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BY ANDREW MORTON

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

Yes vote leads in Scots poll

'Unionist' Queen fears break-up of UK

Tim Shipman
POLITICAL EDITOR
and **Jason Allardyce**
SCOTTISH EDITOR

SCOTLAND is on course to vote for independence, according to a shock new poll that today puts Alex Salmond's "yes" campaign in the lead for the first time.

The YouGov survey for The Sunday Times shows that the nationalists have taken a two-point lead and are poised to triumph in the referendum on September 18.

The poll puts the "yes" campaign on 51%, with the unionists on 49% - overturning a 22-point lead for the Better Together campaign in the space of a month.

It comes as Buckingham Palace aides revealed that the Queen has a "great deal of concern" about the prospect of Scotland breaking away and has asked for daily updates on the progress of the campaign.

While palace officials say the Queen is neutral over the referendum, a senior royal source claimed: "The Queen is a unionist... There is now a great deal of concern."

Senior aides are worried that she will be pitched into a constitutional crisis that threatens her status as Scottish head of state and her oath to uphold the Church of Scotland. "If there is a 'yes' vote, that puts us into uncharted territory constitu-

tionally," one aide said. "Nothing is certain. Her being Queen of Scotland is not a given."

The new poll last night sent shock waves through Westminster as Tory MPs warned that David Cameron would have to resign as prime minister if Scotland voted to go it alone. Several Conservative MPs are prepared to go public and demand he quit and two Tory ministers have warned colleagues that they would also feel compelled to resign if there was a "yes" vote. Conservative whips revealed they were "aware" that a small number of MPs might seek to use such a crisis to oust Cameron.

Recriminations also engulfed Labour, with insiders calling for Ed Miliband to sack the party's election co-ordinator, Douglas Alexander, who is blamed by many for the reversal of fortune.

In a grave embarrassment for Miliband and Alistair Darling, the poll reveals that Scottish Labour voters are fast deserting the Labour-led unionist campaign; 35% will now back independence -

nearly double the 18% a month ago. The under-forties, working class and women voters are also shifting towards the "yes" camp.

In a second blow for Labour, just one in three voters trusts arguments made by Darling, the head of the Better Together campaign, or Gordon Brown, its highest-profile campaigner. Both Cameron and Miliband score a dismal 23%. In contrast, Salmond and his deputy, Nicola Sturgeon, are trusted by more than 40% of Scottish voters.

The poll is particularly significant since YouGov has traditionally found less support for independence than some other pollsters.

All three main parties seeking to defend the union will launch a PR blitz this week to stem their haemorrhaging support. The prime minister will travel to Scotland today to visit the Queen at Balmoral, for what will now resemble crisis talks. They will make a joint public appearance at a church service.

Cameron is planning a final speech a week tomorrow,

telling Scots that they have the "best of both worlds" by remaining part of the UK.

Miliband has ordered 100 of his MPs to campaign in Scotland and plans a joint appearance with Gordon Brown this Friday. John Prescott and John Reid will also hit the campaign trail.

In a speech yesterday, Alexander promised the unionist parties would deliver "a stronger Scottish parliament" to swing floating voters and would provide "the clarity they need".

The prime minister has repeatedly ruled out resigning, insisting "emphatically" on Thursday that he would not quit. A separate YouGov poll of voters across the whole of the UK today finds that 22% of voters think he should stand down.

But MPs from all wings of the Conservative party have told The Sunday Times they think Cameron will be duty-bound to stand down if he becomes the leader who lost the union.

Several compared him to Lord North, the first prime minister to be forced out of office after losing a vote of confidence in the House of Commons in 1782, after he presided over the loss of the American colonies.

MPs say the view that Cameron may be forced to stand down is shared by some

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DAVID HARTLEY

The Queen and Prince Philip attend the Braemar Gathering yesterday. She is said to be 'horrified' at the prospect of a 'yes' vote

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Launch all-out blitz on jihadists, says Kissinger

Toby Harnden
NEW YORK
Tim Shipman
and **Mark Hookham**

HENRY KISSINGER, the former US secretary of state, has urged President Barack Obama to "launch an all-out attack" on the terrorist group Isis in Syria and Iraq, warning that Americans have become "bystanders" in the Middle East.

