



“Towards the Break-Up of Britain? What is different this time?”

Centre for British Studies/Großbritannien-Zentrum
& The Open University

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Two wee controversies...or perhaps not so wee?

- Scotland and the Olympics! Should there be a Scottish Olympics Team in London 2012?
- Re-branding Scotrail September 2008 – Developing a ‘Scottish’ Rail Identity!!!
An SNP publicity exercise?



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Call for Scottish Olympics team

The Scottish Government has repeated its calls for Scotland to have its own, separate team at the Olympics.



The Scottish Government would rather Scotland had its own Olympics team

Ministers said it would be good for Scottish sport. The SNP wants to hold an independence referendum in 2010 - two years before the Games in London.

However, Labour said the Nationalists were being petty and should share Britain's pride in Team GB.

The Beijing Olympics saw cyclist Chris Hoy earn the accolade of Scotland's greatest Olympian with his three golds.

His three medals helped Great Britain to its best performance for a century but if the Scottish Government is successful in its bid, Team GB in future will not include Scotland.

Sports Minister Stewart Maxwell pointed to the success of nations such as Jamaica as proof small countries can make an impact at the

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Scotland's railway



ARCHITECT'S CONCEPTUAL DRAWINGS FOR THE PROPOSED STATION AT GOGAR.

Improving services

In the biggest single transfer of power from Westminster since Devolution itself, 2005 saw Scottish Ministers assume the power to manage and monitor the performance of the current and subsequent ScotRail franchises, take strategic decisions about future investment, and fund and specify where resources should be targeted to grow the country's rail network.



In 2006, Transport Scotland, a new agency of the then Scottish Executive, was created to carry out these responsibilities on Ministers' behalf.

FirstGroup began operating the franchise in October 2004 and has worked hard to ensure the challenging targets set were met and exceeded.

Since 2004, delays to services have halved and punctuality now stands at over 90% - no mean feat considering



Investment

To date, First ScotRail has invested more than £25 million to enhance services and facilities since taking over the franchise in October 2004.

As part of the franchise extension, an investment fund of more than £70m, managed by Transport Scotland, has been created to further improve Scotland's railways.

This investment is on top of the £40 million First ScotRail pledged to invest after taking delivery of the franchise.

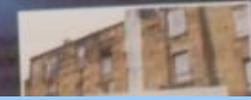
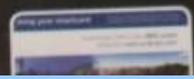
Express services between Edinburgh and Glasgow have been extended and additional early morning services are set to be introduced to allow passengers from Dumfries, Gourock, Ayr, Kilmarnock, Dunblane, Perth and Kirkcaldy to connect to services arriving in London before noon.



Franchise extension

New brand

The new ScotRail branding means there will be a consistent look across Scotland's railways.



A Scottish rail identity



For the past 25 years, ScotRail has been at the heart of Scottish life – keeping communities connected, helping commuters to work and visitors to the many tourist destinations our nation has to offer.

First coined in September 1983, the name ScotRail was devised as a shorter, more easily identifiable substitute for British Rail Scottish Region by the British Railway Board. This offered a regional identity for British Rail's services north of the border and its cross border services between Scotland, northern England and London.

This distinctive identity also symbolised a gradual resurgence in rail travel and rejuvenation of the network in Scotland during the 1980s – trains capable of speeds up to 100mph were introduced and passengers benefited from new air conditioned coaches.

A more radical reorganisation took place in April 1994 with the breaking up of British Rail and the transfer of ownership of passenger companies to the private sector.

With over 3,300 employees and an annual turnover of over £300 million, ScotRail immediately became one of the largest companies in Scotland upon its creation.

The first private operator of ScotRail, National Express Group, was awarded the franchise in April 1997 and immediately began a programme of improvements to the network.





The Problem with 'Britishness'!

- What is it?
- How is it to be defined?
- Is there a shared British culture?

- Britishness now an important focal point of political debate & discussion in the UK
- Political concern about a declining sense of Britishness and the possible fragmentation of the UK itself



PANORAMA

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In pursuit of Britishness

By Vivian White
BBC Panorama reporter

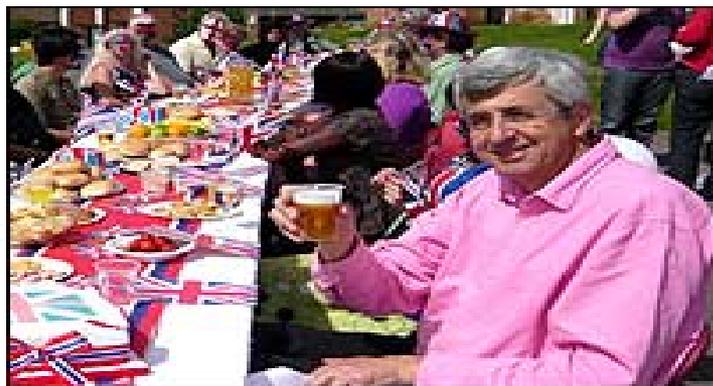
After two weeks of intense flag-waving in Beijing and ecstatic scenes back home, we could have just wrapped ourselves in the flag and left all the tricky questions about Britishness for another day.

