

Comrades

Kevin Higgins

As an ex-member of the Militant Tendency I wanted to bring down the State that most people supported. I'm glad the likes of me ... were prevented from doing so ... Thank you Special Branch. (Stephen Brent, Chichester, on the BBC website.)

1981. Capitalism was a Dimplex heater
with a broken switch. We'd
rush across the greasiest Formica,
the nastiest carpet to agree with each other
and cheer the news: *redundancies rocket,*
stock markets on the floor.

'Another Tory government
is out of the question,' you told me.
It was February, 1982. The daffodils
couldn't have cared less.

'This puts a question mark over
Thatcher,' I told you.
It was November, 1989. Hailstones
on Stoke Newington High Street.

Today, we meet with a history
of fried bread and picket lines
behind us. We believed in each other.
Now, it's a hundred years

since those afternoons
full of sunlight and clenched fists
when – in miners' strikes and poll-tax riots –
we were like boys playing
in hoped-for snow.

Democratiya 16 | Spring/Summer 2009

Kevin Higgins was born in London in 1967 and grew up in Galway City, Ireland. Two volumes of his poetry have been published by salmonpoetry: *The Boy With No Face* (2005) and *Time Gentlemen, Please* (2008). The latter is reviewed by Siobhán Campbell in *Democratiya 15*.