In an exclusive interview with The Sunday Times, Kissinger said airstrikes should be of "limited duration as a punitive measure" and "not make any distinction between Syria and Iraq". He said: "There

can't be any debate any more about fighting them [Isis]."

Kissinger, an influential force in US foreign policy for more than four decades, accused Obama of failing to appreciate that other countries yearned for American guidance in the Middle East and other crisis areas.

"We don't have the power to impose our preference, but without us, and without some leadership from us, the new order cannot be created," he said. "That I think [Obama] has not understood." He said Obama "has not understood all the currents that need to be dealt with" in the world.

During last week's Nato

summit in Wales, Britain and America announced a 10-nation coalition to "degrade and ultimately destroy" Isis.

The criticism of Obama by Kissinger, 91, will increase pressure on the White House to order military action in Syria as well as Iraq. "In my view, this should have happened already," Kissinger said.

David Cameron will begin a diplomatic blitz this week to drum up support from Arab countries for airstrikes on Iraq after warnings from Labour and the Liberal Democrats that they will not back military action unless Saudi Arabia or Qatar are on board. Downing

Continued on page 2 >>

Porridge gets a Tory flavour

Richard Brooks
ARTS EDITOR

WHAT would Fletch say? Another old gag is to have his spell of porridge turned into a comedy series.

Jonathan Aitken, the former Tory cabinet minister who spent seven months in jail for perjury and perverting the course of justice, is the inspiration for a Channel 4 series. He may not be the "habitual criminal" that Fletcher was in the BBC comedy Porridge, but Aitken can see the funny side.

"It was me, the Old Etonian, with the old lags," he said. Aitken is working

with Sean Gray, who co-wrote the political satire The Thick of It, and producer David Aukin, the former head of film at Channel 4.

The central character will not be called Jonathan, let alone Johnno. "That's what they called me inside," said Aitken. "All prisoners have their first names changed to end with an 'O' or a 'Y'. I hope I'm not recognisable though I'm very happy with the idea for the comedy."

Aitken served his time in Belmarsh, Stamford Hill and Elmley. But was it comic? "It has its pretty awful side," Aitken said. "But a lot of amusing things happen."

Find out your lifespan with a piece of string

Nicholas Hellen
SOCIAL AFFAIRS EDITOR

THE key to a long life is having a waist no bigger than half your height, according to a new scientific study.

The report, to be published tomorrow, is based on 20 years of British medical records and is the first to quantify how many years you will lose to obesity as measured by your waist-to-height ratio.

The new golden rule means that the average man, standing 5ft 10in tall, should have a waist measuring no more than 35in, while the girth of an average woman, at 5ft 4in, should not exceed 32in. More than two

thirds of the adult population break this rule.

Dr Margaret Ashwell, a co-author of the study with researchers from the Cass Business School in London, said the evidence was so strong that it should become a global message and anybody could check it with a piece of string: "Keep your waist circumference to less than half your height."

According to the research, an overweight man of 30, of average height and with a 49in waist, can expect to have his life shortened by 7.2 years, while a 30-year-old woman of average height and girth of 44.8in will die 4.6 years early.

The findings suggest that existing measures of obesity such as body mass index are failing to alert people to the risk of serious health problems.

To live a long life, keep your waistline at half your height, page 7

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“Greenserve removed an old combi boiler and immersion heater and fitted a new combi. They worked quickly and competently, and showed some good problem-solving when getting to grips with the old plumbing in my flat. Would recommend.”

Ian Rawes, in London, wanted a gas boiler installer. He found Andrew Harris from Greenserve.



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At last, Ashya is to fly to Prague

Kevin Dowling and Jacy Meyer

FINAL preparations were being made last night to fly Ashya King, 5, to Prague for specialist proton beam therapy treatment on his brain tumour amid new controversy over whether the treatment is suitable.

