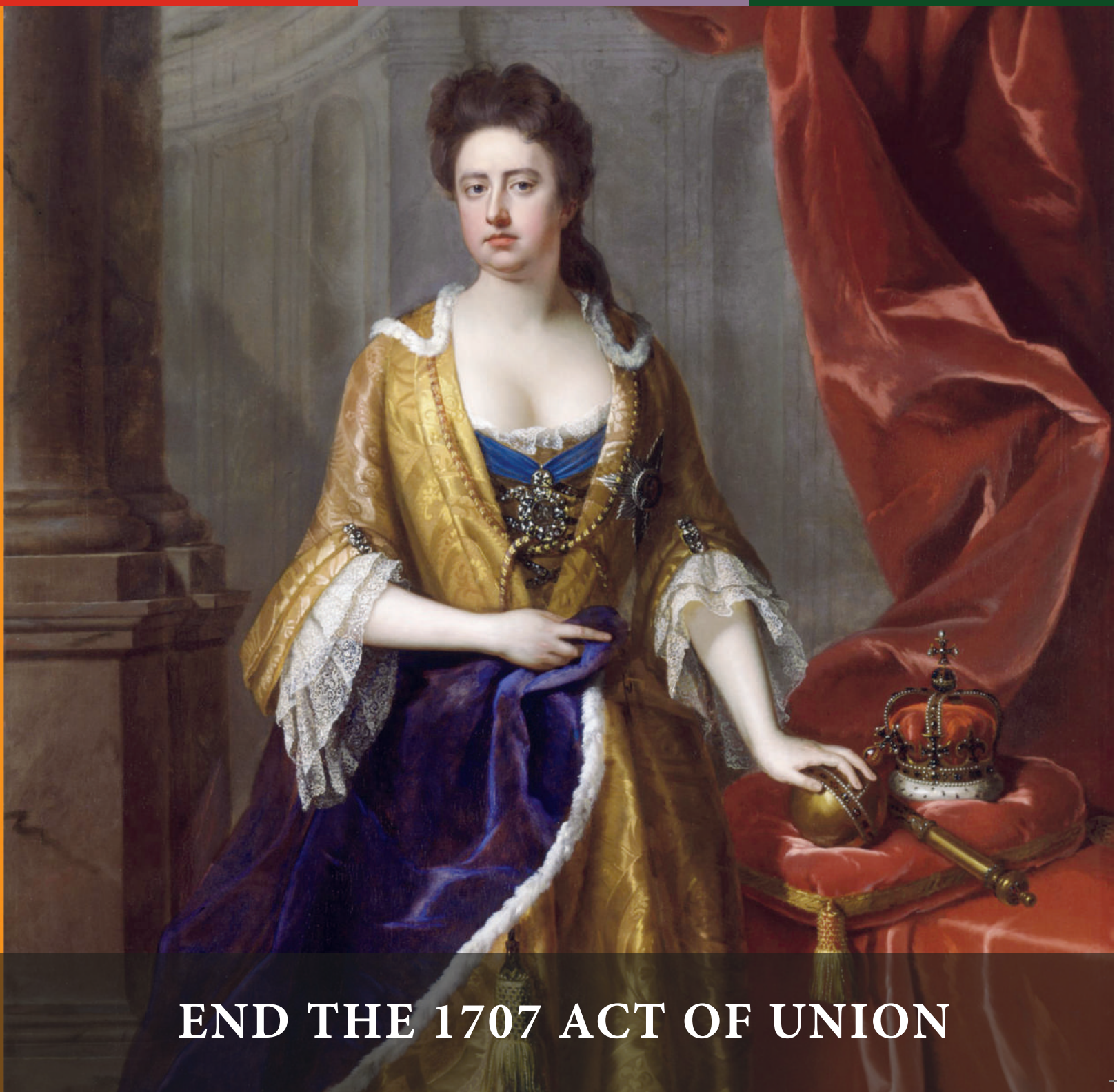


SCOTTISH REFERENDUM

*The Crown versus the People
England's case for voting 'Yes'*



END THE 1707 ACT OF UNION

The picture on the cover is Queen Anne who forced through the 1707 Act of Union to secure the Protestant succession and found the British state and continue the century of wars that built Britain as a world Empire.

This pamphlet is a summary of arguments used over the summer of 2014 in the run up to the Scottish referendum. The context was the attempt by Left Unity members to persuade the new party, launched in response to an appeal by socialist film-maker Ken Loach, to support a yes vote. When the pro-yes position narrowly lost at conference a few comrades set up the 'Scottish Republic Yes Tendency' (SRYT).

The tendency was in favour of Scotland becoming a fully sovereign republic. This was not on offer in the referendum, but we believed that a yes majority vote which create conditions in which a Scottish republic would become a real possibility.

Hence the SRYT campaigned for a yes vote as a democratic advance for Scotland, and by example as an encouragement for greater democracy in the rest of the UK.

Our immediate aim was to try to persuade Left Unity to abandon its neutral position in the referendum and build links with the Radical Independence Campaign in Scotland. Unfortunately Left Unity remained strictly neutral throughout the campaign.

The case in this pamphlet was made briefly at the "London Says Yes" rally on September 6th which is the cut off date for publication. Events are moving rapidly. We wait to see what the Scottish people decide.

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INTRODUCTION

On 18 September people living in Scotland will be able to vote for or against the Union with the rest of the UK. If Scotland votes 'yes' the country will begin a process of constitutional change to establish a 'Free State' or 'Independence under the Crown' and negotiate with the UK government over the distribution of assets and debts. The case for Scotland to vote 'yes' is being thrashed out in homes, workplaces, schools, universities, pubs and clubs. Whilst Scotland has the right to decide, the outcome will affect people in the rest of the UK. The aim here is to make a people's case as to why a 'yes' vote is in the interests of people in England and the general interests of democracy.

The United Kingdom is a constitutional monarchy. Politics revolves around the inter-relations between the Crown, Parliament and People. The national question involves a struggle to re-arrange these relations. Behind all the parties and leaders taking part in the campaign is an underlying conflict between the Crown and the People. On one side of the dispute is the British Crown and on the other side is a section of the Scottish people. At the time of writing an opinion poll published in *The Times* recorded the first narrow majority of Scottish people in favour of yes.

THE CASE FOR THE CROWN

Our United Kingdom

In February 2014 David Cameron went to the Olympic Park in East London to deliver an appeal to the country (1). The venue was carefully chosen to appeal to British patriotism. Here Scottish cyclist, Sir Chris Hoy, had won Olympic gold which Cameron claimed “was the perfect example of ‘the power of collaboration’ between the two nations”. The spirit of Team GB was conjured up to fight the Scottish nationalists. He says “for me the best thing about the Olympics wasn’t the winning. It was the red, the white, the blue. It was the summer that patriotism came out of the shadows and into the sun”.

Collaboration between England and Scotland and the cheering and Union Jack waving is now in danger. Cameron says “Centuries of history hang in the balance; a question mark hangs over the future of our United Kingdom. If people vote yes in September, then Scotland will become an independent country. There will be no going back”. He does not dwell on who owns “Our” United Kingdom. This is best avoided. But he is right - “centuries of history”, since the Act of Union in 1707, are on the line.

“My argument today”, he continues, “is that while only four million people can vote in this referendum, all sixty three million of us are profoundly affected. ... who could wake up on September 19th in a different country, with a different future ahead of it. That’s why this speech is addressed not so much to the people of Scotland, but to the people of England, Wales and Northern Ireland”.

This is one of his most important points he makes. The democratic principle of self determination means only the votes of people living in Scotland will count. The referendum is not based on ethnicity. Scottish people settled in England cannot vote. Migrants from England, Pakistan or Poland can. But in appealing to “the sixty three million of us” he is talking first to his own class. He speaks for the rich but never about them. What is good for them is by extension good for all. He is right that opinions in the rest of the country count. But our interests in the outcome are quite different from Cameron’s wealthy backers.

There is an important truth here, whether from the perspective of the rich or from the position of the working class and the poor. Scotland’s future is not a Scottish question.

