. The victims of inflation and rising unemployment will increase.

The economic outlook and the increasing industrial and social conflict it generates raise again the question of the socialist alternative to the insecurity and the misery of capitalism. Working class power must be put back again on the political agenda.

## Road to socialist unity

THE International Socialists have agreed, together with Lutte Ouvriere of France and the International Socialists of the United States, to sponsor an international conference.

The last few years have seen the development in many parts of the world of groups professing to be revolutionary socialists. Revolutionary marxism has begun to escape from the isolation which for many years was imposed on it by both Stalinism and social democracy.

But as yet the impact of revolutionary ideas has only been marginal to the working class and has largely been confined to such groups as students.

The International Socialists are committed to the eventual building of a world revolutionary socialist international. But any international worthy of the name must be able to develop an international political strategy in which the different national sections can feel confidence. This cannot be done by an association of small groups, but only by an international which has sections with real roots in the working class.

For this reason, IS feels that none of the existing 'internationals' in fact function as such and that in present conditions a centralised international cannot yet be created.

Our aims are more modest. There are serious political differences between the three organisations sponsoring the conference, involving our analyses of the Russian regime and of the nature of capitalism in the West.

### IMPORTANCE

What unites the three sponsoring groups, and the other groups we hope will attend the conference, is not adherence to the label of 'Trotskyism' (despite the importance we attach to the thought of Trotsky and the traditions of the Left Opposition) but rather, in theory, the belief that only the working class is able to establish socialism, and in practice, a commitment, within the limits of our resources, to participation in the day-to-day struggles of the working class.

Not that we underestimate the importance of these theoretical differences. On the contrary, we hope that the forthcoming conference will permit us to begin an international debate on the key questions of socialist theory, so that the ideas of all the participating groups can be tested against experience and raised to a higher level.

Moreover, we hope to explore the possibilities of practical co-operation between revolutionaries, for example in helping workers to confront the growing threat of international combines.

These are our aims. We do not intend, at the present time, to establish any centralised or exclusive organisation.

Participation in the conference will not prevent IS from exploring the possibilities of joint action or unity with any other groups, whether in Britain or elsewhere.

The road to revolutionary unity is a long and difficult one, and this conference is just one step along that road.

## COTTONS COLUMN

HERE THEY COME AGAIN—the old Labour 'lefties' who kept quiet for six years while the government attacked the labour movement and who now, from the safety of the opposition benches, can start making radical noises again.

First in the queue is Mrs Judith Hart, number two to Richard Crossman at the pensions ministry in the Labour government. Writing in last week's New Statesman (edited by a certain R Crossman) Mrs Hart sounded off against the harsh prison sentences handed out to the Cambridge students.

Strange, isn't it, that Mrs Hart didn't feel equally obliged when in office to bluntly oppose the government's plans to bring in legal shackles for the trade unions?

Stranger still that Mrs Hart didn't mention that top-level discussions on the Cambridge trial were held while Labour were still in office. The word from Uncle Jim Callaghan's office was to get really tough with the students and send them down for a stiff sentence to deter other 'anarchists' (not you, Lord Stokes, sit down) from demonstrating.

Under the Tories, suggests Judith, it may be a case of 'demonstrate at your peril'. Not a bad slogan, either, for Labour 'lefties' when in office.

Britain, according to the new noble lord, has a 'legal title' to the colony. This is a strange view of 'legality'. Would Greenwood approve if Franco sent a few gunboats to annex the Isle of Wight?

But Greenwood, the one-time colonial secretary, who helped rig the Guyana elections to keep Cheddi Jagan from office, does indeed have a strange view of legality. Perhaps Lord Tony would tell us what happens to Gib when Spain is no longer a police state?

SHIRKERS living on national assistance can feel doubly ashamed as they read this snippet from the Sunday Times and see how hard-working and thrifty members of the ruling class are.

'Grouse shooting is reckoned to be the most expensive sport in Europe, probably in the world. Major Richard Waddington, an acknowledged authority in the field, recommends that a party of 70 is about right for a shooting group of eight guns, accompanied by 35 beaters, three gamekeepers, signallers with red and green flags, loaders, drivers, waiters and other attendants.

