



WORKERS MUTUAL AID

FULLTIME UNION MEN
PROMISES
THE HISTORY OF THE 20TH CENTURY
HOUSING SHORTAGES
SOCIAL CREDIT
WAR GAMES
HONOURS LISTS
H.P. SAUCE
DEFENCE BUDGETS
TUC
COMMUNISM
FASCISM
C.I.R.
NEDDIES
BOSSSES
SHEPHERDS
PATRIARCHS
LIBERAL REFORMS
PIE IN THE SKY
COPS & ROBBERS
MONOPOLY DEMOCRATS
BLACK LEGS
ECONOMIC CRISIS
PATRIOTISM
LENINISM
CAPITALISM
UNEMPLOYMENT
MONDAY
LANDLORDS
NATIONALISATION
P.O.W.
P.I.B.
CLUB
REFORMS
C.B.I.
PROMISES
MORE PROMISES
POWELLISM

LIBERALS
MAOISTS
TAXES

TORIES
TROTSKYTES
BUREAUCRACY
POLITICIANS
LABOUR
WAGE FREEZES
RACISM

WORKERS MUTUAL AID was started at a meeting of London workers—mainly builders, printers and engineers—in October, 1968.

The objects are:

1. To advise that no trust be placed in politicians and political parties, and to encourage independent action by workers themselves to secure control of their own lives.

2. To give help to all who fight for

better wages and working conditions

shorter hours and less hard work more free time

Membership is open to all who agree with these objects

This pamphlet sets out in more detail why we think **Workers Mutual Aid** is so necessary today.

Where the terms 'working class' 'working people' etc., are used, they denote the worker by hand or brain, their wives and families, apprentices and students, etc.

Why Workers Mutual Aid?

'You can fool some of the people some of the time ...'

'Labour Government works' they told us. It certainly does—it works for the rich, for the bankers, for the employers, and of course for the parliamentary parasites who voted themselves a whacking great wage increase as soon as they took office. But for the rest of us, for the millions of working men and women who keep the country going, everything that affects our lives has been getting steadily worse.

Thousands are homeless and many more are forced to live in property that should have been pulled down years ago. The social services are decaying and the plight of the old is a scandal.

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Wages are frozen—but not prices, which rise each time the Chancellor opens his mouth. Taxation cuts a great hole in every wage packet. Unemployment is growing—factories are being closed down by 'mergers' for bigger profit, even whole industries are being destroyed bringing near destitution to entire communities. Speed-up is throwing men on the scrap heap while making the rest work harder, faster and longer.

But it's only temporary, say the politicians. All will be well when we 'get the economy right', or 'pay our way', or 'get a strong pound', or 'increase production', or some other bloody gibberish. Meanwhile, we are told on all sides to work hard, don't complain and perhaps Mrs. Castle will let us have a few shillings a week increase . . . next year or the year after.

Danger looms

Nobody is taken in any more by these Government lies—but equally nobody can see a way out. So, as the misery of the people increases, tension and frustration mount. There is a ready made scapegoat in our midst (mostly even poorer and more exploited than we are ourselves) the black immigrant. The danger now looming is that the anger of the people will be deflected from the real cause of their suffering on to the heads of a defenceless minority. It has happened in history time and time again.

Yet long before the black immigrant came to Britain, the working class lived in terrible poverty—far worse in fact than that experienced today.

What caused it then? The working class has always suffered. It is an inevitable consequence of the profit-making system we live under. The politicians hope to blind us to this fact by setting worker against worker, white against black, cynically exploiting the frustration of the people in order to maintain their own power. Enoch Powell is a reactionary Tory who excels at this game.

If people are homeless, if rents are too high and wages too low, if some have long hours of work while others are unemployed, it's not because there are any real shortages, it's not

because the black man has come here looking for work—it's simply and solely because those who run our society do so for their own private profit and not for the well-being of ordinary people.

The housing shortage could be solved within a couple of years. There is plenty of land (in private ownership of course)—there are enough bricks, building materials and building workers. But cheap rent, high standard housing is not PROFITABLE so thousands continue to rot in slums.

As for unemployment, if we were not forever committed to this lunatic trade war with other countries—if instead production were geared to making what people need when they need it—what factory would ever close? What worker couldn't do with a new fridge or a new carpet every five or six years—indeed how many thousands of workers do not possess these things at all—let alone replacements for them?

There could be abundance for everybody. As a matter of fact, it is perfectly possible right here and now for every human being in the world to have good food, decent housing and a life free from back-breaking toil. The material resources are there, and modern machines (though at present used to put men out of work) could eliminate physical and mental drudgery and cut the working week by half.

This is what we COULD have, but what we DO have is an inhuman rat race. The politicians try to keep the facts from us, but people are beginning to see through the political tricksters. There is a widespread disgust with politics and politicians, and it is out of this disgust that **MUTUAL AID** was born.