Ashya was said to be "in perfect health and very happy" while he was "playing with toys" and family in his hospital bed in Malaga, Spain. Yesterday

doctors drew up plans for him to be transferred by air ambulance to Prague.

"We want him to go this weekend but at the latest on Monday," said the family's lawyer, Juan Isidro Fernandez Diaz.

"The most important thing is that Ashya is in perfect condition. He is playing with his toys and with his brother and his mum and dad."

The Kings have fought against the medical opinion of

Ashya King and parents Brett and Naghmeh have been at the centre of a media storm since they removed him from Southampton General Hospital



doctors at Southampton General Hospital, where he was being treated before they removed him against medical advice 10 days ago.

On Friday night a High Court judge gave the Kings permission to take Ashya to Prague.

The latest move comes amid growing controversy over the

truth about the boy's condition. His father had said Ashya had just four months to live but on Friday Peter Wilson, the lead paediatrician at Southampton hospital, said it was wrong to describe Ashya as "terminally ill" or "dying".

Wilson said: "Ashya is sick because of the surgery he has

had. He has a 70%-80% chance of survival. For every week we do not treat him from this week, his chances of survival decrease."

He said that proton beam therapy, which allows doctors to target tumours more precisely and does less damage to surrounding, healthy tissue,

holds no advantage for a child such as Ashya because cancerous cells could be anywhere in the brain or spine.

"For this particular tumour, the reason why the proton beam was not deemed to be of any benefit is because you have to irradiate most of the brain and spine anyway," Wilson

told the Guardian. However, Iva Tatounova, director of strategy at the Proton Therapy Centre (PTC) in Prague, said the centre has a lot of experience treating children and proton therapy was a "more modern option".

The centre's medical experts will meet tomorrow morning

to assess Ashya's medical records before he travels to Prague.

"[The] PTC has again requested information from Malaga Hospital in order to be made up-to-date on Ashya's current health condition, so that it can be discussed with them directly on Monday," Tatounova said.

The PTC says that it has treated "dozens" of patients from Britain, "mainly with prostate cancer and brain tumours", since it opened. The PTC expects to meet representatives from the NHS in the next few weeks to discuss future co-operation.

Brett King, 51, a property developer, and Naghmeh, 45, were reunited with their son on Wednesday after their dramatic arrests at a guesthouse in southern Spain last weekend.

They spent three nights in custody after being detained on international arrest warrants. British police accused them of child cruelty following their decision to take Ashya to Spain, where they own property.

Diaz said: "Like any parent would, they've just tried to do the best for their child. As far as the money goes, don't worry. Many companies have donated enough money, both in England and in Spain."

The state may threaten but a parent knows when a child is sick, Camilla Cavendish, page 21

A 'yes' vote could demolish Miliband's Downing Street hopes

Peter Kellner

IT IS like Groundhog Day with a savage twist: the same month, same numbers, same shock to the political world — but this time with much more dramatic consequences.

Almost exactly four years ago a YouGov/Sunday Times poll found Ed Miliband had overtaken the favourite — his brother, David — in the race to be Labour's new leader. We

said he was 51-49% ahead. That is precisely the margin by which "yes" now leads "no" in Scotland.

Seldom has the term "knife-edge" carried such lethal force. A two-point gap is too small for us to call the outcome. But that fact is itself remarkable, as Better Together seemed to have victory in the bag. Month after month it had held a steady lead, averaging 58%

"no", 42% "yes". In the past four weeks, however, support for the union has drained away at an astonishing rate.

The "yes" campaign has not just invaded "no" territory; it has launched a blitzkrieg. Only Conservative voters have resisted Alex Salmond's advances: 93% of them still plan to vote "no".

All other sections of Scottish society are on the move, most notably among

four key groups: Labour voters, up from 18% saying "yes" four weeks ago, to 35% today; working-class voters, up from 41% to 56%; voters under 40, from 39% to 60%; women, from 33% to 47%.

These findings suggest that Salmond has achieved three things. First he has neutralised the fear factor. Many Scots thought independence too risky — for example, the uncertainty over

Scotland's currency and the prospects for jobs and investment.