It is a class issue. Class knows no borders, even though democracy and sovereignty is defined by them. It is right that 'citizens' living in Scotland vote on the democratic issues but it is right the whole matter is examined from an international class point of view. Since 'England' may be presented as the villain of the peace it is vital that there is a class point of view from England, and of course Ireland and Wales.

Cameron identifies three broad views on the referendum in the rest of the UK. First are passive Unionists – he calls them “the ‘quiet patriots’: people who love the UK, love our flag and our history - but think there’s nothing much they can do to encourage Scotland to stay in the UK”. Second are those who are indifferent or neutral - “the ‘shoulder shruggers’: people who are ambivalent about the outcome, who think this doesn’t matter much to anyone south of the border. Their view is that if Scotland left the UK then yes, that would be sad, but we could just wave them a wistful goodbye and carry on as normal”.

Thirdly are “a few - who think we’d be better off if Scotland did leave the UK, that this marriage of nations has run its course and needs a divorce.” This is true. Like the monarchy the British Union is historically obsolete. If Scotland does not leave in September it is only a matter of time before the end. A longer drawn out divorce is likely to degenerate into something nasty. Better a quick, peaceful and speedy divorce. But the words “think we’d be better off” are ambiguous. It might suggest the case for divorce is about economic advantage. It is not. It is about the advantages of greater democracy.

The rich will be worse off. If there is a 'yes' vote, share prices will fall when the result is announced. Of course the speculators are watching the opinion polls and pricing-in the likely result. Nevertheless the actual result will still affect share prices. Big money will be in the doldrums until their plan B kicks in. The working class will not be better off unless they take advantage of the new freedom which divorce offers. This means building stronger workers organizations across Europe, including greater co-operation within these islands.

Cameron sets out the purpose of his speech. “Today I want to take on all these views: the idea we’d be better off without Scotland, the idea that this makes no difference to the rest of the UK and the idea that however much we might care, we in England, Wales and Northern Ireland can have no voice in this debate because we don’t have a vote. All the above are wrong. We would be deeply diminished without Scotland. This matters to all our futures. And everyone in the UK can have a voice in this debate”. He then sets out four major points as to why rich Tories think “the United Kingdom is stronger with Scotland in it” .

The Common Market

The 1707 Act of Union created the legal framework for a common market. Cameron says “over three centuries we’ve lived together, worked together – and frankly we’ve got together getting married, having children, moving back and forwards across borders”. He gives examples of free trade and the free movement of people. “Today 800,000 Scots live elsewhere in the UK and more than 400,000 people who were born in the rest of the UK now live in Scotland. And there are millions of people who do business over the border every single day, like the farmers in Lincolnshire who grow some of the barley that’s used in Scotch whisky”.

He summarizes by saying “The United Kingdom is an intricate tapestry, millions of relationships woven tight over more than three centuries”. “When the Acts of Union were passed, the role of the state was limited to things like defence, taxes and property rights. Since then the state has transformed beyond recognition and our institutions have grown together like the roots of great trees, fusing together under the foundations of our daily lives. You don’t need a customs check when you travel over the border, you don’t have to get your passport out at Carlisle, you don’t have to deal with totally different tax systems and regulations when you trade and you don’t have to trade in different currencies”.

However he fails to mention the international aspects so important in drawing up the balance sheet. First is the British Empire. After 1707 the British Union became the British Empire expanding across the globe. The UK made immense profits from natural resources, land, slaves, trade, taxes and investments in the colonies. But this wealth had a terrible cost in war and human suffering. In the 20th century the UK fought two devastating world wars to defend its Empire. In the end Britain’s colonial empire was dismantled. The ‘success’ of the British Union was not mainly due to the internal market.

The dark shadow of the Empire has become the curse of the City of London. The British Empire bequeathed the UK with an overwhelming domination of financial interests. Money was the real winner. The British Crown bailed out its overboated parasites such as the Royal Bank of Scotland. But the people are being forced to pay for this in public sectors cuts, tax increases and the policy of Government led and Bank of England promoted inflation. The Scottish people are paying a share of these debts even though it is not their Royal Bank. Scotland needs publicly owned and democratically accountable banks. They will not get this by remaining in the British Union.

There is another aspect of the post-imperial British Union. In 1977 the UK joined the Common Market. Today the European Union has over five hundred million people. The case for the British common market created in 1707 has been overtaken by global events. Today the European Union outguns the British Union as a free market by a factor of ten. The EU has superseded the British Union. The case for the British free market is not merely dying. It is dead. It needs a speedy burial. Scotland needs to break free from the outdated and increasingly anachronistic “institutional framework of the UK”. Cameron’s economic case is not much more than conservative nostalgia for a past life.

Stability And Prosperity

The second reason Cameron gives is prosperity. This is not, he argues, about the narrow issues of tax, spend and debt and “how it gets split between our four nations”. This “completely misses the bigger picture”. Look up for a minute and see the driving forces of capitalist globalization. He says “this is a world that has been through massive economic storms where economic competition is heating up as never before, where we have to work harder than ever just to make a living”. Profit, competition and economic crisis are the rules of the game. Workers “have to work harder” and of course faster just to survive. In this dangerous and uncertain world “we are quite simply stronger as a bigger entity”.

The idea that ‘economic size’ gives workers protection is simply untrue. Of course ‘economic size’ measured by Gross Domestic Product is a proxy for the bargaining power of the capitalist rulers of the USA, China or Japan in their negotiations with rivals. But it does nothing to protect the working class from exploitation. In the last thirty years economies have grown ever larger whilst workers’ protections have shrunk. Cameron says “An open economy of sixty three million people is hugely attractive for investors”. The words “sixty three million” and “open economy” are Tory code for more sales and profits for British capital and less protection for workers.

Sixty three million consumers are peanuts in a world dominated by the US multinationals and the huge emerging markets in China and India. The European Union, a single market with five hundred and three million people, is the future for Scotland whether as capitalist or socialist. However it is not size but lack of protection that helps explain the UK’s low and shrinking real wages. In triumph Cameron says “Last year we were the

top destination for foreign direct investment in Europe. That is a stamp of approval on our stability”.

“Stability” is little more than the empty boasting of a rich and powerful politician before disaster strikes. The UK is attractive because it is a low wage economy now experiencing a government engineered pre-election boom. This won’t last beyond the next election. Boom leads to bust as surely as night follows day. Growing poverty is unstable. At some point workers will take action to stop their declining living standards. Foreign investment will leave as fast as it has arrived. The UK is structurally more unstable than ever.

Yet politically it seems stable because it has a strong state and weak democracy. Far too much power is concentrated in the hands of the Crown. This has enabled the Tories to impose declining real incomes on working people, whilst piles of cash are building up for the rich in UK tax havens. Cameron does not want us to “jeopardise all of this” by voting ‘yes’. Two referenda indicate declining political stability. There is a growing dissatisfaction with UK politics. In Europe, the position of the UK is uncertain. In Scotland significant sections of the people want to leave the UK. Instability now threatens the present system of distributing income from the poor to the rich.

Stability doesn’t pay the bills. So Cameron knows he has to talk about prosperity. Any case based on present prosperity won’t wash. So he says “let me be clear: The central part of my economic argument for the UK is not about what we’d lose if we pulled apart – but what we could gain in this world if we stay together. This government has set out a long-term economic plan for Britain: getting behind enterprise, dealing with our debts, a plan to give the people of this country peace of mind and security for the future. And this isn’t just a plan, it’s a vision”. The message is about jam tomorrow not today.

Hence Cameron claims the future under the Tories looks bright! The UK is “the big European success story of this century moving from an island sinking under too much debt, too much borrowing and too much taxation to a country that’s dynamic, exporting, innovating, creating”. And of course “Scotland is right at the heart of that vision”. “Why?” he asks. Because Scotland has strengths – “their historic universities like Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Glasgow and St. Andrews; great industries: from food processing to financial services, from ship-building to science”. But these can prosper in the European Union with five hundred million people without the damage inflicted by Tory policies.