And indeed at our own Britishness party, which we staged in a quiet street in Uxbridge (thank you, thank you, local residents) I did feel a little out of place - being almost the only one whose face wasn't painted red, white and blue.

I should add that there were some Scottish Saltire faces too and one very fine figure of a man adorned with a Welsh dragon.

Published Date: 22 August 2008

Taken from: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/panorama/7577539.stm>



Vivian White joins the great Britishness party



Can you pass a citizenship test?



The government is launching the citizenship test for foreigners who want to become British. If you want the passport, then you'll have to read *Life in the UK*, a special book, and sit a 45-minute test on society, history and culture. But do you know what it is to be British? The following very unofficial questions are based on information in the official book - let's see how well you do...

Question 1

Life in the UK says to be British means you should...

- A: "Respect laws, the elected political structures, traditional values of mutual tolerance and respect for rights and mutual concern."
- B: "Share in the history and culture of an island nation with a character moulded by many different peoples over more than two thousand years."
- C: "be part of a modern European democracy, one with a tradition of sharing our ways with the world – and allowing the world to bring its ways to us."



'Britain is a composite nation, a patchwork of anomalies, mistakes and inconsistencies. It has a standing army but not a football team. It has an anthem, a flag and a queen, but there is no patron saint of the United Kingdom and no founding date of an original constitution to be celebrated with even token formality.... Its allegiances are split between opposing camps, bound equally to Europe and the United States by history and geography, The country that once boasted an empire is now struggling to find a new role for itself in a vastly unequal global order that it once helped to shape. Welcome to modern Britain'.

(Vron Ware, 2007: 1-2)



‘Britishness is defined not on ethnic or exclusive grounds – but through our shared values, our history of tolerance, of openness and internationalism, our commitment to democracy and liberty, to civic duty and the public space. These values, embodied in our great institutions – such as the NHS, the BBC, The Open University – tell a national story that is open to all citizens’.

(David Blunkett (then Labour Home Secretary), 2005: 4)



'In my view the heart of Britishness does not lie, like some continental traditions, in ethnic belonging or republican obeisance. Rather it lies in a way of living together characterised by tolerance, egalitarianism, respect for the dignity of the individual and a powerful tradition of dissent. Attempts to create lists of symbols and objects that encapsulate Britishness are wide of the mark; efforts to identify people whose behaviour defines Britishness comes closer, because our national identity is essentially about the way we treat each other. In a phrase: British is as British does. It is about what people do, not who they are'.

(Trevor Phillips, Chair, Commission for Racial Equality, 2007: 42)



We've been here before.....

1970s – The Break-up of Britain Thesis

Tom Nairn (1977) – The UK is an '*ancient regime*' that is increasingly untenable in a modern world

Context – legacies of the end of Empire, rise in militant Irish Nationalism/Republicanism and stirrings of the Scottish Nationalist Party!



Today - Possible Sources of Fragmentation...

- Declining sense of Britishness
- Re-emergence of English nationalism/the 'little Englander'
- Europeanisation/Globalisation
- Migration/Immigration
- Assumptions about declining cohesiveness/social order
- Uncertainty about 'the other' (Britain long defined against the US and Europe – less so now?)
- And.....the rise of 'Celtic' Nationalism – especially in Scotland!
- Devolution.....and the emergence of an SNP Government in Scotland



The Threat/Promise of Scottish Nationalism

- Consequences for the UK's main political parties:
- New Labour – Loss of Substantial Scottish UK Parliamentary Seats – permanent opposition for Labour?
- Conservatives – Increasingly playing to 'Middle England'/Metropolitan South East Sentiments – Scottish Largesse and Dependency on 'English Taxpayers' has to end.
- Devolution – Creates a Democratic Deficit for England – which is now ruled by Scots!



Saturday 7 June 2008



MPs tell Brown: 'Wake up or we will loose Scotland'

Secret meeting of Labour MPs warns PM a
Cameron government will bring on
Scottish independence

EXCLUSIVE BY GERRI PEEV
AND ROSS LYNDALL

Wednesday, 1st October 2008 [Change Date](#)

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Labour fears Cameron could deliver Scotland to the SNP

Published Date: 07 June 2008

By GERRI PEEV AND ROSS LYDALL

SCOTTISH Labour MPs have given a stark warning that the country will become independent within a few years unless the party wakes up to the threat of a Conservative government at Westminster.

