

The reality is that little England knows that it is suc...

Published: January 13, 2026, 1:21 pm

As the [Guardian](#) and many other papers note this morning:

Politicians across the spectrum have reacted angrily after Boris Johnson dismissed devolution as “a disaster north of the border”.

During a Zoom call with around 60 northern Conservative MPs on Monday evening, the prime minister described devolution as “Tony Blair’s biggest mistake”.

Let's ignore for a moment the fact that we have a Prime Minister who cannot spot that Tony Blair's biggest mistake was the Iraq war.

And let's ignore the supposed claim put out afterwards that this referred to the SNP alone, because Blair was clearly not responsible for them, so it was impossible that this was what Johnson meant.

And let's ignore that devolution came as a package with the Welsh also being given this option and Northern Ireland securing peace via the Good Friday Agreement, which presumably falls into the same category for Johnson given the problems it is now giving him on the EU.

Instead, let's just consider how insulting this is to the consistent majority in Scotland who now want independence, and how alienated they must feel.

And let's remember that this was said to the Northern Research Group of Tory MPs who want what amount to devolved powers for their area, which also feels deeply alienated from London, because it is, also by London's choice.

And then let's recall that Scotland does at least have a functioning government, that has taken decisions on coronavirus sooner than London, as have those in Cardiff and Belfast as well.

After which let's appreciate that the evidence is firmly stacked against Johnson, barring one thing. If you look through the lens of the imperialist oppressor, seeking to free-ride

on the back of the exploited from afar the capital, then of course Johnson is right. In the sense that devolution was the precursor for the independence that is now to follow in, I think, all three of the UK's smaller nations, then, of course, Blair made a massive mistake. The right to exploit was put in peril by his actions and Johnson wishes to retain it. That is what this is about.

Johnson wants to retain Scotland precisely because he knows London needs its economic support. Ignore the rigged data in Government Expenditure and Revenue Scotland. The reality is that little England knows that it is sucking value from Scotland as hard as it can. And it does not want that to stop. And the chance that it might is what petrifies them.