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**THE ANDREW MARR SHOW**

**INTERVIEW:**

**WILLIAM HAGUE, MP**

**LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF**

**COMMONS**

**NOVEMBER 2<sup>nd</sup> 2014**

**ANDREW MARR:**

I'm joined now by William Hague who was Foreign Secretary. That is the big dilemma, is it not Mr Hague: how do you deal with all these people who are out there, some of whom have been radicalised, some of whom went out there (as we've heard) for the best possible motives and simply want to come home?

**WILLIAM HAGUE:**

Yes it is, but the most important thing to emphasise of course is don't go in the first place. I pay tribute to Mr Deghayes actually for coming on your programme and for explaining what has happened to his family and these issues. This is happening to too many families. But we have been very clear for the last three years, don't go to Syria. Maybe you may think you're going to deliver aid, but you can end up being drawn into an extremist organisation. Even the opposition, the moderate opposition who we support in Syria, don't want foreign fighters to go and join them in Syria. We should help with our aid, with our diplomatic support for people in Syria, but not by going there and getting involved in the fighting.

**ANDREW MARR:**

What about the hundreds of people who are already over there - some of whom have fought, some of whom have not fought, many of whom now want to come home again? What should be our attitude towards them?

**WILLIAM HAGUE:**

Our top priority has to be the protection of the security of the people of this country, and that is why we will take action where we think people could be dangerous. We confiscate passports; we're working on additional powers to be introduced into parliament; there have been over 200 arrests this year related to people going to Iraq and Syria. But the Home Office and the police and the health service are also working together on what we can do to assist those people who come back with good intentions, but of course we have to be sure that they do have good intentions.

**ANDREW MARR:**

Absolutely and that's difficult. A lot of people out there probably have fought, changed their mind. We've heard lots of stories of people who've realised, the scales have fallen from their eyes about what's really going on in that part of the world, would like to come back, and perhaps you could use them as powerful weapons in stopping other people going in the first place?

**WILLIAM HAGUE:**

Well perhaps we could and others will just need help because they will have been through an extremely traumatic period. We haven't had a lot of those people coming back yet and saying they want to be of assistance, but if they do well then of course the government, the police, the National Health Service will work with those people and help them to recover and to assist others.

**ANDREW MARR:**

Alright, English votes for English laws. How are you getting on?

**WILLIAM HAGUE:**

Well this is an important issue. I think there are two aspects to this. One aspect is decentralisation within England and this is something that this government is

championing with city deals and the same thing for areas that are not cities, giving more powers to local authorities – particularly in the North of England – and you’ll hear more of this in the coming weeks. And I think an area of ...

**ANDREW MARR:**

*(over)* Quite a good idea to get rid of the House of Lords and replace it by a Senate of the Regions and Nations.

**WILLIAM HAGUE:**

Well ...

**ANDREW MARR:**

Not a bad idea, is it?

**WILLIAM HAGUE:**

This is something that many of us have voted for. Ed Miliband ...

**ANDREW MARR:**

Really?

**WILLIAM HAGUE:**

Well you remember we had ... we attempted to legislate on this earlier in this parliament to create an elected upper house, mainly elected upper house. Who blocked that? The Labour Party. It would have got through if Ed Miliband had wanted it to go through. And then we have a speech from him yesterday saying he wants an elected senate. We could be well on our way to that if he hadn’t already blocked it. The Labour Party also took forward no ideas for decentralisation in Britain in 13 years.

**ANDREW MARR:**

*(over)* But if the Labour Party ...

**WILLIAM HAGUE:**

*(over)* This is coming from this government.

**ANDREW MARR:**

*(over)* But if the Labour Party has now changed its mind, it suggests very strongly that after the next election the House of Lords as we know it will be abolished ...

**WILLIAM HAGUE:**

Well we have had ...

**ANDREW MARR:**

*(over)* ... as you'll agree??

**WILLIAM HAGUE:**

... they have made the same commitment many, many times, remember. Labour governments have been elected on this basis before. Have we seen that creation of an elected senate? No. So I don't think the work we're doing on English votes can be dependent on reforming the House of Lords. That's a desirable thing to do as well. So there is that aspect of decentralisation to cities. And then ...

**ANDREW MARR:**

*(over)* There is the Commons?

**WILLIAM HAGUE:**

There is. Of course we have to address this situation - and the Conservative Party wish to do so - where in future if we are deciding about the health service or education in England and those matters have been devolved to Scotland or to Wales, then those policies should require the consent of the English Members of Parliament in one way or another.