So what does the British Union have which the EU does not? It has a Tory government determined to impose free market economic policies. Cameron’s rich friends depend on

this continuing after 2015. But he claims the secret of British success is in the “the power of collaboration”. He says “Together we’re stronger at getting out there and selling our products to the world”. His example is Scotch whisky which “adds £135 to the UK’s balance of payments every single second”. So “whether I’m in India or China, there’s barely a meeting where I don’t bang the drum for whisky abroad”. Perhaps Cameron likes a wee dram but it is hard to believe that the Union is needed because English politicians are better at selling whisky to Asia.

Normally the Tories wax lyrical about competition and profit. But now faced with danger they have discovered the “power of collaboration” or “co-operation” as socialists might say. It is not in Scotland’s interests to collaborate only or primarily with England and vice versa. Why should it be presumed that the Scottish working class would be best served by limiting co-operation to the British TUC? Since the German working class is the most productive, with relatively strong trade unions, then more effort should be directed to the German and wider European trade union movement. Voting ‘yes’ offers the Scottish people new wider opportunities for international co-operation.

Global Power

Conservatives support the status quo. Devolution, which the Tories opposed, has given Scotland “the space to take decisions, while still having the security that comes with being part of something bigger. From Holyrood they can decide what happens in every hospital, school and police station in Scotland and in the UK, Scotland is part of a major global player”. The key words are “security”, “something bigger” and “major global player”. A yes vote will damage Britain’s position as a world power on which the profits of the banking, finance, energy and armaments industries depend.

This is Cameron’s third reason. “We’re stronger together is our place in the world. Together, we get a seat at the UN Security Council, real clout in NATO and Europe, the prestige to host events like the G8. Together we’ve got the finest armed forces on the planet”. He speaks of the importance of the Scottish component in UK military prowess and the consequence for the British war machine in terms of jobs - in shipbuilding on the Forth and Clyde and in armaments industries.

The message is that British militarism keeps us safe. He says “now to some, all this might sound like national vanity. It’s the view that if the UK split up and our role in the

world shrank, it wouldn't matter so much". Indeed it would be one of the positive benefits of a 'yes' vote. Instead of providing the cannon and fodder for the UK military machine in Ireland, the Falklands/Malvinas, Afghanistan and Iraq at huge cost in blood and money, an independent Scotland would have to find a different role in the world.

Cameron is clear "we matter more as a United Kingdom – politically, militarily, diplomatically – and culturally too. Our reach is about much more than military might – it's about our music, film, TV, fashion. ..The UK is the soft power super power". For a rich man art can be a commodity and a means of storing wealth. But for an imperialist it is "soft power", one of the many ways to influence and dominate. This is the mind-set not just of Cameron but of all who rule the country and wish to project their superiority to the world.

The preservation of the UK's imperial power and influence is a major reason to vote 'no'. He warns "If we lost Scotland, if the UK changed, we would rip the rug from under our own reputation. The plain fact is we matter more in the world together". So why does the UK "matter"? Since the Act of Union, the UK has built up a fearful reputation for military prowess and war. Three hundred years of intermittent warfare from the days when the Royal Navy ruled the seas, to the 'necessity' for Trident nuclear weapons systems today. Voting 'yes' won't end this but it would be a turning point not least because as Cameron says "we would rip the rug from under our own reputation".

Patriot Games - Liberty And Freedom

Patriotism is a different creed for someone like Cameron born into the English upper classes and educated at Eton. The UK might easily seem like a socialist paradise where everybody is free to enjoy the fruits of society's co-operative endeavours. His speech was described as "a passionate appeal" to keep the Great Society on track. He says "Our great United Kingdom: brave, brilliant, buccaneering, generous, tolerant, and proud". He adds, "this is our country", perhaps in recognition that the upper classes own most of it. Socialism for the rich is well worth defending.

Cameron adds, tongue in cheek, "And we built it together. Brick by brick, Scotland, England, Wales, Northern Ireland. Brick by brick. This is our home – and I could not bear to see that home torn apart". Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel, declared Samuel Johnson. Scoundrels may own the country but they sure as hell didn't build it.

It was built by working people for a pittance while their lords and masters grew rich. No wonder Cameron says “I love this country. I love the United Kingdom and all it stands for. And I will fight with all I have to keep us together. And so I want to be clear to everyone listening. There can be no complacency about the result of this referendum. The outcome is still up in the air”

Cameron appeals to universal values such as “Freedom, Solidarity, Compassion” and “Democracy” which for Cameron are inseparable from the UK. These values are found in “how we started our NHS, our welfare system, our state pension system”. All this came about despite ferocious resistance from the upper classes. The present Tory government is continuing the tradition by dismantling the welfare state in the name of freedom, solidarity, compassion and democracy.

Cameron quotes Nelson Mandela’s 1964 speech from the dock at his trial in Pretoria. Mandela said: “I have great respect for British political institutions....I regard the British Parliament as the most democratic institution in the world”. What a terrible mistake. Yet in context it is quite understandable. Fifty years ago Mandela was on trial for his life. He defended himself by contrasting the racist Apartheid regime with an idealised view of the mother of parliaments, perhaps a view common among liberal English South Africans to whom he appealed. As a life saver it worked but as a verdict on British democracy it was somewhat flawed.

Democracy goes to the heart of the referendum. The British Parliament is not the most democratic institution in the world. It has no effective control over the Crown. The Westminster parliament failed to represent the people over the Iraq war, the privatization of NHS services, and the defence of civil liberties. A ‘yes’ vote will explode the myth of great British parliamentary democracy, assiduously promoted by Cameron and the Tories. It will kick start the process of extending democracy in Scotland and convincing the rest of the UK to follow suit.

Cameron concludes with an appeal to defend the British Union. He says “So to everyone in England, Wales and Northern Ireland everyone, like me, who cares about the United Kingdom I want to say this: you don’t have a vote, but you do have a voice. Those voting are our friends, neighbours and family. You do have an influence”. Therefore he urged people to “Get on the phone, get together, email, tweet, speak. Let the message ring out from Manchester to Motherwell, from Pembrokeshire to Perth, from Belfast to Bute, from us to the people of Scotland – let the message be this: We want you to stay”.

Scotland is staying on the same island as the rest of us. But the Scottish people have the chance to take more powers into their own hands. However Cameron is right on one thing. The future of Scotland is not simply a Scottish question. It is a class question and therefore not restricted by the Scottish border or who actually votes. Cameron proves his own contention. He will not be able to vote. Yet his future is on the line. If this referendum is lost he will have to face the music at home and abroad.

THE PEOPLE'S CASE

England Says 'Yes'

In 1638 a rebellion by Scottish Covenanters enabled the opposition in the English parliament to challenge the autocratic rule of Charles Stuart. This was the trigger for the English civil war. In 1644 at the battle of Marston Moor, an army of Scottish Covenanters and Cromwell's Ironsides won a decisive victory over Charles Stuart's Royalists. By 1649 the King was defeated and England became a commonwealth or republic. In 1988 Scotland began a rebellion against the poll tax. This spread to England and culminated in rioting in Trafalgar Square and the end of Thatcher's government.

The defeat of Charles Stuart and Margaret Thatcher has one thing in common. Opposition began in Scotland before it was finally victorious in England. In the present struggle for democracy, Scotland finds itself out in front. But to win the battle for democracy there has to be an alliance between the Scottish people and the working class in England. This is precisely what is missing. The alliance of progressive forces in Scotland and England remains pivotal to winning democratic and social change. The problem is the narrow economic focus and the consequent political passivity of the working class movement in England.

'England', or the people of England, refers to the middle and working classes living in England. England is a multi-ethnic, multicultural and multi-religious country. The term 'England' does not include everybody from monarch to pauper. It does not include the English upper or ruling class who are identified as 'British' or the British ruling class. The term 'England' is not an ethnic term to mean 'White Anglo-Saxon Protestant' or 'WASP's as they are called in the USA.

