

Conservative Trade Unionists
32 Smith Square London SW1P 3HH
Tel 01-222 9000



9th July 1984

Ack.

Michael Alison Esq MP
No 10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

Dear Mr. Alison,

Mrs. Joy Bushby, Chairman of the National Committee of Conservative Trade Unionists, has asked me to forward to you the following emergency motion which was submitted to the National Committee at their meeting on Saturday, 7th July and which was passed unanimously:

'The Conservative Trade Unionists' National Committee congratulates the House of Lords on its amendment to the Trade Union Bill calling for mandatory secret postal ballots in elections for Trade Union Executives. This Committee looks forward to a successful conclusion of the discussions taking place between the Lords and the Government to bring forward a workable amendment in line with long standing CTU policy.'

Yours sincerely

pp Tom Cowell
Asst. Director Youth



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

Dear Mrs. Bushby,

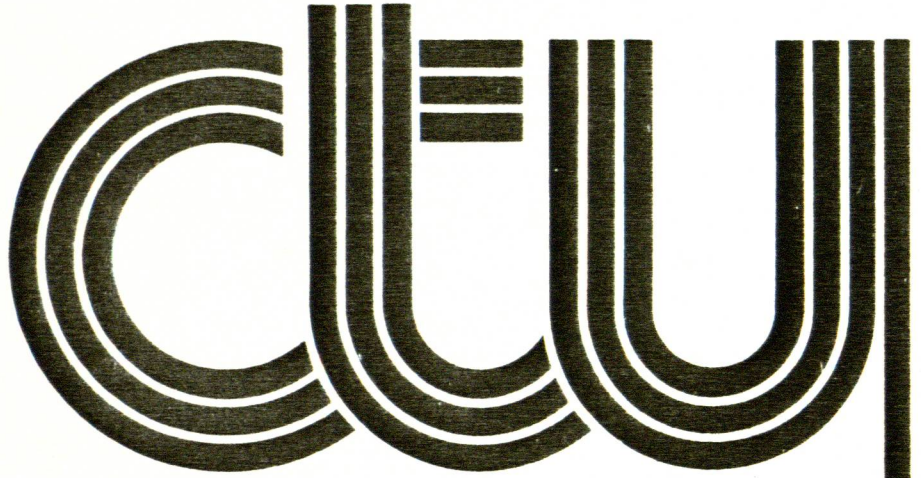
Thank you for your letter of 27 June about the amendment passed by the House of Lords to the Trade Union Bill on the subject of postal ballots for union elections.

I know you have been talking to Tom King about the amendment and that he has discussed with you a number of alternative proposals which he hopes to table in the House of Lords next week. I think the proposals which he is now making are excellent, and I hope very much that the CTU will be able to give them their full support.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

Mrs. Joy Bushby



27th June 1984

The Prime Minister
The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher MP
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

Dear Mrs Thatcher,

I welcome the amendment carried to the Trade Union Bill in the House of Lords last Tuesday night, which provides for postal ballots for election to trade union governing bodies, this to be the responsibility of an independent body.

I enclose a copy of "News for Trade Unionists" which was circulated at our recent National Conference in Birmingham. I have briefly stated the case for postal ballots therein.

Our Annual Conference passed a motion concerning postal ballots overwhelmingly.

I have been dedicated to this policy for many years, supported by my colleagues in CTU, but in the last few months conviction that this is the right course has gained considerable momentum from a wide cross section of opinion both in and out of Westminster.

I have discovered a great deal of support for postal ballots among trade union members other than Conservative supporters.

Many trade unionists voted for us in the last two general elections because they hoped that among other measures we would provide them with means for the protection of secrecy when they took part in a ballot, so that they may do so without fear of intimidation or ballot rigging. There is no way in which workplace ballots could be secure from interference, even if that interference is only psychological.

The Prime Minister
The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher MP

27th June 1984

We must not forget that the thugs of Orgreave may well be the same people who could be in charge of workforce ballots sometime in the future.

It seems that there is no limit to the lame arguments put forward by Ministers and MPs against postal ballots, even though by so doing they are protecting union officials instead of members.

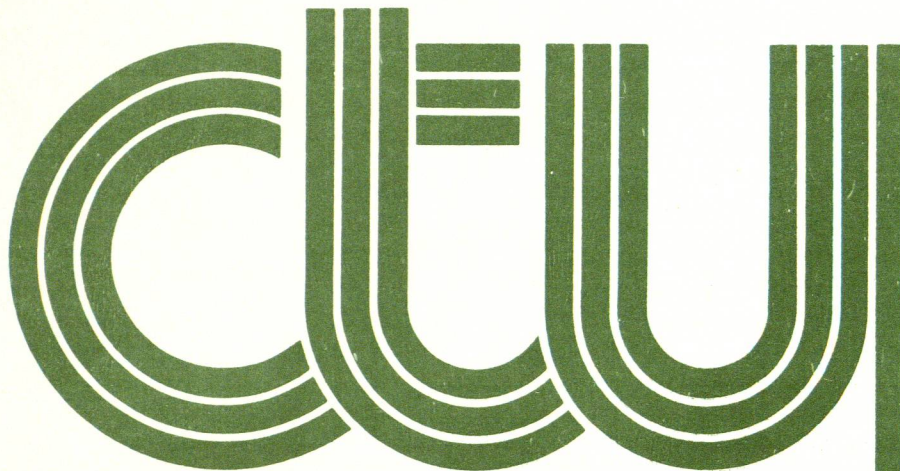
As soon as we answer one argument another is put forward. This is such a vital fundamental issue we cannot allow it to be washed away in the sea of civil servants' dogma.

Those of us who are advocating postal ballots so vigorously feel that having achieved a measure of success so far we cannot stand by and see it go wrong now.

We should not deny the moderate trade unionists the protection they seek from us.

Joy Bushby

Mrs. Joy Bushby
Chairman of the CTU National Committee



27th June 1984

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Joy Bushby

Mrs. Joy Bushby
Chairman of the CTU National Committee

MR. TURNBULL

The attached letter is for your approval before the Prime Minister *signs* ~~sees~~ it.

I have tried to be as sympathetic as possible to the CTU without pre-empting any decision. I have drawn my draft from some of the remarks of Lord Gowrie in the debate.

Siela

STEPHEN SHERBOURNE

3.7.84

Stephen

This is fine by me but you ought to deal with DEmp.

AT 317



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

4th July, 1984

Thank you for your letter of 27th June about the amendment passed by the House of Lords to the Trade Union Bill on the subject of postal ballots for union elections.

The Trade Union Bill, introduced by the Government, establishes - as you know - the basic democratic principles of voting in secret; voting by the use of a ballot paper; and voting without interference or constraint. And the Government believe that postal ballots are the best safeguard against intimidation and malpractice.

The issue raised in the House of Lords amendment to which you refer is one of detail rather than principle - namely about the practicality of requiring unions to conduct elections by post in all circumstances.

However, the Government are now giving further consideration to this question and your letter, raising a number of important points, is a very helpful contribution.

.../

We share the same objectives and, as always with legislation, it is a matter of achieving our objectives in the most practical way.

Mrs. Joy Busby