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Pound to gain on euro but dip versus dollar: Poll

London.—Sterling is set to make solid gains on the euro in the coming year as markets fully price in the divergent monetary policy paths the Bank of England and the European Central Bank are following, a Reuters poll found.

The BoE is widely expected to be the first major central bank to begin hiking interest rates - although not until next year - whereas most economists say the ECB will cut its key interest rates today.

“The divergence between the two is just go-

ing to be ever more extreme,” said Geoffrey Yu at UBS.

“There is a big reluctance to sell sterling - the UK economy is doing relatively okay.”

According to this week's poll one euro will be worth 81.0 pence in a month, 79.8p in six months and just 78.8p in a year.

The common currency, trading around 81.3p earlier yesterday, has fallen around 5 percent in the past year and those medians suggest a stronger pound than the May poll did.

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Britain told to leave the European Union

Paris.—Former French Prime Minister and fervent EU advocate Michel Rocard accused Britain yesterday of having only joined the European Union to serve its commercial interests, telling it to leave before it caused further damage.

The comments by the 83-year-old Rocard came as Britain leads opposition to the bid of former Luxembourg Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker to run the European Commission, a post for which he has backing from a number of EU members including Germany.

“Between you and us, the continental Europeans, there is a disagreement that is turning ugly,” Rocard wrote in an commentary published in *Le Monde* newspaper.

“Europe is dying from it,” he said.

The Socialist Rocard has been a backer of closer European integration since the bloc's founding in the decade

after World War Two and spent 15 years as a member of European Parliament after leaving French politics in 1997.

Britain - which joined the then European Economic Community (EEC) in 1973 after France's General Charles de Gaulle had resisted a previous attempt to enter the bloc - has long been accused by some of the zone's founder members of seeking to slow down the European political union.

But Chancellor Merkel warns against sidelining Britain in EU

GERMAN Chancellor Angela Merkel warned in a speech in parliament yesterday against ignoring the views of Britain on European issues despite differences with London over who should become the next president of the European Commission. Speaking in the Bundestag ahead of a meeting of Group of Seven (G7) leaders in Brussels, Merkel said

she was actively pressing her European counterparts to support the candidacy of Jean-Claude Juncker for the top European Union job. But she also made clear that states with doubts about the former Luxembourg prime minister needed to be heard out and she sharply criticised German politicians and media who have urged her to ignore British concerns and ram through Juncker.



Prince calls for unity in Spain

Madrid.—Spain's King-to-be, Prince Felipe, yesterday called for unity to lead the country out of recession. The Prince, who is set to be crowned as Spain's new King later this month, said that a united front was the only way to overcome many of the problems which the country was experiencing at the moment. **See Page Eight.**

10 minute speech!

London.—Queen Elizabeth unveiled yesterday Britain's last legislative programme before the next national election, citing mostly minor new laws and fuelling opposition criticism that the coalition was out of ideas. In a ceremony in the upper house of parliament rich in pomp and pageantry, it took the queen less than 10 minutes to list 11 new pieces of legislation Prime Minister David Cameron's Government plans to enact before a May 2015 general election. **Page 9**