The term 'England' in this article draws from Marx's use of 'the people' to exclude the ruling class, or from Gramsci's term "national-popular classes". A version of this is implied in contemporary politics by the Occupy movement's slogan "we are the ninety-nine percent", in the 'People's Assembly against Austerity' or in the 'Agreement of the People' campaign. Republicanism is a political movement of 'the people' for democracy against the ruling class. It implies an alliance of the people-classes for democratic aims.

Socialists do not give equal weight to both 'people classes'. In England by far the largest class is the working class, the majority of whom are women, and the majority of whom are employed to provide services. Workers in manufacturing are now a small, but highly productive, part of the working class. Socialists identify the international working class and its productive powers as the key to the progressive transformation of society. In England the working class is the vanguard of the people, in the struggle for democracy, social justice and freedom.

In the wider United Kingdom context, the views of the working class in Scotland will decide the referendum vote. The Scottish people have taken over the leading position in the struggle for democracy and self determination held by Irish people from the 1970s to the 1990s. Despite this, the economic and social weight of the working class in England is still a decisive factor. The attitudes and views of workers in England and the forms of action, political or economic, they are ready to take will have a major impact on the outcome.

Conservative attitudes in England are a deadweight against political reform throughout the UK. The working class movement in England has a vital role in breaking down the barriers to radical change. The Scottish referendum poses a challenge to the old politics. At present it is still a minority who are ready to make a break, even though the latest opinion poll published in *The Times* for the first time gives the 'Yes' vote the slightest of leads. This could be secured and advanced if people in England fully and actively supported 'yes'. We might exaggerate to make the point by saying the outcome is decided in England even though the votes are cast in Scotland.

The Labour and Trade Union bureaucracy maintains its grip over the working class. The Labour Party leadership is solidly behind British Unionism and is supported by the right wing trade union leaders. The message is that if there is a 'yes' vote Labour will lose seats in Scotland and this will give the Tories almost permanent rule over England. This is re-enforced by appeals that working class unity depends on maintaining the British state. The Unionist case is backed 'independently' by the Communist Party of Britain (Morning Star) campaign "Yes to unity, No to Separation", George Galloway MP, the Alliance for Workers Liberty and Workers Power.

In Scotland the trade union bureaucracy has taken a more neutral position because many rank and file members support a yes vote. The Public and Commercial Services union for example held a conference in February 2014 and voted by 18,025 to take a neutral position. The supporters of yes won 5,775 votes. Nobody voted for the 'no' po-

sition. (2). The PCS adopted the traditional trade union view of political matters. Trade Unions should keep out of political and constitutional issues. They should adopt a neutral position and confine themselves to economic questions such as pay and conditions.

In England the left wing of the trade union bureaucracy has broken with the Labour Party, most notably the Rail Maritime and Transport (RMT). The RMT in Scotland has now voted to support 'Yes'. Alongside the decline of Labour, two new parties, the Trade Union and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) and Left Unity, were set up to create a popular mass politics to the left of the Labour Party. Both parties have adopted trade union neutrality on the referendum. They have broken organisationally from Labour, but not from Labour's conservatism on political reform and trade union neutrality on Scotland. The Communist Party of Great Britain (Weekly Worker) has also adopted an abstention position.

There are many individuals and organisations on the radical left in England who support a 'yes' vote - Ken Loach, Billy Bragg, Tariq Ali, and the late Bob Crow - and organisations such as A World to Win, the Agreement of the People, Counterfire, Occupy (Real Democracy), Open Democracy, Red Pepper, Republican Socialist Alliance, Revolutionary Socialism 21, Socialist Resistance, the Socialist Party (England and Wales) and the Socialist Workers Party. In Left Unity the Scottish Republic Yes Tendency was set up to challenge the party's (trade union) neutrality.

The Scottish referendum shows the Scottish left is very active in constitutional politics and overwhelmingly supporting a 'yes' vote. The left in England is divided three ways. Those socialists who support a 'yes' vote have not been united enough to run an effective campaign in England. Labour Unionism and trade union neutrality have not been challenged. Mobilising the working class movement in England to give active support to the yes campaign would have had a significant impact on the outcome of the referendum. The fact that this has not happened highlights the weakness of democratic and socialist politics in England.

In England the general view is that this is a matter for Scotland not England. The phrase "England says 'Yes'" is not therefore a statement of fact but a claim that the progressive and democratic part of the people of England should support 'yes'. The people's case for yes is not confined to Scotland. The people of England, Wales and Ireland have much to gain from actively supporting a 'yes' vote. As internationalists, we should recognise that the working class movement in England has a key role to play. Scotland's opposition to the Act of Union is an opportunity for the working class in Scotland and England to find new ways of becoming more united.

Tories Defeated

The first reason for England to support a 'Yes' vote in Scotland is that it would be a significant defeat for Cameron and the Coalition government. The policies of this government have done considerable damage to democratic rights and the welfare of people throughout the UK. It has engineered a massive redistribution of wealth from working people to the rich by promoting inflation and limiting wage increases, cutting public spending on the social wage and opening the NHS and other public services to further private profiteering.

At first sight the Scottish referendum seems to have little connection to Tory austerity measures. This is a misreading of the situation. Political events such as elections, referenda, wars, corruption scandals and constitutional crisis of all kinds can have a major impact on the credibility of governments and their ability to sustain themselves and their policies. How do the slogans the Coalition government used to mobilise or justify its policies – “We are all in it together” and idea of a socially inclusive “Big Society” stand when the country breaks up?

The referendum will impact on the stability of the Tory Coalition. The Prime Minister and his government will be the victors in this battle or the first casualties. A research report by the investment bank, Nomura, says all three main Westminster parties will be losers. But in “the post referendum ‘blame game’ “we think the ruling Conservative Party would fare worst”. (3). The bank’s report continues “it is possible, in our view that PM (and Conservative Party leader) David Cameron could either feel obliged, or be forced by popular pressure, to resign, throwing up the prospect of a potentially divisive leadership contest just months before 7 May 2015 general election”.

Shane Croucher, writing in the “International Business Times”, says “David Cameron would probably have to resign if Scotland voted to split from the UK.....and a bitter leadership contest that would ruin the Tory chances of winning the next general election.” (4). The ‘war of words’ between the Tories and Labour over who failed will be highly educative. Was Alistair Darling an uninspiring yesterday’s man? Was it Cameron who failed to take the fight to Scotland and confront Salmond? The stakes are so high that the blame game will not be an edifying sight. None of this will help keep the working class in its place.

The danger facing the Coalition has been subject to much press speculation. Nick

Hallet (5) refers to a *Daily Mail* report in which a senior Tory says “If Scotland goes it is going to be very difficult. He might have had little choice but if you are the PM that calls Salmond’s bluff and loses, it’s unthinkable”. Fraser Nelson, editor of the *Spectator*, said on the Andrew Marr show that resignation would be quite likely. Isabel Hardman (6) in the *Spectator* points out that “the referendum is the single event that swing MPs (in marginals) all mention when asked what could seriously trip the PM up in their estimation between now and 2015”.

If people in Scotland think they could get Cameron sacked the yes votes would pile up. Kicking the Tories is a great Scottish sport, second only to tossing the caber. This is why the No campaign in Scotland is fronted by Labour politicians like Alistair Darling and Gordon Brown. As speculation on Cameron’s prospects mounted, Merrik and Rentoul (7) report “No.10 silent on David Cameron’s future if Yes vote wins the day”.

Downing Street spin doctors had to halt the damage. Patrick Wintour reported that No10 was worried that “some Scots will vote for independence as a way of expressing dislike of the Tories”. So in early May it was reported that Cameron told friends he will not resign in the event of a yes vote “in an effort to ensure Scots do not think his future as Tory leader is on the ballot paper this September”. (8).

The *New Statesmen* (9) makes a similar point. He says “aside from Cameron’s own interests in his preservation, there is another reason why the Tories are keen to kill the speculation. Any hint that he would resign would only serve to energise the nationalists and encourage a yes vote”. The *Daily Record* in Scotland (10) reported the BBC asking Cameron directly if he would resign. “No”, he said “and I think it is very important people understand that because it is not my name or anyone else on the ballot paper”.

