

Axe fiend kills baby

A BABY boy was hacked to death in his pram by a man wielding a medieval-style battleaxe.

The four-month-old's mother was critically injured in the attack by a stranger in the street.

Harold Montague, 33, first used the axe's spiked end to stab his sister-in-law at his Las Vegas home. She survived.

Then he ran out and turned on little Damien Avila-Castro and mum Sandra. "A cop said: 'He claims he blacked out'."

THUMBEARNER

A school has become the first in Britain to install fingerprint scanners in Blackburn, Lancs.

Debt us out of here

SPENDING CUTS MUST BE FAST, SAY EXPERTS



PUBLIC spending must be slashed THIS YEAR to stop Britain plunging back into recession, experts warned yesterday.

They said mortgage rates would rise and the Pound's value would slide unless the UK's soaring national debt is cut very soon.

The call by leading economists

By KEVIN SCHOFIELD, Political Correspondent

is a huge boost to the Tories, who have said they will immediately start lowering the deficit - expected to hit £178 billion - if they win the General Election.

PM Gordon Brown, left, has said immediate cuts would choke any economic recovery. Among the 20 leading figures who put their names to a letter in the Sunday Times backing the Tory plans were Sir Howard Davies, the former deputy governor of the Bank of England.

They also included Labour peer Lord Desai and four former chief economists at the International Monetary Fund.

The letter read: "There is a compelling case, all else being equal, for the first measures beginning to take effect in the 2010-11 fiscal year."

The experts said public spending should be cut and any tax rises should be kept to a minimum.

Shadow chancellor George Osborne said: "This is when Gordon Brown's argument on the deficit has collapsed and a new consensus for more decisive action emerges."

Giveaways

"These economic experts also say there is a compelling case for starting in 2010 and that there should be independent oversight of the forecasts, two arguments we have been making for months."

Meanwhile, it was claimed that Mr Brown and Chancellor Alistair Darling are at odds over when to hold the Budget.

The PM is thought to favour a voter-friendly package including several giveaways in early March. That would leave him the option of calling an April election.