'Such a search and destroy operation will, these days, cost around £3000 a week.

Mr Meyjes will be joined by DS Rayner (Marks and Spencer), KF Lane (Rio-Tinto-Zinc), HR Hutton (Hambros Bank) and A Fogg (PA Management Consultants).

And, 'tis rumoured, when things get really tough, Uffa Fox may be called in to keep a hand on Teddy's tiller.

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### Go ape

BUT NOT ALL the old left-wingers are pretending to be diehard socialists. Lord Greenwood, formerly Tumbledown Tony, the housing minister, is upset at the thought that the Tories might soften their attitude to Gibraltar's relationship with Spain.

Writing to The Times last week, Greenwood spoke glowingly of Gibraltar as a 'small democratic bastion in an otherwise anti-democratic Iberian peninsula'. Wonder what Spanish workers living on starvation wages on the Rock think about that?

### Hands off Ted

HAVE YOU JUMPED onto the popular bandwagon of those maligning our prime minister? Have you thought that he was having a somewhat extended holiday in these difficult times?

If so, jump off the bandwagon and think again. Teddy boy has been hard at it, recruiting top industrialists to help advise the government. Apart from the well-publicised Mr Meyjes of Shell, Heath is bringing more big businessmen into the civil service to help give the administration the Right Flavour.



Please send further details of the meetings and activities of the International Socialists to:

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# Socialist Worker

## Official figures explode myth of 'wages explosion'

IN RECENT MONTHS the main theme of ruling class propaganda has been the so-called 'wages explosion' - a new name for an old song. Day after day, the millionaire newspapers tell their readers that wages are getting unreasonably high.

Full press coverage is automatic

by Jim Kincaid

for any prominent capitalist who cares to announce that big business will be on the rocks unless wages are cut and profits rise. True enough, for a favoured few, the tinkle of extra cash is quite resounding. Hospital consultants

have lately had a 20 per cent increase on the £8000-£12,000 a year they make out of the health service. (Most of them double their take by doing private practice as well.)

Top civil servants are now to get up to £2000 a year in extra pay. Chairman of the nationalised industries, it seems, were finding it tough to make ends meet on £17,500 a year. The Tories have come to the rescue with an extra £50 a week.

But for the mass of workers, the wages explosion is a lie. What is really happening over wide sections of British industry is that wages are lagging behind rising prices.

Conclusive evidence comes from a recent report on lower paid workers, issued by Incomes Data Ltd. Out of 126 industrial groups studied (covering three workers out of four) the researchers found that 90 had minimum wage rates of less than £15 a week.

For some jobs, the basic pay would have to go up by over £7 a week to reach the £16 10s which the TUC says should be the national minimum wage.

Currently prices are rising by over 6 per cent a year and the rate of increase is accelerating. Yet wage increases of less than 4 per cent a year are general in a whole range of jobs - for example in baking, the garment trade and for laundry workers, shop workers, pub and hotel workers.

Easily the worst off are workers in the Wage Council industries. More than 3½ million workers have their pay and conditions negotiated through this antiquated system which dates back to the balmy days of 1909.

### Government power

By law, on each of the 57 Wage Councils, the union representatives are heavily outnumbered by the employers and the so-called independent members - lawyers and professors usually. In case this lot get too carried away with generosity, the government has the power to override any pay award recommended by a Wage Council.

It often takes two years - and sometimes more - to get a pay increase through the Wage Council. As an example, canteen workers have been given only one pay increase since July 1965, a beggarly 8 per cent, bringing their basic to £8 16s a week for men.

Workers in the tailoring trade have had 5 per cent since 1966. Currently 350,000 agricultural workers get a basic of £13 3s for a 43 hour week.

Yet the history books will solemnly say that sweated labour is a thing of the past and that it was the invention of the Wage Council system that abolished the sweated trades.

The unions involved should tell the Wage Councils to go jump in the river and start a real fight for a living wage in the low pay industries.