**ANDREW MARR:**

Have you found a way to avoid there being two completely separate classes of MPs in parliament - in other words, some way of using grand committees and report reading votes and so forth - or is it going to be a straightforward you're an English MP, you can vote on these things; you're not an English MP, you can't?

**WILLIAM HAGUE:**

There are different ways of doing this and we will publish either from the government or the Conservative Party in the coming weeks the options on this, so that everybody can have the debate about this. But I would make the point we already have two classes now of members of parliament because the Scottish MPs are not voting on the health or education policies of Scotland, but they are voting on what happens in Yorkshire, in England, in my constituency, and I'm not able to do so in their constituencies. We already have two classes of members of parliament. So the question is how to be fair to the whole of the United Kingdom while meeting, by the way, all the vows to Scotland.

**ANDREW MARR:**

Sure.

**WILLIAM HAGUE:**

Alex Salmond was saying to you in that interview earlier you know if the main parties don't meet their vows to Scotland ... Nobody is intending to go back on the vows to Scotland.

**ANDREW MARR:**

*(over)* That's going to happen come what may, okay.

**WILLIAM HAGUE:**

That is going to happen. He's trying to create a sense of betrayal to serve the purposes of the Scottish National Party.

**ANDREW MARR:**

Talking about a sense of betrayal, a lot of the people who were hoping for a really good, clear-cut, widespread review of child abuse in this country now feel betrayed by the way the government's behaved. You have completely bogged it up, have you not, over the Woolf Review – both the Home Office getting involved in helping her rewrite letters and so forth and not being able to find anybody who is not a paid up member of the establishment to do this very, very important job quickly and clearly?

**WILLIAM HAGUE:**

Well we're determined that this inquiry will happen and will be able to do its work. There are so many deeply disturbing things for it to look into. Now the Home Secretary will make a statement to parliament tomorrow on how we are going to proceed now that Fiona Woolf has withdrawn from this. Many of us believe that she would have done this with great impartiality and integrity, but she has withdrawn from it. The panel will be able to go ... She was chairman of a panel.

**ANDREW MARR:**

*(over)* What do you think about the Home Office's behaviour?

**WILLIAM HAGUE:**

*(over)* The panel will be able to go on with its work in any case.

**ANDREW MARR:**

Sure. What do you think about the Home Office's behaviour in helping her adjust her letter about her relationship with Lady Brittan?

**WILLIAM HAGUE:**

Well I think the Home Secretary will be able, as I say, to speak about this in parliament this week. I can't answer for the details of things happening in the Home Office, but I do know the Home Secretary has been passionately concerned to get this inquiry going.

**ANDREW MARR:**

It does look like complete incompetence, doesn't it?

**WILLIAM HAGUE:**

Well no, I think what we've seen is a determination to get this inquiry going with somebody who would have the very highest standards leading it. Well okay there has been a controversy about that, we will have to adjust to that, but the important thing is clearly some terrible things have happened over many years. We've got to find out the

truth about that, so we have to somehow maintain and restore the momentum of this work. And the panel will be able to go on with its work temporarily even without a chairman, but of course a new chairman must be found very quickly.

**ANDREW MARR:**

The Prime Minister has very boldly taken on the challenge of the Rochester by-election. He's gone there a lot of the times himself. Most of the cabinet have been pouring down there. It would be a complete catastrophe for the Tory Party if you are unable to stop UKIP in that kind of seat, wouldn't it?

**WILLIAM HAGUE:**

Well let us see what the result ... I was there yesterday finding a great deal of Conservative support ...

**ANDREW MARR:**

*(over)* Go on, say it would be a complete catastrophe for us. We're all finished if you don't win in Rochester.

**WILLIAM HAGUE:**

*(over)* ... a nice invitation from interviewers always to forecast some disaster for one's own party. No I think this will be a hard fought by-election of course ...

**ANDREW MARR:**

And if you lose, it will be pretty damaging for you though, won't it?

**WILLIAM HAGUE:**

Well everybody always speculates about the drama in advance of a by-election. We'll see that result, but what we're concentrating on now is getting the right MP for Rochester and Strood and putting the case of the Conservative Party ...

**ANDREW MARR:**

Alright.

**WILLIAM HAGUE:**

... and we're doing that very well with a brilliant candidate.

**ANDREW MARR:**

Mr Hague not being reckless.

**INTERVIEW ENDS**