Cameron Resigns

Despite Cameron’s denial a ‘Yes’ vote may force him out. The Tory party would have to have a leadership contest. Isabel Hardman (11) in the *Spectator* points out it is not up to Cameron whether he survives a yes vote. She says it will be down to how much pressure is on the 1922 Committee chairman Graham Brady demanding a leadership contest. Although Cameron is a great charmer of his party, we should not underestimate “the blow to Cameron’s authority if the Union were rent asunder on his watch”.

Referendum ballots have never sacked anybody and never will. A 'yes' majority is not an automatic resigning matter. But whatever Cameron's spin doctors say, his future is on the line. Powerful people with their wealth and class interests will decide Cameron's fate. Money speaks through the Tory Party in parliament but also through the constitution. The monarchy has a constitutional role in any political crisis. We should not underestimate the behind the scenes power or influence of the Queen.

The Queen will not sack Cameron. She will discuss matters privately with him. Then, if necessary, he will fall on his sword. His resignation will be accepted with regret. Cameron's fate will be decided by the Queen and the Tory leadership taking account of the voices of big money. If he loses the support of either he will be in serious trouble. But if he loses the support of both he will be toast. Nobody can predict if Cameron will survive a yes majority. But the speculation and the official denials show it is quite possible.

What is sure is that a yes majority will damage and weaken the credibility of the Coalition government. But what will happen if the 'no' vote wins. It may be Cameron's 'Falkland's moment'. Thatcher emerged triumphant from the Falkland's war fiasco. Victory will be his triumph and boost to his 2015 election campaign. He will claim he has saved a 'Great' country from economic disaster and from breaking up. If people don't believe the former they may well think the latter is true and give him another term.

It is therefore in the interests of the people of England that the Cameron government is defeated in the referendum. . It may lead to Cameron's resignation and a divisive Tory leadership contest. This will damage the Tories and their prospects of winning the next general election. It will give encouragement to all working class forces throughout the UK opposing the Tories on the NHS, welfare 'reform', the bedroom tax and its foreign policy in the Middle East. A 'yes' majority in Scotland is not separate from the struggle against Tory austerity but part and parcel of it.

Crown Weakened

There is much more at stake than the defeat of the Tories or the resignation of Cameron. This goes way beyond their special interests. The referendum, like all political battles, is presented in the media as a struggle between leaders. Cameron is doing battle with Salmon. Alistair Darling fronts the campaign in Scotland being neither English nor Tory. Behind this is the Tory Coalition government. Chancellor George Osborne and

Defence Secretary Philip Hammond joined the fray. (12). SNP government ministers provide their answers. But it does not capture the full picture nor the full extent of the forces involved in the struggle.

When Cameron speaks about the “the institutional framework of the UK” which has existed for “more than three centuries” and mentions “when the Acts of Union were passed” he is speaking in coded language about the British constitution. The present state was created through the ‘Glorious Revolution’ which began in 1688 and was finally completed by the 1707 Act of Union. The City of London became hardwired into the affairs of a state built on the foundations of constitutional monarchy, unionism and the protestant hegemony.

The bigger picture is who governs the country, how political power is used and on whose behalf. This is the issue which the Scottish referendum brings to the surface. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is governed by the ‘Crown-in-Parliament’. The Crown is the executive power of the state. Ministers and Civil Servants act on behalf of the Crown in consultation with parliament. But these are not equal partners.

There has been considerable change over the past three hundred years, not least universal suffrage in parliamentary elections. The most significant factor is that the power of the Crown has grown considerably. But the full extent and operation of the Crown remains concealed by official secrecy. In his speech Cameron says “when the Acts of Union were passed, the role of the state was limited to things like defence, taxes and property rights. Since then the state has transformed beyond recognition and our institutions have grown together like the roots of great trees, fusing together under the foundations of our daily lives”.

The UK state, acting through the Crown, is the master not servant of the people. The most important ‘fact of life’ established by the ‘Glorious Revolution’ is that the Crown is neither the monarchy nor the people. It is a mask for those who run the country on behalf of the British ruling class. It is the servant of the political interests of the ruling class at home and abroad. The Crown has at its disposal all the powers and resources of the civil service, the security services, armed forces, the diplomatic service and mass media. It is supported by the main political parties, the Tories, Liberal Democrats and the Labour Party and all the Unionist parties in Northern Ireland.

The Scottish referendum poses a serious threat to the power of the British ruling class. A section of the territory, population and economy of the UK may be prized from their

grip. Its armed forces will be weakened and its deployment of nuclear weapons such as Trident may be scuppered. Its position on the world stage as a diplomatic and military force will be undermined. It will lose credibility at the United Nations, in the European Union and as a NATO power.

The Crown is therefore mobilising a full range of political, social and civic forces against the most serious political threat it has faced since World War II. In addition to the three main parties, the City of London, the Bank of England, the major banks and Corporations, the Confederation of British Industry, the TUC and trade union bureaucracy are all backing the British Union. The parties of the extreme right, UKIP, BNP, the Democratic Unionist Party and the Orange Order are all rallying round the Union, monarchy and flag.

Better Together was set up as a campaigning front. As Jack Conrad says “Better Together is a vehicle for the establishment, big business and militarism. In June 2013 Better Together launched Forces Together. Purportedly it consists of people serving in the armed forces, veterans and family members..... it emphasises how Scotland “benefits from the full range of UK defence capabilities and activities”. Yet, in fact, the whole Forces Together operation stinks of the officer corps”. (13)

Ministers of the Crown working through and independently of the Better Together campaign have threatened the Scottish people with economic sabotage. If Scotland votes the wrong way they claim it not be allowed to use the pound sterling, and will be ejected from the European Union. Military spending in Scotland will be cut and many will lose their jobs. Capital may flee from Scotland and undermine the economy. This is the essence of Project Fear. But it shows the ruling class is very worried.

On 7 August 2014 a new “Lets stay together” campaign was launched with an open letter to Scotland. A report in the *Guardian* announced that Dan Snow and Tom Holland have mobilized a diverse range of celebrities and public figures – from Sir Mick Jagger, to Dickie Bird, Tracey Emin to Mary Beard – “who have declared their love of Scotland and called on its people to remember “the bonds of citizenship” which bind the union together”. (12). The launch called on people to sign “Our Letter to Scotland”. This shows that Cameron’s call for support in the rest of the UK has been acted on. In the weeks before the referendum the British ruling class has public support in England and according to opinion polls, the support of a majority of Scottish voters.

If Scotland votes ‘yes’, it will be a serious defeat for the British ruling class. The power of the British Crown will be weakened. It will be a significant step forward for the national

democratic movement in Scotland. The issue of what kind of constitution the people of Scotland want and need will move centre stage. It will pose new questions about the government of the rest of the UK.

Democratic constitutional change, so long delayed, will come to the fore across the UK. The people of England must not “sit on the fence” or adopt the trade unionist policy of neutrality or abstention. Radical democratic change is needed in the rest of the UK. People in England must support those in Scotland fighting for democratic change. This is why England must say ‘yes’.

Act Of Union Ended

“The Union with England Act 1707 is repealed” says clause thirty five of the draft Scottish Independence Bill published in June 2014. (14). Repeal of the Act of Union is at the centre of the referendum. Scottish voters will decide ‘yes’ or ‘no’ to repealing one of the basic laws of the British constitution. Cameron says his name and future as Tory leader and Prime Minister is not on the ballot paper. True enough. He is merely the one holding a constitutional bomb which will go off if Scottish voters have the courage to do what is necessary.

The first clause of the 1707 Act of Union says “that the two kingdoms of Scotland and England shall upon the first day of May.....forever be united into one Kingdom by the name Great Britain.” (15). One Kingdom united “forever” was intended as a permanent marriage. It did not even say “until death us do part”. There was no right to divorce, no exit clause, and no right to self determination.

Queen Anne’s Act of Union was a “forced marriage with benefits”. The aim of the marriage was to secure the Hanoverian Protestant succession, abolish the Scottish parliament and end the danger that the Scottish ruling class might ally with England’s enemies, mainly France and Spain. In exchange Scottish Presbyterians would keep their privileged position and there would be a common market and currency union and access for Scottish merchants and capitalists to the English empire with its plantations and slaves.

