

Scottish Voters Sound Death Knell for 300-Year Union

In itself, the outcome of the by-election of July 24 held in Glasgow East, Scotland, was stunning—in that the Scottish National Party (SNP) captured a long-held Labour parliamentary seat. But the significance of the defeat for Labour, was what it portended for the union among Scotland, England, and Wales.

“Glasgow Spells the End of 300-Year Union,” was the headline of the July 27 *Sunday Times* article by Simon Jenkins. “When last year the Scots voted the SNP into office, by the narrowest of margins, it was regarded as a protest against Tony Blair, against the Iraq war, against English centralism, by bloody-minded Scots,” Jenkins wrote. “What nobody in England—or Scottish Labour—was prepared to accept was that the Scots might have voted quite specifically to be more independent of England.

“Glasgow East has done more than deliver a bloody nose to the most Scots of modern Prime Ministers [Gordon Brown is Scottish]. It has accelerated a process that may soon rearrange the political and geographical components of the United Kingdom. This is not just the best. It is for real,” Jenkins concluded.