

## BRONZE AWARD

KEW EE-JIEN, 14, MALAYSIA

TITLE: PETER OSBORNE

Sometimes we forget about our own history, our country's history. What we come from and who we are, deep down. In short: our identity. In my view, this article, "A royal salute to the Commonwealth," 2011 by the British journalist and political commentator Peter Osborne, is about the dilemma between modern ways and the old days. Peter Osborne describes his concerns about our current political culture, compared with the ancient culture when Great Britain was an Empire, and the Queen was Empress.

He believes it is time to reinvent the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth consists of the UK and most countries that used to be a part of the British Empire when Great Britain was a colonial power. Peter Osborne gives a lot of arguments. He writes, "Over the past few decades, Britain has been unlucky in its leaders ...they have been hostile or blind to the British history. The Commonwealth has not been a priority."

He led us into the European Union and turned his back on the Commonwealth, and in the reign of the New Labor Leader Tony Blair, the Commonwealth was nonexistent. In that period, the Commonwealth was not at all taken seriously. Peter Osborne says: "... the Commonwealth has only really been sustained thanks to the immense personal charisma of the monarch. That is a big mistake. We should prioritise the Commonwealth." That is why he salutes the Duke and the Duchess of Cambridge for going to Canada because Canada is one of the Commonwealth members.

Not only that, but he also calls the Canada family because the Canadians and the Brits fought side by side in the two Great World Wars of the twentieth century. Commonwealth is also cheap. It costs Britain 20p per head to be a part of the membership, and it costs fifty pounds to be a part of the European Union because of the Commonwealth countries' history together; the countries have created friendly connections. All these countries are based on democratic values.

None of these countries wants to use military force to interfere in other countries' affairs. That is a virtue, Peter Osborne thinks. He says that it would be a better solution to emphasize cooperation with these countries instead of the countries in the EU. In a way, you can compare the Commonwealth with the North, where Denmark, Norway, and Sweden are a part of. We have this close connection with one

another and are always helping each other, in wars.

In Denmark, we hear a lot in the media that people have forgotten our history and that we should have more history in schools because people know too little. Also, the EU is too dependent on the USA's economy, and because the USA had a massive crisis, the countries in the EU also got an economic crisis. Is that something we want to be depending on? But there is a chance for the Commonwealth because David Cameron, the prime Minister since 2010, has shown his interest in the Commonwealth countries by taking his first trip to a Commonwealth country.

But also because the Queen has shown interest in the Commonwealth and is one of the few who understands the meaning of it. She has repentantly been engaged by being the chair of this organization and by showing up to every meeting hosted by "Family Commonwealth." So, all in all, I understand what Peter Osborne says, but something I do not understand is just because Britain should take priority in the Commonwealth does not mean Britain cannot take precedence in the EU too.