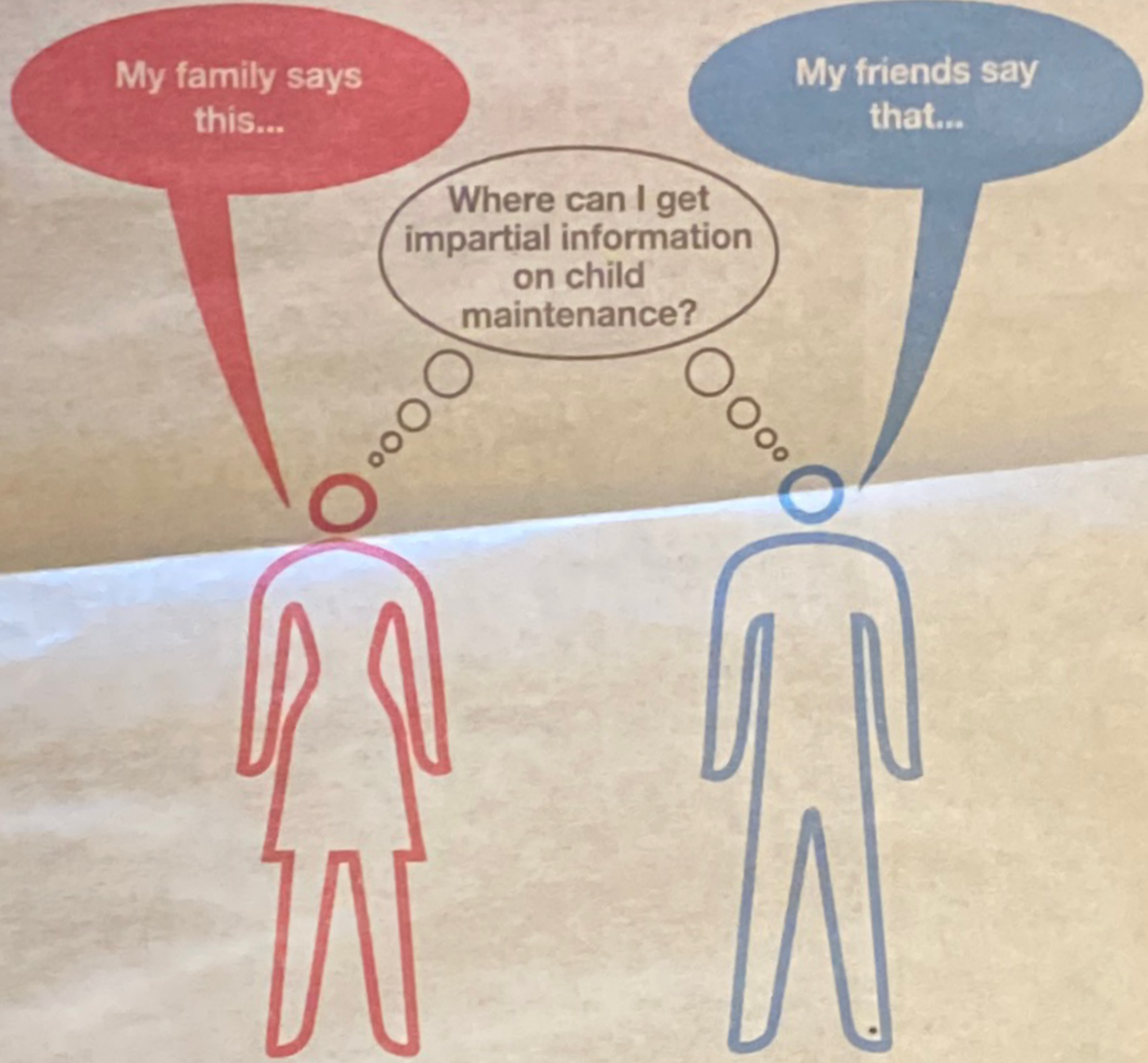
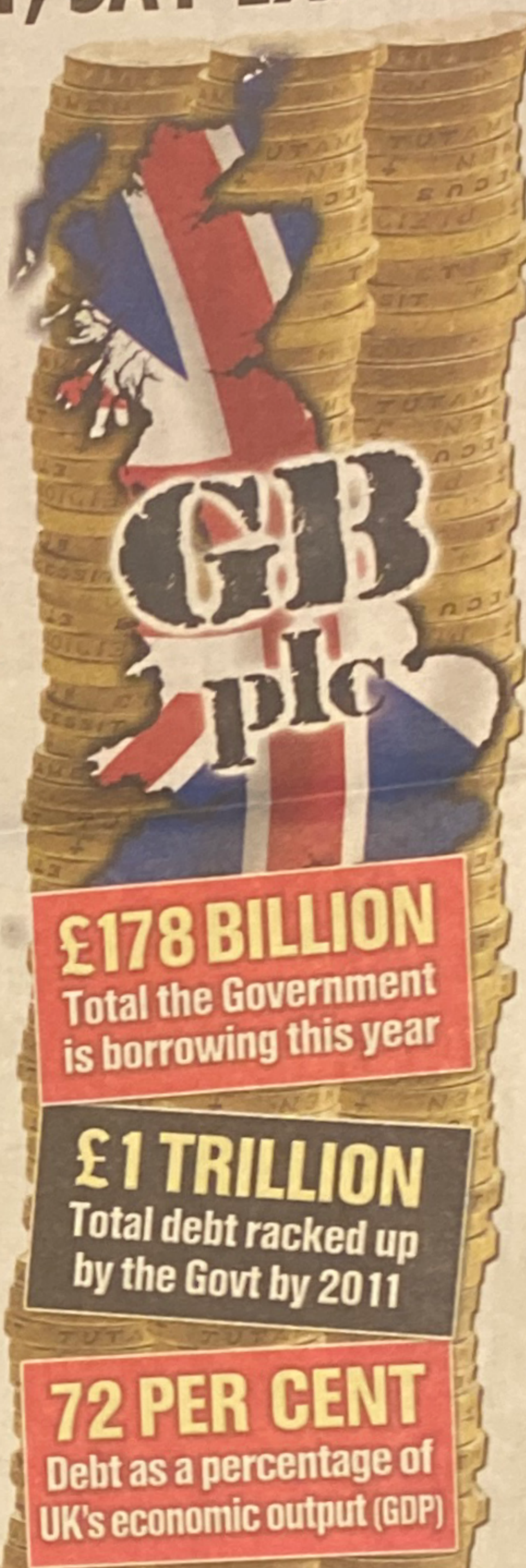
But Mr Darling wants it later, with an emphasis on cutting the deficit.

Labour have vowed to halve the £178 billion deficit - what it needs to borrow to cover spending - in four years. The Tories say it must happen much faster.

The total debt the Government has racked up is set to top £1 TRILLION in 2011. Debt as a percentage of economic output (GDP) is an indicator of how deep in the red a country is.

Website ukpublicspending.co.uk puts Britain's at 72 per cent - the highest since 1969. k.schofield@the-sun.co.uk

The Sun Says - Page Eight



Child Maintenance options

0800 0834 375

www.cmoptions.org

Separation can be a confusing time. Now there's a new free service that can talk you through all the facts about child maintenance and offer wider practical help, whatever your circumstances.

Call one of our specialists in confidence on 0800 0834 375.

We're here to help you work it out

TRIM CAREFULLY

WORRY, but don't panic. That is my reaction to present concerns about Britain's budget deficit.

The trouble for the UK is that the deep recession slashed tax revenues and our budget deficit this year is higher than most.

Around the world, the worry is Governments with high deficits will not be able to pay their debts. Some fear Britain could be another Dubai or Greece. But I don't think so.

We need to reduce the deficit by cutting public spending, but we



myView

By DR GERARD LYONS
Chief Economist at Standard Chartered Bank

must be careful or the economy could slip back into recession. Cuts must be made in the right areas, not in infrastructure or education.

When this is happening the Bank of England must keep interest rates near zero so the economy can cope.