



# **The Benn Heresy: Foreword by Owen Jones**

*Alan Freeman*

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This new edition of the classic biography of Tony Benn captures the essence of Benn's formidable impact on the British Labour Party and British politics. Written at the apogee of his career, immediately after the Labour Party's 1981 Deputy Leadership campaign under Harold Wilson, it charts the evolution of Benn's ideas and the underlying reasons both for their resonance with the British public, and their root-and-branch rejection by the British political elite.

The rise and persistent attraction of both Benn and 'Bennism' is set against the background of a British industrial decline imposed by the obstinate craving of the political classes of both right and left for a fading imperial glory.

Alan Freeman shows how Benn set out to reverse both by means of a radical democratic transformation of British society, exploding the Blairite myth of Benn as an inconsequential, amiable and unelectable eccentric. Benn emerges as a figure of towering insight and political courage, combining the commitment to equality and social values which defined the postwar Labour left. The result is a vision as relevant to Britain today as it was thirty years ago.

This new edition includes the interview with Benn conducted just after the 1981 Leadership election, a substantive new chapter by the author, and a foreword by Owen Jones, the author of *Chavs: The Demonization of the Working Class* and *The Establishment: And How They Get Away With It*.

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