The good life—with time to think, to learn, to create, and to enjoy life to the full—is now possible for everyone, not just for the favoured few. But we shall never get it by asking some government or other to achieve it for us. We will only get it if we organise to take it.

Under all governments—of whatever kind—it is we, the working people, who produce the goods—but WHAT is produced and for what purpose, HOW it is produced, and WHO gets it are decisions made by others.

Workers Mutual Aid wants to see this situation changed. Those who produce should make the decisions—and when they do we are confident that, instead of producing armaments, poison gas, rockets, and expensive gadgetry, they will decide to feed the hungry, house the homeless, and make the life of mankind a happier and fuller thing than it is today.

Is Mutual Aid a new political party?

'What IS a politician?'

Workers Mutual Aid is not a new political party and doesn't want to become one. It is opposed to ALL political parties because they all want to command the workers, they all teach acceptance of authority, they all preach that decision-making must be left to 'leaders'.

By setting themselves up as 'leaders' the political parties reinforce the greatest weakness of the working class—their belief that they themselves are somehow unfitted to run society. Asking others to do for you what can only be done by yourself is our greatest mistake—and on this mistake all the political parties flourish.

Vote for us, they say, and we will

give you the earth! But, as we all know to our cost, what they actually give us is just another government, another bunch of parasites to order us around and push us about.

Since the war we have had a succession of 'Labour' governments but nothing has changed for working people in any fundamental way. We still have to set the alarm clocks every night to ensure that we are on time in the morning to spend another day making profit for the boss or the state.

Once it embodied the hopes of millions for a better life, now Labour is hated and despised by millions who helped it into office. It is seen to be

the miserable servant of big business, a wretched caricature of what the people had hoped it would become. But all parties are the same. If we trust them and give them power over our lives, they will use that power for themselves—never for us.

In our opinion, workers don't need political parties. We don't need 'directing' or 'leading'. What we need is confidence in our own ability to make an end of the system which exploits us—and that will come from ACTION undertaken by ourselves based on co-operation, solidarity and the practice of mutual aid. It will never come from trusting politicians.

The name doesn't matter

Most people will now agree that Labour is a complete fraud but would the 'revolutionary' parties be any better? Russia, China and Eastern Europe show that they won't.

Russia had a revolution all right and it was ordinary workers and peasants who did all the fighting and eventually overthrew the old rulers. But they didn't believe that they could by themselves run and organise society, so most of them left it to the Communist Party to do the job for them.

A Communist government has ruled Russia ever since, for more than fifty years, but the Russian workers still have no say in the actual running of their country and their lives. Instead of being exploited by lots of little bosses they are now exploited by one big boss, the almighty Russian State, one of the most dictatorial regimes in the world today.

The British Communist Party advocates this kind of 'communism' for Britain—and that surely is all that need be said about them. They should be ignored by anyone who wants to build a free society without exploitation.

There have always been, and there always will be, people who work harder than others for the cause of freedom and justice. In the past, they have been attracted to the various parties of the left where their energy and devotion has been horribly misused and wasted. **Workers Mutual Aid** offers the chance for such people to *encourage* the initiative of their fellow workers instead of *crushing* it by setting themselves up as 'leaders'.

Is Workers Mutual Aid a new Trade Union?

'From Tolpuddle to the House of Lords'

Workers Mutual Aid is not a trade union. In the first place, membership is open to ALL who accept its objects whereas a trade union is, by definition, limited to trades and has sectional interests which often conflict with the interests of other workers. But more important, trade unions *accept* the present system and merely try (not very successfully) to improve the wages and conditions of their members within it. **Workers Mutual Aid** wants to destroy the system altogether.

Everyone knows that most trade unions today are bureaucratic institutions where the tendency is for the leaders to become permanent and

irremovable. Decisions are handed down from the top. The members are asked to do little except pay their dues—which most of them do with as little enthusiasm as they pay their national insurance.

Right now the unions are under the political control of the Labour politicians—which is why they faithfully carry out the policies of the Labour Government, even though these policies blatantly conflict with the interests of their members.

They accept and operate the Prices and Incomes Policy which freezes wages in the interests of the profit-makers. They go along with mergers

and closures, and even agree to the sacking of trade unionists in the cause of what they call 'greater productivity in the national interest'.

In return for all this service to the government, the top of the trade union movement is adorned with peerages and knighthoods. They mix with the 'top' people, get well-paid seats on Government Boards and Nationalised industries, and even meet with the Prime Minister on all 'important matters'. But for the poor bloody rank and file these people are supposed to represent, there is just the wage freeze and growing unemployment.

Mrs. Castle's White Paper on 'reforming the trade unions' is an attempt to give legal force to what the Trade Unions, in the main, have already become in practice . . . **state organisations with the leaders acting as the jailers of the workers.**

The Chief Jailer is to be George Woodcock, secretary of the TUC, who now becomes the Chairman of the 'Commission on Industrial Relations' at a reputed salary of £15,000 a year. His two principal assistants are (according to press reports) likely to be Will Paynter, the communist ex-secretary of the Mineworkers Union, and Leslie Blakeman, the Personnel Director of the mighty Ford Motor Company. What a trio! Labour, Tory and Communist united in hounding the militants and battering them over the head with statutory powers.