According to the UK government Forced Marriages Unit (16) “A forced marriage is where one or both people do not consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used.”

In 1707 the Union was imposed on the people of England and Scotland. The Scottish elite sold their daughter to a rich aristocrat in England for a pile of cash. The daughter was angry and rejected an imposed marriage. But later she became resigned to her fate and accepted it. Living with a rich man in a big mansion with many slaves was better than living in poverty in a tin shack.

Some may remember the story of Patty Hearst, daughter of a very rich newspaper family, who in 1974 was kidnapped by the Symbionese Liberation Front. Some time later Ms Hearst was seen on camera taking part in a Symbionese bank robbery with gun in hand. She was arrested and spent two years in jail. Had she 'joined' the front as a survival strategy? Had she become a convert and true believer? Was it a case of Stockholm syndrome in which victims come to accept their fate 'willingly'? Does kidnapping become legitimate or acceptable because the victim adjusts to it?

The Act of Union was imposed by Queen Anne, supported by a section of the Scottish ruling class, and opposed by the vast majority of the people. Scotland was not conquered but sold to England for a price. Queen Anne was able to close the deal by a combination of military threat, bribery and the opportunity for the Scottish ruling class to profit from the English colonial empire. There was strong opposition from the Scottish people. All available evidence confirms it, as shown by petitions, demonstrations and riots.

Queen Anne's bloody Act of Union was one of the major crimes of the 18th century. It was a conspiracy to impose a union on Scotland in order to carry out robbery and exploitation on a global scale. In 1707 there were 30,000 slaves in the English empire. One hundred years later there were 400,000 slaves in the British Empire. This was human trafficking on an industrial scale. As many Scottish people were victims as beneficiaries of this. In his Olympic speech Cameron 'forgot' to mention these crimes and spoke only of the benefits of the Act of Union.

Cameron's arguments about the 'benefits' of the British Union could be made about the European Union. A common currency, open borders, free trade and the free movement of people are central to the case for the EU. They facilitate a wider and deeper development of capitalist internationalisation. None of this is done to benefit working people, but the by-product of this is the need for workers to recognise their connection and common interests with workers in different countries. International workers unity and cross border organisation is not built by the European Union but built in opposition to it.

The claimed economic benefits of the British Union are now outdated and transcended

by the European Union. Every historical economic benefit of the British Union can be maintained in the European Union. If the UK withdraws from the EU then Scotland will be in a mini-British Union not the maxi-European Union. Keeping the British Union is nostalgia for a past when the British Union was at the centre of the British Empire. That has gone and what remains are economic remnants of its past glories.

Cameron forgets or fails to account for the true costs of the British Union either within the country or in the wider Imperial Union. There is the human cost of three hundred years of intermittent wars. Up to one hundred and twenty thousand Irish and Scottish prisoners were transported to America and Australia or sold into slavery. The Highland Clearances had a devastating impact on the people. The Great Hunger in Ireland (1845-52) was one of the world's great tragedies. Its effects were so deep that the population of Ireland has not recovered to this day.

The full human cost of the British Empire cannot be measured. In the 18th century the Atlantic slave trade transported an estimated eleven million slaves. British armed forces helped re-impose slavery in Haiti, in the face of the 'Black Jacobin' uprising. In the 20th century two world wars were fought to defend the Empire. These wars virtually destroyed European societies. Nearly three million British subjects were killed or wounded in the first war and one million in the second. In the 21st century the British Union survives as a relic of a bygone imperial age. It is time to leave all that romanticised Unionist patriotism behind.

England should and indeed must oppose the Act of Union. People in England need to recognise that forced marriage is a crime. The marriage has to be annulled with immediate effect and declared illegal under the norms of human rights. England must recognise how this crime came about and the full consequences of this for the rest of the world. This is not a Scottish problem for Scotland to deal with. The people of England cannot remain silent. If we do we will be casting ourselves as beneficiaries, accomplices and apologists.

England should abolish the Act of Union for itself as part of its own self liberation and progress towards democracy. There should be no malingering, or wondering what to do, or sitting on the fence. England should welcome the referendum as an opportunity for Scotland to do what a democratically minded England should have done decades ago. Meanwhile England should give full support and encouragement to the 'yes' campaign in Scotland.

Self Determination Achieved

The United Kingdom is a union state, a multi-nation state found on the union of nations. England has been and remains the dominant nation. It is not a voluntary union. There is no right to self determination in the constitution and no legal right for people in the minority nations to hold a referendum. The Acts of Union are the legal means by which the smaller nations are bound to England by a denial of their right to national self determination. The Acts of Union with Wales in 1536, with Scotland in 1707 and with Ireland in 1801 were part of the foundations of the UK state, until the latter was amended by the Government of Ireland Act 1920 and the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1922.

The right of nations to self-determination is a democratic principle. In any multi-nation state, the union must be entirely voluntary. In practice this means a constitutional-legal right by which a referendum can be called by citizens of the nation concerned. Voting should settle the matter peacefully, until the next occasion when it can be settled again by a future ballot. The voluntary nature of the union can be confirmed by ballot as often as necessary. The ability to exercise the right must be in the hands of the people by inclusion in the constitution.

It is generally accepted that the Union of England with Wales and Ireland were based on military force. In 1918 when a majority of the Irish people voted for independence in 1918 the right to self determination was denied and military force was used to re-impose British rule on Ireland. However it should be remembered that English rule did not rely on force all the time. Mostly British rule was maintained by ideological and cultural means and by the incorporation and accommodation of local elites.

The Act of Union was not imposed on Scotland by conquest. Nevertheless it was not and has never been a voluntary union. As the smaller nation, Scotland has no legal-constitutional right to self determination. The present referendum will be the first time in three hundred years that the Scottish people can vote on the union or independence. This is not however the exercise of a constitutional right. This referendum could not have taken place without overcoming a number of hurdles placed in its way.

First there had to be a Scottish parliament which could decide to hold a referendum. Second there had to be party elected with a majority of seats which promised a referendum. Only the SNP offered such a referendum and only won a majority in 2011. But then the SNP has not offered full independence or sovereignty. "Independence under the

Crown", a Scottish Free State, is well short of full Scottish self-determination. Citizens, therefore, have no means of exercising this right without voting for a nationalist party or on referendum questions agreed with the British Crown. Even then there is a final hurdle. The Scottish parliament has to seek permission from the Crown.

The Coalition government recently promised workers the 'right' to ask their boss for flexible working. A right to flexible working and the 'right' to ask for it are as different as chalk and cheese. There is no 'right' if the power to decide is with the employer. The Scottish parliament won the 'right' to ask the Crown for permission to hold a referendum. The Crown decides whether it is opportune to allow it, by assessing its best interests in answer to a given request.

The people of England should recognise that Scotland is a nation without a right to self determination. The Scottish people do not have sovereignty. Although Scotland is not a colony of England, the Union was imposed on the Scottish people by the English and Scottish ruling classes as a joint venture to plunder the world. But in common with colonial subjects, the mass of the Scottish people never agreed to it. There was no exit clause, no right to divorce or no right to self determination.

The people of England should act to end the Union before it becomes a source of growing dispute which will poison the previously friendly relations between the people of England and Scotland. England recognising itself as the dominant nation in the UK should declare it will only have a union which is entirely and exclusively voluntary and in which peaceful and democratic means of separation are legally available. This does not mean that the old Union simply continues from inertia or conservatism. It must be dissolved and the possibility of a voluntary union put forward for sovereign nations to decide.

British Nationalism Undermined

In his Olympic speech Cameron made great play on patriotism. He was proud to be British because it was "a brave, brilliant, buccaneering, generous, tolerant, proud nation". He believed the UK was the "most extraordinary country in history". He declared "I love the United Kingdom and all it stands for. And I will fight with all I have to keep us together". In this way he is appealing for support by playing on emotions rather than

facts. These emotions of pride, fear, happiness or anger relate to ideas about Britain and the kind of values which British people hold.

