

■ Tekst 8

The old country

According to the promotional video which Her Majesty's Government inflicted on 51 representatives of Commonwealth countries yesterday, we are now part of "Britain – a young country". However, the fact is that Britain is not a young country. It is an old country. Britain was created in 1603 or 1707 – depending on whether one takes the union of the crowns or the Act of Union as being the decisive event. To call Britain a young country, therefore, is absurd especially in the company of many Commonwealth countries on whose constitutions the ink is barely dry.

15 The Government's "re-branding" film

showed quantities of young people but it would also be untrue to suggest that the British people are particularly young. On the contrary, we are older than ever before.

20 Whereas in 1961 12 per cent of the population was over 65, now 16 per cent have exceeded that age. In 30 years' time, the proportion will be nearly one in four.

Mr Blair announced yesterday that 25 "there is a new British identity". When he is talking such palpable nonsense, one can only be grateful that he did not go so far as to proclaim a "new, improved Britain".

'The Daily Telegraph', October 25, 1997

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'It is an old country.' (regel 7)

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