The Castle plan is the Slave-owners' Charter. If it ever becomes law those workers who won't go along with the system will be hammered unmercifully. They can be dragged into the Courts, fined—and then made to pay the fines out of their wages. *Slavery is the only possible word for it.*

Mutual Aid members don't want to take over the unions. We are not office seekers for the same reasons as we are not politicians. We want to act WITH people not FOR them. *That is basic to Mutual Aid.* But nobody is going to stop us from practising what we preach.

We shall try to stop modern technology casting men on the scrap heap—automation must make ALL our lives easier, not increase the dole queues. We won't go in for 'productivity' deals that get some men a few bob extra by putting others out of a job. We won't stand for wage-freezing and, above all, we shall defend anyone who has the guts to take action in defence of the workers' interests.

If there are enough **Mutual Aid** members in the unions they might well change from the docile institutions that they are at present into real instruments of the workers' struggle. If that happens it must be good, but if the change is resisted by the men of the apparatus, then other organisations will arise to take their place. Those organisations will, we are sure, be based on the principles of mutual aid.

What Workers Mutual Aid can do

*'Petitioning and appealing is for
beggars'*

Our present society is characterised above all by the government dishing out a constant stream of orders on all manner of things which affect our everyday lives—taxes, housing, social security, wages, even whether we should get up when it's dark or when it's light. People accept this situation because they can see no alternative. **Workers Mutual Aid proposes that we dig in our heels and fight back.**

Our idea is very simple. One man on his own is helpless—but there are millions of us. We are the people who really count, the millions who produce all the wealth but don't get it. If we act together we CAN change things. We have the strength—all we

lack is the will to do it.

*It is not sufficient reason to do some-
thing because some government says
you must. Question, oppose, resist!*

On bad housing, homelessness, evictions, means-testing, wage freezing, down to what time our children should go to school. When an issue arises, all members of **Mutual Aid** in the district concerned can quickly come together and decide on what ACTION to take. End once and for all this unquestioning acceptance of orders from above. There is boundless initiative, intelligence and courage

among the people—it only needs to be released.

We want to surround this miserable fraud of a government (and any other government that might take its place) with an army of active, determined and angry people. It will transform the situation. We want to see a network of **Mutual Aid** members all over the country—the more there are the more effective it can be. The politicians will do nothing but talk. We have to do the job ourselves—TOGETHER.

We believe that **Mutual Aid** is the best way to organise our forces to win a better life right here and now, because it encourages initiative and builds confidence in our own strength. Eventually, we are sure, working men and women will take control of society out of the hands of the big corporations and the State and run it themselves democratically, by agreement and without coercion of any kind—that is, on the principles of mutual aid. There is no other way to create a decent, humane, co-operative and non-exploitive society.

It is not the job of this pamphlet to outline a blueprint of the future society. It can't be done anyway because only the actions of millions will determine what forms that society will take. But whenever men have tried to organise their own lives free from coercion and repression—and they have tried many, many times in many countries—they have always created societies which have similar features. It will be so again.

For instance: society will be equalitarian, the dog-eat-dog principle will be abolished. *All* men will have the absolute right to live at the highest level that society can provide. At this stage, when money still exists, that will mean *equality of wages*. Naturally, the present income derived from exploiting labour—rent, interest and profit—will be ended, but so also will the ridiculous differences in wages between, say, a journalist or an advertising writer on the one hand and a sewerman or a farm labourer on the other. Status-seeking through wage differentials is part of competitive society and won't be tolerated.

Decision-making must be in the hands of the workers themselves. It must be popular and democratic and that means that the new society must be organised on a more human scale—smaller communities, possessing all the benefits of modern technology (and that is entirely possible today) must replace the present living nightmares of our big cities. Not only will this reduce the strain, the tension that comes from living in overcrowded, noisy cities but—even more important—it will allow of democratic decision-making on a face-to-face basis.

What you == can do

There will be plenty of problems and we shall devote further pamphlets to discussing some of them in the future.

Mutual Aid members will have their own ideas on many of these problems and they will express them. But all of us are agreed on certain principles and they can be summed up in one short phrase: *We are against all political parties—We are for Workers Mutual Aid.*

We want to build from the bottom, without 'leaders', relying on the initiative of the working class. If you would like to join us, fill in the form printed at the back of this pamphlet.

Workers Mutual Aid

APPLICATION FORM

I agree with the objects of **Workers Mutual Aid** and will do all that I can to further these objects at my place of work.

I enclose 2/6 for a membership card.

Name

Address

Industry employed in

Please return this form together with 2/6 to:

or direct to:
THE HONORARY TREASURER
Fred Emmett
35 Micheldever Road
London SE12

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