

Scottish Independence Referendum – this week's views



A selection of remarks and comments and pointers to articles about the Scottish Independence Referendum.

People living in Scotland are invited to vote in the referendum on independence from the United Kingdom on 18 September 2014. The referendum question is “Should Scotland be an independent country?”

Whether you intend voting Yes or No to that question, your views, and those of others, have a place here. We invite comments and we also invite you to write about what you think by using our Submit your Story feature [here](#).

The BBC took time to interview the leaders of both the Yes and the No Campaigns in one week. Watch the interviews [here](#).

[Post](#) by [BBC Scotland News](#).

Referendum TV is being screened live from Hill Street during the Fringe. Hosted by Lesley Riddoch and Iain McWhirter you can watch it [here](#):-

Better Together question the nationalists' defence strategy for a separate Scotland which they claim has been undermined after the Secretary-General of Nato said that leaving the UK would mean a separate Scotland would have to reapply to join the alliance.

Anders Fogh Rasmussen said that any decision on accepting a new country into Nato had to be unanimous among all 28 member states. Any other Nato nation can veto an application at any time.

Cyprus is still excluded from the military alliance because of a long-running territorial dispute with Turkey, whilst Macedonia is not a member because of a disagreement with Greece.

The nationalists have pledged that a separate Scotland would join the nuclear alliance in the event of separation, despite also pledging that they would remove Trident in a separate Scotland.

Experts say this would put our Nato application at risk.

Last week, a report from the expert defence think tank RUSI showed that Alex Salmond's plan to remove trident by 2020 was unrealistic, with 2028 a more likely date.

Des Browne, Former Secretary of State for Defence and Scotland, said:

“With a week until postal ballots are sent out to around one million Scottish households, it is clear that the Nationalists' plans on defence don't add up.

“A vote to leave the UK is a vote to leave Nato, the most successful defence and security alliance in the world. Separation puts that at risk. Alex Salmond has not explained how he intends to remove our nuclear deterrent whilst simultaneously rejoining a nuclear alliance. It simply isn't credible.

“Today we have the ability to make a difference in our world. We have seat at the top table in Nato, the EU, the UN and the G7.

“Our membership of Nato as part of the UK gives us a level of

security that cannot be guaranteed if we vote for independence. Why put that at risk?"

The Governor of the Bank of England Mark Carney is steadfastly towing a middle line but that has allowed the Yes and No camps to interpret what he said in two different ways.

Read [The Telegraph's](#) account of the pronouncement by the Governor that the Bank do indeed have contingency plans.

The Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott has caused a stir saying to [The Times](#) that he believed those who were pro-independence were not friends of freedom or justice. The First Minister rebuffed these comments stating that the Australian known for his outspoken manner was foolish, hypocritical and offensive. [See the BBC here.](#)



Three senior former members of the police service in Scotland declared their support for a Yes vote in the September 18 referendum when they visited the Yes campaign's office on Friday.

James Fraser, former Chairman of the Scottish Police Federation, David Ross former Vice-Chair and Allan Burnett, the former counter-terrorism co-ordinator with The Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland (ACPOS), join the increasing number of Scots who are working for a Yes vote to ensure a healthy and secure future for the police service in an independent Scotland, in sharp contrast to the prospect of cuts in funding if there is a No vote .

Allan Burnett, a former director of intelligence at the old

Strathclyde Police force, and Assistant Chief Constable in charge of co-ordinating Counter Terrorism for Scotland said:

'September's vote is a huge opportunity to ensure that policing in Scotland goes in a very different direction from what we are sadly seeing in the rest of the UK right now.

'Police numbers are being slashed as part of Westminster's austerity programme. It is pretty clear that is exactly what is in prospect for the people of Scotland if there is a No vote next month. The Westminster government – whoever is in charge of the Treasury – will be looking to make substantial and painful cuts to Scotland's budget – and policing will be under severe pressure.

'Police numbers in England and Wales have fallen more rapidly than anywhere else in Europe. Meanwhile, Scotland continues to benefit from record numbers in the police service. A No vote will put that at real risk. A Yes vote will consolidate the progress in police numbers and conditions of service. A No vote ends all of that.'

Jim Fraser said: 'We keep hearing scare stories from Project Fear about what will happen in the event of a Yes vote . The truth is there are real dangers for Scotland – if we miss this great opportunity on September 18 – and vote No .