### Speed-up strike goes on

LINWOOD:- Last Friday's meeting of Chrysler's car assembly workers again ended in a unanimous decision: The strike continues until the company guarantees no speed-up.

Chrysler had sent every striker an individual letter the day before the meeting promising that negotiations on wages would start as soon as there was a resumption. It also held out the carrot of six months' guaranteed work and the chance of overtime.

This attempt to blackmail the workers through pressure on their wives and families failed miserably. 'I'm not much use to the wife when I get home now,' said one of the strikers. 'She doesn't want me to kill myself any quicker.'

# 'FIVE DAYS WORK OR FIVE DAYS PAY' - GKN CONVENOR

SW Reporter

5000 workers at the GKN Sankey car-components plant at Wellington, Shropshire, have been on strike for a month. Socialist Worker spoke to the GMWU convenor, Frank Grimley.

### HOW DID the strike begin?

In May 1969 we agreed to the introduction of job evaluation. This was completed in December and in June negotiations on pay for a new grading structure began.

The company wanted to introduce a productivity deal with new grading, method study, and a new piecework system. Their pay offer was much too low and was completely rejected by all the unions concerned.

The shop stewards then demanded a straight, no strings rise to bring the GKN wages into line with the Birmingham and Coventry car workers' earnings.

### SYMPATHY

The management refused absolutely to agree to this. On 10 and 11 August mass meetings were held and the strike started.

Since the strike began, many motor workers have been laid off. What are your feelings about this?

During the past we have been laid off as a result of strikes in other factories. We know what it is like and we have every sympathy for those workers affected. I support the demand of 'five days' work or five days' pay'. We do not feel that these lay-offs, however, should prevent us from fighting for better wages.

The newspapers recently reported that a new offer had been made. At the last mass meeting, however, it was rejected. What was this offer?

On 27 August a meeting was held in London of the National Joint Council for the motor industry. As a result of this an offer of £2 a week was made with a guarantee of a further £4 10s by 1 December. This latter payment would be connected to the productivity deal and would be backdated to 1 August.

### SHOCKED

The following day this offer was accepted by a majority of the joint shop stewards committee. When we told the company of our decision, we were shocked to hear that their London offer had now been withdrawn.

We immediately contacted the national union officials for clarification and finally agreed not to recommend the offer to the mass meeting.

The workers decided overwhelmingly to continue to fight for a substantial pay increase.

How long are you prepared to continue with this strike? Until we win.

### NOTICES

NORTH LONDON Women's IS Group: Sunday 6 September, 8pm. Topic: nurses At 18 Dickinson Rd, N8. All welcome.

LAMBETH IS public meeting: liberation movements in Southern Africa. Spkr: Basker Vachee and Josiah Maluleke, former sec-gen 3 Rhodesia TUC. Friday 11 Sept, 8pm, The Library, Jeffreys Rd, SW4 (nr Stockwell tube).

WANTED: one-bedroom, furnished, pref, self-contained flat for married couple in N London area. Before 12 Sept if poss. Phone Brian Booker 01-985 6304 before 5pm.

WANDSWORTH IS public meeting: public transport. Spkr: Chris Davison. Battersea Library, St Johns Hill, Clapham Junction 8pm Wednesday 8 September.

SWANSEA IS. Trevor James, S Wales NUM organiser, talks on the Triple Alliance. Red Cow pub, 7.30pm Fri 18 September.

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Birmingham Claimants Union members on picket duty

## Welsh metals men out for a month in pay battle

by Jill Branston

SWANSEA:- The strike at the Alcoa (Aluminium Company of America) factory goes into its fourth week with management persisting in its refusal to honour the 1966 agreement to give mates 80 per cent of craftsmen's rates. Reports are circulating that some DATA staff who refused to do craftsmen's work last week have been laid off.

250 maintenance men voted last Friday to continue their strike after the AEF executive had declared it official. The 50 EETU maintenance men striking in solidarity have not yet been given official union backing.