Great British nationalism is the mythical story of the United Kingdom from its origins as a modern state in the early 18th century. In this story Britain steadily evolves into a parliamentary democracy and becomes the first industrial country in the world. Britain grows into a global empire providing large parts of the world with the benefits of liberal democracy and civilisation. In the 20th century these values are defended when the British Empire defeats Kaiser Bill. In the Second World War Britain stands alone against the might of German fascism. After the war the creation of the NHS and the welfare state summed up all that is great in Britain.

Great British nationalism binds people to an imagined community, represented symbolically by the monarchy, the Union Flag and the national anthem, God Save the Queen. People can identify with this and feel part of something much bigger than them. Britain is seen as a civilised liberal democracy which is tolerant of others and a major force for good in the world. Britain is therefore no ordinary country. It is the stand out country. The Americans may be richer and brasher but they lack real class.

British nationalism views the country as superior to the rest of the world. People are inculcated with belief in British superiority. Even if things go wrong we can be satisfied that we are better than other nations. If people criticise us it is because they are jealous. The superiority of the British values, institutions and way of life creates a profoundly conservative mind set. Why change when we are already better? The Tory Party most closely represents British values in the monarchy, church, public schools, Oxbridge universities, civil service and the armed forces.

British nationalism is a major factor in ensuring the UK remains a conservative country. Even though social conditions continue to decline and Westminster democracy fails to deliver real change we can comfort ourselves that this is a great country and the rest of the world is envious of our mythical superiority. The possible break up of the UK will force people to recognise that everything in the garden is not rosy. When a small but significant section of the country decides to leave, it is time the rest of us went back to the drawing board and began to think about radical change.

All this is brought to a head by the referendum. How great can a country be when a whole section of the population wants to leave? Cameron kept a straight face when he warned an incredulous world it would lose “something very powerful and precious”

if the UK's "family of nations" broke up. The myths about Britain and what it represents in the world, the kind of country it is, and its future is being challenged by the national democratic movements in Scotland and Wales, who are thinking about their past and a different future.

The gap between the myth and reality has grown wider over the years of imperial decline. The rest of the world sees British democracy as antiquated like the Palace of Westminster itself. The economy is stagnant and the gap between rich and poor widening. The deployment of military forces in Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya are little more than a tool in the service of the United States. British identity, even when re-branded as 'Cool Britannia', Gordon Brown's 'British jobs for British workers' workers', or Ed Miliband's 'One Nation Labour', is a declining brand searching for meaning.

England is already a very different country from the one imagined by Britishness, whose death is being mourned by UKIP. The Scottish referendum brings the issue of British national identity to the fore. The possibility of Scottish independence challenges the myth of Britain as a liberal democratic country, which selflessly helps the rest of the world. Britain is for the rich. England has still to decide who it is and what it is for.

SCOTLAND SAYS YES

Scottish Democracy Advancing

England must support democratic reform in Scotland. The Scottish referendum campaign has seen the emergence of a more effective national democratic movement involving a range of parties and civic organisations. These include the Scottish National Party, the Green Party, the Scottish Socialist Party, Scottish CND and the Radical Independence Campaign. Scotland's national democratic movement is united in supporting a yes vote but divided between those on the right who emphasise Scottish nationalism and those on the left who champion republican democracy.

A 'yes' majority will end the present constitutional relationship between Scotland and the rest of the UK. This will be the biggest democratic constitutional change since 1922 when the Irish Free State became formally independent under the British Crown. Scotland will become a "Free State" along similar lines. The Scottish government published this draft Scottish Independence Bill in June 2014. (17).

The Bill will become an Act of the Scottish Parliament in 2015 if Scotland votes yes. It aims "to provide an interim constitution for Scotland to have effect from independence; to provide for the establishment of a Constitutional Convention to draw up a permanent constitution for Scotland". It has thirty seven sections in total. This includes the incorporation of the European Convention on Human Rights, and sections on Equality, the Environment, Natural Resources, European citizenship, Respect for human rights and Nuclear disarmament.

A written constitution has been a democratic demand put forward by many organisations in England such as Charter 88, Republic and the Agreement of the People. Scotland will take the first step to that goal with an interim written constitution. The Bill proposes the involvement of the Scottish people in deciding the basic laws of government through a Constitutional Convention. This is a radical idea compared with the British constitution imposed from above.

Clause 2 identifies the central principle as the "sovereignty of the people". It simply says "In Scotland, the people are sovereign". This is further clarified in clause 3 where

the nature of the people's sovereignty is described more fully. It says in section (2) of clause 3 that "All State power and authority accordingly derives from, and is subject to, the sovereign will of the people, and those exercising State power and authority are accountable for it to the people". This is a radical break with the principle of the sovereignty of the "Crown-in-parliament" which governs British constitutional law.

Clause 3 recognises the right to self determination which says "(1) In Scotland, the people have the sovereign right to self-determination and to choose freely the form in which their State is to be constituted and how they are to be governed". This is a radical break with the present British constitution which does not include any right to self determination.

Clause 9 deals with the unelected head of state. The people have no rights to decide this. This clause says "(i) Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth is to be Head of State, as Queen" and "(ii) Her Majesty is to be succeeded as Head of State (and as Queen or, as the case may be, King) by Her heirs and successors to the Crown according to law" and "(iii) Her Majesty, and Her successors to the Crown, continue to enjoy all the rights, powers and privileges which, according to law, attached to the Crown in Scotland immediately before Independence Day".

These proposals represent a democratic advance compared to the present UK constitution. However there is a contradiction between popular sovereignty identified in clause two and an unelected monarchy given special privileges in clause nine. The people of England should recognise that democratic reform in Scotland will encourage demands for change in the rest of the UK. England supports a yes vote so that these proposals can move to the centre of political debate in Scotland and by example in the rest of the UK.

A Scottish Republic Emerging

In July 2013 after the birth of Prince George, former Labour MP Denis Canavan, Chair of the Yes campaign declared that the new baby would never be King of Scotland. (18). In an independent country "the people of Scotland should ...be given an early opportunity to decide whether they want to retain the monarchy or choose an elected head of state". The 'Scottish Labour For Independence' campaign joined the chorus. "It is such a big issue" said Allan Grogan "it would go down to a referendum after the independence vote".

Canavan's statement was so sensitive that the SNP responded immediately to calm loyalist fears. A spokesman explained that "the current parliamentary and political union of Great Britain and Northern Ireland would become a 'monarchical and social union'. Echoing Prince Charles's claim to become a 'Defender of Faiths' the SNP pointed out that the present state should be renamed the United Kingdoms.

In March this year SNP Scottish Justice Secretary, Kenny MacAskill said that on the monarchy "it will be for the people of Scotland to decide". The Scottish Sunday Post headline screamed "Minister backs vote to axe Queen". (19). Republicanism is not on the ballot paper. But it is latent and emergent in the crisis of British Unionism. Despite the personal popularity of the Queen, the institution of monarchy becomes vulnerable in a time of radical constitutional change.

No section of the capitalist class in the UK including Scotland wants a republic. Since the Glorious Revolution and the Acts of Union capital has identified its interests with the Crown-state and is inseparable from it. The British monarchy, which symbolises the Crown, seems on the face of it as popular and as secure as ever. Yet the deep economic and social crisis facing the people unevenly across the UK can be expected to manifest itself in the fault lines of the constitution.

If Scotland votes yes there will be an interim constitution. This will shift the debate about the nature of Scotland's basic laws to the centre of the political stage. At present the issue of who will have sovereignty in the new constitution is a secondary issue compared to the abolition of the Act of Union. But after a 'yes' majority the contradiction between clause two on the sovereignty of the people and clause nine on the sovereignty of the crown will come to the surface.

The possibility of a post-independence Scotland becoming a republic is a real enough. The constitutional future of Scotland will not be settled by the referendum. The SNP led the official 'Yes Scotland' campaign, will be closed down on September 19th and the SNP government will look to the 'great and good' to help it create its new constitutional monarchy. But the widely supported Radical Independence Campaign (RIC) supports a Scottish republic. RIC and others do not intend to demobilise, but to build a popular movement for a new Scottish republic.