'The people of Scotland need only to look at the way policing in England and Wales is being hammered by this coalition – and we all know that in the event of a No vote Scotland will be next for a hammering.

'Nobody should be in any doubt that as far as policing is concerned a Yes vote is the only way to stop funding being cut and cut again. The No campaign pretend the Barnett formula is safe following a No vote, but it would be a miracle after a No vote if it wasn't slashed. Westminster can't be trusted with funding the police service in Scotland this – it is as simple as that.

David Ross said: 'Policing in Scotland will suffer dramatically and rapidly if there is a No vote. Everything from the number of serving police officers to their remuneration, career opportunities and pensions will be threatened. Only with a Yes vote can we ensure that policing isn't the next thing to suffer from Westminster's slash-and-cut mentality.'

'The police service – like so many other areas of Scottish public life – needs to be protected from the worst excesses of the cuts and austerity threatened from Westminster now and for years and years to come. This referendum is the one opportunity to make sure Scotland avoids that fate.'

Blair Jenkins, Chief Executive of Yes Scotland, said: 'The support of these respected and senior former police officers is very welcome. They know exactly what fate awaits the police service along with all other public services, including the NHS, at the hands of Westminster in the event of a No vote in September. However unlikely that may seem, it is a real danger to communities and services up and down the country.'

'The police service in Scotland faces a grim future without independence. We know from all the polling evidence and our own canvassing that more and more people are moving to Yes – especially when they realise that the risks of a No vote are so great.'



The second debate between First Minister Alex Salmond and leader of the No campaign, Alistair Darling takes place on Monday 25 August at Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum.

You can watch it on TV but you can also send in your questions now.

[Read more here](#)

Scotland's foremost historian, Professor Sir Tom Devine has revealed he's voting Yes after completing 'a long journey' over 'the last fortnight.

Devine, who was knighted in June as part of the Queen's birthday honour, told the Observer newspaper that in Scotland's period of devolution, it had 'demonstrated competent government' and that only independence would allow the country to develop an 'equal relationship' with its 'great southern neighbour'.

Sir Tom Devine said: 'This has been quite a long journey for me and I've only come to a yes conclusion over the last fortnight.

'The Scottish parliament has demonstrated competent government and it represents a Scottish people who are wedded to a social democratic agenda and the kind of political values which sustained and were embedded in the welfare state of the late 1940s and 1950s.

'It is the Scots who have succeeded most in preserving the British idea of fairness and compassion in terms of state support and intervention. Ironically, it is England, since the 1980s, which has embarked on a separate journey.'

He added: 'The union of England and Scotland was not a marriage based on love. It was a marriage of convenience. It was pragmatic. From the 1750s down to the 1980s there was stability in the relationship. Now, all the primary foundations of that stability have gone or been massively diluted.

'We now have a proper modern history of Scotland which we didn't have until as late as the 1980s. We have a clear

national narrative underpinned by objective and rigorous academic research. This wasn't always the case.

'Our economy is now based on some heavy industry, light manufacturing, electronics, tourism, financial services and a vibrant public sector which provides sustainable jobs.

'We have a resilient economic system and reserves of one of the most important things for an independent estate: power, power through the assets of oil and also through the potential of wind energy. In this, Scotland is disproportionately endowed compared to almost all other European countries.'

Welcoming the historian's endorsement, Blair Jenkins said that Sir Tom offered great insight into Scotland's rise as a nation.

The campaign's Chief Executive said: 'Sir Tom Devine is Scotland's best known historian and his research into our country's past is second to none. He offers great insight into Scotland's re-emergence as a nation and we're delighted that he shares Yes Scotland's view for the present and future potential of Scotland as an independent nation.'

Professor Devine's works include *The Scottish Nation: 1700-2000* and *To the Ends of the Earth: Scotland's Global Diaspora, 1750-2010*

The Edinburgh Reporter rounds up the variety of views we find across all media as often as we can.

If you would like to write about your views on independence then please feel free to submit your article using the Submit your Story feature [here](#). The Edinburgh Reporter does not have a stance on the independence question, but hopes to help you make your mind up about the vote on 18 September 2014 by providing as much unbiased coverage as possible.

There are two main websites where you can obtain further information:-

Yes Scotland can be found [here](#)

Better Together has a website [here](#)