They fear a General Election win for David Cameron could drive voters into the SNP's hands as the Nationalists would be seen as the "lesser of two evils".

SNP figures admit privately that a Tory victory would be good for their cause, allowing them to



There are real fears within the Labour Party that a Conservative victory at the next election could lead to a vote for independence and a victory for Alex Salmond that would end the union Picture: Getty

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‘Tory win likely to make more Scots vote for independence’

A QUARTER of Scots would be more likely to vote for independence if the Conservatives win power in Westminster, a poll suggested yesterday.

The YouGov study revealed that 34 per cent are in favour of independence and 50 per cent are against. But the same sample showed that 25 per cent would be more likely to support independence under a Tory government.

Published Date: 08 September 2008

Taken from: <http://news.scotsman.com/politics/Tory-win-likely-to-make.4467209.jp>

‘Conservative win would ‘fuel support for independence’

The independence referendum planned for 2010 is "there to be won" the SNP claimed yesterday, after a poll showed a majority of Scots would vote in favour if they came under a Conservative government at Westminster.

It is the first time Alex Salmond's strategy of using a Tory victory to fuel support for independence in a referendum has been tested in this way. Asked in general how they would vote in a referendum on Scottish independence, 34% said they would vote in favour with 50% against.

Published Date: 08 September 2008

Taken from: http://www.theherald.co.uk/politics/news/display.var.2442500.0.Conservative_win_would_fuel_support_for_independence.php

The break-up of the union now appears inevitable

With nationalism on the rise in every corner, 2008 will see the UK stretched to breaking point. Yet still Westminster is oblivious



Iain Macwhirter

The Guardian, Thursday January 10 2008

[Article history](#)

Gordon Brown's acknowledgment on Tuesday that 2008 will be "an important year for the union" was an understatement. It will be crucial. Who could have forecast 12 months ago that Britain would be starting 2008 with nationalist parties in power, or sharing it, in all three devolved administrations? Last year was supposed to have been a celebration of the 300th anniversary of the Act of Union. In fact it was about dismantling it: the SNP is now running Holyrood; Plaid Cymru is in coalition with Labour in Cardiff; and the nationalist Sinn Féin shares power with the DUP in Stormont. It is the unionist nightmare come true: a separatist clean sweep.

The rise of provincial nationalism was by far the most significant political development in Britain in the last year - far more important than the election-that-never-was, or the change of personnel at No 10. Brown is





Scotland and the 'Arc of Prosperity'

- SNP's vision of an independent Scotland as a vibrant, competitive and modern economy
- Role Models –Ireland, Norway, Iceland ('Arc of Prosperity' countries on the North West fringes of Europe)

But.....

Late 2008 - From the 'Arc of Prosperity' to the 'Arc of Insolvency'?



Scottish independence: the dream that just melted away

Alex Salmond was always going to struggle to gather enough 'yes' votes

Published date: 21 October 2008

Taken from: <http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/commentators/mary-dejevsky/mary-dejevsky-scottish-independence-the-dream-that-just-melted-away-967703.html>

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TIMESONLINE

Financial meltdown leaves nationalist vision in tatters

As the UK Treasury steps in to prop up the Scottish financial sector, arguments for independence are devalued

Published date: 12 October 2008

Taken from: <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/scotland/article4925945.ece>

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TIMESONLINE

Is Scottish independence stone dead?

As Scotland's economic outlook darkens the SNP should feel much less confident of winning the Glenrothes by-election

Published date: 19 October 2008

Taken from: <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/scotland/article4969039.ece>



Scotland counts the cost of its financial Culloden

Edinburgh is an undemonstrative city, says Bill Jamieson, but its financial community has been mortified by the loss of two banks that have guarded its wealth for centuries

Published date: 22 October 2008

Taken from: <http://www.spectator.co.uk/the-magazine/business/2538626/scotland-counts-the-cost-of-its-financial-culloden.shtml>

Banking bail-out hurts SNP's independence plan - but Salmond won't mind

So as Scotland's banks take a pummeling on the stock markets, so too do Alex Salmond's dreams of Scottish independence. At least that's how it appears.

Published date: 14 October 2008

Taken from: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/blog/2008/oct/14/scotland-snp>



Finally...Is the Union safe?

- Around 1/3 Scots support Independence
- Independence Referendum Promised for 2010 (on St Andrews Day!)
- Brown and New Labour – Caught between rise in support for SNP (and social democratic/old labour style policies) and emergence of sentiments among some voters/sections of the media & Conservative Party in England which are anti-Scottish (or are perceived to be)
- But current financial crisis seems to have been reflected in support for Brown – and a growing sense that Scotland might not be able to manage on its own financially!



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