In Scotland the republic is just below the surface of public consciousness. Republicanism is taken more seriously in Scotland not least because the possibility of a new constitution focuses attention on what kind of sovereignty is possible or desirable. The

deadweight of historical inertia will be disrupted if people vote 'yes'. Self-government and the sovereignty of the people will move up the agenda. Therefore as soon as people think beyond the September referendum then it becomes clearer that the struggle in Scotland will evolve into a struggle between constitutional monarchists and democratic republicans.

The Scottish republic is thus the elephant in the room. The ballot paper does not mention it. The Westminster parties don't want it. The Queen is against it. The SNP government does not offer it. Indeed the SNP has promised to keep the monarchy in an "independent" Scotland. The SNP government and the British Crown have reached an understanding about 'Independence-under-the Crown'. Alex Salmond has met the Queen on a number of occasions most recently on 1 July 2014. No doubt if assurances were sort they would have been freely given.

Yet the closer Scotland gets to independence the democratic option - full sovereignty for Scottish people – become a real possible option. Republicans in England must support a yes vote because a yes majority will open up republican opportunities in Scotland. This in turn will feedback to the debates and movements in England. It is in England's democratic interests that Scotland proceeds to a republic by the shortest possible route.

ENGLAND'S CASE TRULY STATED

There are a number of reasons why the people of England and especially the English working class should support a 'yes' vote in the 18 September Scottish referendum. The first and most obvious reason is to defeat Cameron and his austerity government which has done and is continuing to do serious damage to the people. Whether Cameron has to resign and the Tories engage in a leadership contest is neither here nor there. But when the Tories are tripped up it is an opportunity for the people to take advantage.

Defeating the Tory coalition is not the only or even the main reason. The working class movement has to weigh up the bigger picture. People must not exchange momentary short term gain for long term disadvantage. We cannot simply assume that every defeat for the Tories will benefit the working class. The recent UKIP victories over the Tories represent a victory for more right wing and reactionary politics. Furthermore had there been a Labour government in office we would still face the same democratic issues.

The bigger picture is that a 'yes' vote will be an advance for democracy. The relationship between Scotland and England was established legally by the 1707 Act of Union. This was forced marriage not an equal marriage. It is not merely that England is far larger in population and resources. Scotland could be protected from her dominant neighbour by having the constitutional right to self determination. Without this right, Scotland will be objectively an unequal nation.

Any and every forced marriage should be annulled if we want equality, respect and democracy between people. If the Scottish people do not end the Act of Union it is a legitimate democratic objective for the people of England. Ending a forced marriage does not necessarily mean separation. People can choose to live side by side and co-operate in their common interests. It does not exclude the option of a voluntary federal relationship. This is far more likely if divorce is speedy and peaceful rather than long drawn out and hurtful or violent.

A 'yes' majority will end the anti-democratic 1707 Act of Union. It will restore to the Scottish people the right to decide future relations with England. It will give Scotland a written constitution. All election will be by some form of PR. It will abolish the House of Lords in Scotland. It will transfer to Scotland the right to decide its constitution. These are

limited but nevertheless real gains. They do not preclude taking the road to democracy further. By ending the Act of Union Scotland will have the opportunity to become a fully sovereign or republican nation.

The principle of self determination means voluntary union. Scotland must secure the freedom to choose. The Scottish people must win full sovereignty so they can decide what kind of relationship they want. It is far better that this is achieved with the support and help from England. But it would require a different kind of politics in England - democratic, republican and internationalist. The people of England must reject the dominant chauvinism articulated by the Westminster parties and a tendency by far too many people to dutifully support the values and policies of the British ruling class.

Ending the Act of Union is in the interests of the people of England. More democracy is not a zero sum game in which if Scotland gets more democracy, England must have less. Scotland can win more democracy and this makes it more likely that people in England will want to follow suit. This is the power of a good example. Ken Loach in his statement highlights this point. He says "For a few hours, Scottish people have control over their future. They can choose to keep that power or give it back to a state dominated by the British ruling class. Independence would not solve the problems but it would give Scottish people the power to start to create a more just, more fair, more sustainable society".

He says "when the Sandinistas in Nicaragua kicked out a dictator and began to build hospitals and schools and take industries into public ownership, they were opposed by the U.S. They were the 'threat of a good example'. If Scotland leaves the UK, we in England will face a Tory majority. But if an independent Scotland is a success it can be, for us, the threat of a good example and show that a progressive government can improve lives now and make the future sustainable. (Ken Loach 31 July 2014)

There are many Anti-Unionists in England. Amongst them are 'republican internationalists' who see the struggle in Scotland as essential to build cross border popular republicanism. Whereas Scottish nationalists see progress in terms of mobilising Scottish people from all classes, the Scottish republican internationalists consider the working class are the decisive force. Consequently a strategic alliance with the working class in England is absolutely vital. This alliance has been largely absent. Whatever the outcome of the referendum this alliance must be built.

In conclusion there is no contradiction between opposing the Coalition government and its austerity policies, advancing the struggle for democracy, ending the Act of Union and

voting yes in the Scottish referendum. This is not simply a Scottish issue. The people of England have common interests in all these issues, even though we rightly cannot vote on 18 September. Together we can and should end the system of government through the Crown-in-Parliament, the failed Whitehall-Westminster system.

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Postscript

On Thursday 18 September a majority of Scottish people voted by 55% to 45% to maintain the British Union. Instead of Scotland's democratic future passing into the hands of the Scottish people, the victory of the Unionists handed the power to decide Scotland's constitutional future back to the Coalition government, the Whitehall machine and the Westminster parliament. Cameron emerged from Downing Street on Friday morning to tell Scotland what would happen next.

Alex Salmond resigned as leader of the SNP. In the evening Loyalist and fascist gangs turned up in George Square, Glasgow, singing "Rule Britannia", "God save the Queen", giving Nazi salutes, shouting abuse and threatening peaceful Yes supporters with violence. Fighting ensued. The 'Britain First' party, set up by ex BNP members with links to Northern Ireland, was identified with supporting if not organising these attacks.

The defeat of the democratic movement gave new heart to the fascist thugs. But not before the spectre of a Yes majority had frightened the ruling class. In the week before the vote, politicians and financial markets were spooked. The three Unionist stooges, Cameron, Clegg and Miliband, scurried to Scotland with promises of more devolution. A gaggle of Westminster MPs arrived by train. Gordon Brown emerged from the shadows to rally Labour supporters. And the Queen felt it necessary to appeal to her Scottish subjects for a No vote in the suitably coded language of British royalty.

The Unionist victory was secured by mobilising all the class forces at its command, especially Corporate business, the financial classes, and all those who identified their prosperity with the Crown. They won their majority by promoting fear and promising political reform. The Scottish people could lose their currency, pensions, jobs, and living standards and be excluded from the European Union. Voting No would bring more Devolution within a short time frame. But no sooner had the Unionists won than doubt was cast on what would be delivered.

A key factor in the defeat of the democratic movement was the passivity of the working class in England. The English working class movement took no part in the struggle. There were no mass protest actions or petitions. There were no political strikes or solidarity demonstrations. In England, Labour's conservatism combined with passivity and neutrality to leave Scottish democracy isolated from its natural allies south of the border.

The Unionists were not so passive. They organised a demonstration in Trafalgar Square where Dan Snow, Eddie Izzard, Al Murray and Bob Geldof spoke to thousands. When the smoke of battle finally clears it will be clear that the real winners of the referendum

were the right wing of British politics, the Tories and UKIP. Victory secured Cameron's position in the Tory party, at least for a while. Labour is now on the back foot.

The 'Scottish Republic Yes Tendency' is surely at the end of its road. This is not the end of the matter - far from it. Attention is now switching to the constitutional future of England. On this Cameron and the Tories are well positioned to make the running with the slogan "English votes for English laws". The call for an English parliament is now being heard. So what next for Left Unity - the 'English Republic Yes Tendency'?

21 September 2014

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