Second, he has played the Sassenach card with great skill. Almost half of all Scots fear that a "no" vote would leave their country at the mercy of policies they dislike imposed by London.

Third, Salmond's team is thought to have been far more impressive. The "no" campaign has turned off large numbers of voters. By two to one, Scots say Better Together has been negative — and by the same margin they feel that Yes Scotland has been generally positive.

That said, the contest could go either way in the final 11 days. Here are the factors that have the power to decide the outcome. Factors that could favour a "yes" vote:

■ Momentum. The change in

mood of the past four weeks may prove infectious, with more voters being swayed by the excitement.

■ Superior campaigning. Yes Scotland is not only seen as more positive, it is also winning the ground war with more leaflets, posters, local stalls and emails.

■ Women continuing to lose their fears of independence. If men do not start swinging back to "no", any further shift to "yes" by women will guarantee Salmond victory.

Factors that could favour a "no" vote:

■ Turnout. Our poll points to a high turnout among voters of all ages. But experience tells us the over-60s usually vote in larger numbers than any other group and they still divide 62-38% for "no".

■ Return of the fear factor. Until last week a "yes" victory

looked unlikely. Now that it is on the cards, the warnings from those opposed to independence will gain a fresh urgency and may make a bigger impact.

■ The Quebec precedent. In 1995, with a month to go on secession from Canada, "no" held a steady lead. Then the mood changed. The final polls pointed to a 53-47% victory for "yes". But on the day some voters pulled back from the brink and Quebec voted to remain part of Canada by 50.6% to 49.4%.

Should Scotland choose independence then YouGov's latest Britain-wide poll for The Sunday Times contains bad news for Miliband.

Today's two-point lead for Labour in the national polls would, in my judgment, leave the party 10 seats short of an overall majority and with the

option of going into coalition with the Liberal Democrats or running a minority government on its own.

If we exclude Scotland, Miliband's hopes evaporate, for the Tories are likely to be the largest party with: Conservative 278; Labour 274; Lib Dem 18; and others 21.

The lesson is clear: next week's vote could not only change Scotland. It could also transform what happens at Westminster.

Peter Kellner is president of YouGov

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'No' campaign boss 'couldn't run whelk stall'

► Continued from page 1

cabinet ministers. One senior backbencher said: "This is a mainstream view in the parliamentary party. It goes well beyond the usual suspects. Two people who are ministers have said to me that they feel they would also have to resign."

One MP said: "He should resign. If Lord North went in 1782 for losing the American colonies, I can't see how Cameron can stay, frankly. He thinks he can just cruise on when the union of 300 years has been dissolved. Someone's got to go. Heads have got to roll. The idea that something like this happens, and nobody loses their job over it is nuts."

A former minister blamed the prime minister for letting Salmond dictate the timing of the referendum. "I think he would have to go. It's equivalent to losing the colonies. I'm not looking for an excuse to get rid of David Cameron. I want him to win the next election. But this would be such a blow."

He added: "There have been mistakes about this campaign. We should never have allowed Salmond to have determined the question. We should never have allowed him to determine the date."

"The consequences for the whole of the United Kingdom of a 'yes' vote to make Scotland a foreign country are absolutely cataclysmic. The nation will be pitched into turmoil."

"That will infect the capital

markets, the stock market, everything." MPs are refusing to break cover now because they do not want to boost Salmond's campaign, which rests, in part, on exploiting anti-Tory feeling among many Scottish voters.

But one prominent MP said some would speak out if there were a "yes" vote. "In the event that we lose Scotland, there would be people publicly calling for Cameron's resignation," he said. "At that point events would move beyond the ability of the normal science of politics to predict."

Another senior backbencher said: "It's a golden opportunity for a lot of people who hate Cameron who are just looking for an opportunity to get rid of him. There will be a push to topple him and get in a caretaker government. Today walking around the lobbies the grumpy discontents are very excited about the idea. The Boris campaign is quite excited about the idea. All the usual suspects will gather and circle."