As the wildcat bosses have made no offer to the men and have rushed to lay off most production workers at the plant, the stewards stressed that there is no point in calling in the Department of Employment and Productivity.

The strike must be seen against the background of gradually worsening conditions since 1959 when the American takeover began. ICI, who previously owned the factory, had operated their paternalistic 'profit-sharing' schemes and other fringe benefits.

Now even these crumbs have disappeared. Staff grading schemes have been frozen so some people are still on 1963 rates of pay. One militant described conditions inside the factory since 1959 as '10 years of hell'.

In 1969 the bosses stated that 'a major source of satisfaction' to them had been the fact that tonnage had risen to 100 per cent while costs were declining. Part of these 'declining costs' of course were the men's wages.

As another worker said: 'We had less than 7d rise in the six years up to 1969'. Last year Alcoa bosses creamed \$1000 million from their workers throughout the world and

they no doubt hope to increase the Swansea plant's contribution to profits with the productivity deal at present being pushed through.

As yet none of the 1500 workers at the six other Alcoa plants in Britain have been affected. Pickets are now out at the gates here.

The strikers urgently need financial help, especially since the bosses chose to break off negotiations and provoke a strike straight after the men's summer holidays.

Donations and messages to: Brother H W Jenvey, 55 Mynydd-Newydd Road, Caereithin, Swansea, Glam.

BIRMINGHAM:- A High Court writ against the Birmingham Supplementary Benefit Appeal Tribunal is to be taken out using the legal aid system.

By this move the Birmingham Claimants Union - the two year old 'trade union' of social security claimants (unsupported mothers, unemployed, sick, disabled, pensioners, etc.) hope to force the Tribunal to admit its representatives.

The dispute started in December 1969 when without warning the Tribunal refused to allow the union representative to take in an assistant - thus preventing the training of members in tribunal skills and the taking of records. This action followed the BCU's charges of 'bias and incompetence' against the Tribunal.

'For six months we have adjourned every hearing at the door,' said Claimants Union spokesman Mrs Ann Molloy, mother of eight. 'We have fought it through all channels and frequently picketed the Tribunal. Now it remains to take a writ, using legal aid since we can't afford anything else.'

'Our legal advisers think we can win. This will be an historic step in our battle for recognition. Everywhere the NAB is trying to block the growth of Claimants Unions, sometimes violently. In Birmingham alone we have won thousands of pounds and they don't like it.'

## Clyde shipyard workers say no to sackings

by Peter Bain

GLASGOW:- Shop stewards representing 4000 finishing trades workers at Upper Clyde Shipbuilders have threatened all-out strike action if one man is paid off by Friday (4 September).

The men involved - mainly joiners, painters, electricians and engineers - have seen hundreds of their workmates leave the yards since UCS announced 3000 redundancies in March.

The company intended to complete its redundancy plans by the end of August. But it found that even after 'natural wastage' and voluntary redundancy (with a £1000 tax-free bonus) it still had 1100 more workers than required.

UCS now plans to sack 3000 men from John Brown's yard, followed by 600 from Fairfield's.

Fairfield's convenor Jimmy Airlie, making the strike statement on behalf of the stewards, said that UCS workers had retreated far enough and a stand had to be made. AEF and EETU officials who have been negotiating with the company since March, publicly dissociated themselves from the stewards' strike threat.

The finishing trades' statement follows the boilermakers' refusal to accept even voluntary redundancy. Originally, 700 boilermakers were to be sacked but, with 'natural wastage' and re-deployment, this number has been reduced to 100. The union has said that any member who volun-

teers for redundancy will be disciplined.

The workers' resistance to pay-offs has been stiffened by the employment situation in the West of Scotland. The male unemployment rate in Glasgow in August was 7.5 per cent, including almost 6000 building workers in one of the worst-housed cities in Europe.

While unemployment has always been opposed in words by trade unionists, the scale and scope of the present redundancies looks like provoking sections of workers into action. Such is the rate of technological change and the proliferation of industrial mergers and takeovers that no worker can feel secure.

As Jimmy Airlie said this week: 'The labour movement must be mobilised to demand the right to work.'