The plotters want MP John Randall to stand down and force a by-election in his Uxbridge and South Ruislip seat so Boris Johnson can return to the Commons to take over as leader. Those plans are rejected by Johnson's allies, who urged the plotters to stand down, warning that any move against Cameron would be "a disaster for Boris".

In the event of a "yes" vote, Whitehall sources say the prime minister will hold an emergency Cobra meeting to help combat panic in the financial markets.

He will also face pressure from Tory MPs to pass legislation banning Scottish MPs from voting on English laws in the year between the 2015 election and the 2016 deadline for an independence deal.

The YouGov poll of UK voters shows that four out of 10 think Scottish MPs should not even be allowed to stand next year if Scotland opts for independence.

As the recriminations flowed, senior Tories criticised Labour's failure to shore up its own vote in Scotland. "The reason Labour are up there in force is that they've got to get their side of things fixed," a No 10 source said. "Scottish Conservatives are rock-solid but Labour hasn't delivered."

Unionists on both sides of the border are venting frustration at the quality of the Better Together team that they claim lacks vision and ability.

Better Together figures have christened Alexander "Rain Man" after the autistic character played by Dustin Hoffman because "people cannot connect with him".

"It's a campaign with no vision and no direction — the general feeling is that the people are just not up to the job on the Labour side," one unionist insider said.

A Labour frontbencher said Miliband should fire Alexander as his general election co-ordinator.

"Douglas is showing why he shouldn't be put in charge of a whelk stall let alone a major campaign. Even if there's a 'no' vote, we don't want our fate in his hands next year."

Alistair Carmichael, the Scottish secretary, has pledged to hold a conference on devolution within weeks of a "no" vote. But there is incredulity in Tory and Lib Dem circles that Labour has refused to go as far as them in offering the Scottish government complete control of income tax.

Rory Stewart, the chairman of the defence select committee, criticised the leaders of all three main parties for failing to make the positive case for the union.

He said: "A 'yes' vote would represent a failure of the entire political class. I think it's the greatest constitutional issue we have faced for 300 years and it has not been treated like that. In the 19th century, this would have been like the Great Reform Act. It would have engaged the whole nation and its politicians for years."

Stewart refused to call for Cameron to quit because "that would be a gift for Alex Salmond". But he suggested the prime minister might be forced out: "Gladstone, for all his reputation, fell on home rule, which is a lesser thing than independence."

'Comprehensive' British plan to beat Isis

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Street confirmed last night that the prime minister would attend the UN general assembly on September 24 where Britain and America hope to unveil a broader coalition of the willing. Aides confirmed he would woo Gulf Arab leaders over the next two weeks to join the "core coalition".

Cameron also plans to work with Obama to win UN approval for a crackdown on foreign fighters after moves to strip passports from British militants going to fight in Syria and Iraq. Sources say Cameron will also ask his officials to draw up plans to do

more to assist the moderate opposition in Syria, which risks being wiped out in battles with Bashar al-Assad's troops and Isis militants.

Philip Hammond, the foreign secretary, last night issued the first details of the "comprehensive" plans to defeat Isis, also known as Islamic State or Isil, that are being mapped out with Britain's "international allies and regional partners".

He said: "This will involve a mix of humanitarian, military and diplomatic efforts with different nations making contributions including: training and advising the

Iraqi security forces; arming, training and advising the Kurds; technical and political support to an inclusive Iraqi government, reinforcement of neighbouring countries against Isil and continuing surgical strikes on Isil.

"While we have said there will be no British combat boots on the ground, we have ruled nothing else out at this stage."

Kissinger, who served as national security adviser and then secretary of state under Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford from 1969 until 1977, has been consulted by Democrats as well as Republicans. Hillary Clinton, the likely Democratic

presidential nominee, said she had "relied on his counsel" as secretary of state, though Obama has not sought him out.

■ Nicolas Henin, a French journalist held hostage for months in Syria, said one of his captors was Mehdi Nemmouche, a Frenchman suspected of killing four people at the Brussels Jewish Museum in May. Henin was held for a time with the American journalists James Foley and Steven Sotloff, both of whom have since been beheaded by Isis extremists.

No more debate: it's time to attack, Focus, pages 16-17