AM: You are, I think, announcing a big new review of counter-terror legislation and so forth tomorrow. Can I ask you, not about the detail, but a few broad headline areas? It appears that up to 2,000 new security service officers are going to be recruited, is that right?

SJ: That’s right. That’s part of the announcement, making sure we have all the resources we need to fight this severe terrorist threat. You know, the day I became Home Secretary, within an hour I gave my first interview and I said my number one priority will always be keep our country safe. And in doing so, clearly the terrorist threat is top of my mind, something I think of every single day and what more we can do.

AM: So more security officers. What about more frontline police? Because the people who ran towards danger on the day of that attack were police officers. And there’s a lot of thought that actual neighbourhood policing is crucial to the gathering of the intelligence and helping the security services.

SJ: Neighbourhood policing is crucial, so there are more resources, some that we’ve already announced for counter-terrorism policing, but there’s also more work to be done, as you suggest, with neighbourhood policing. Because one of the other announcements I’ll be making tomorrow is that MI5 will be sharing much more of its information with other organisations. So not just with counter-terrorist police but neighbourhood police, with local government in some cases, absolutely, to make sure that there’s a much higher chance of finding some of these extremists and disrupting plots a lot earlier on.

AM: So some people, I suppose, would say that this is about using local government, using perhaps head teachers in schools and
elsewhere, as, as it were, additional MI5 agents. They’re the ones who’ll be passing information back to the security services, and that in turn may make some communities feel that the heavy hand of the state is too heavily on their backs.

SJ: No, I certainly wouldn’t describe them as additional agents. You know, it’s a specific job for our intelligence agencies, a job for counter-terrorism policing. But, for example, when it comes to neighbourhood policing I think one of the lessons learnt from the five terrible attacks that we saw last year, with 36 people murdered, was that – you know, we had an independent – there was a review done, it was overseen independently by David Anderson, and I thank him for the work that he’s done, and some of the work that came out of that was to say that information that the intelligence services have, that they should share it a lot more early on, so that when other organisations get hold of it they perhaps can do more with it, you know, at that very, very early stage.

AM: Can I press you a little bit more on neighbourhood policing and policing generally, because you told the Police Federation recently, ‘if you haven’t got the resources then clearly that can have an impact on crime.’ Which seemed to be a hint that the police were finally going to get more resources for the frontline. Is that the case?

SJ: There’s more than a hint. It was a recognition that our police have an incredibly difficult job to do, they’re seeing rising demand – in not just – we talked about the terrorist threat but they’re seeing rising demand, for example, from cybercrime, they’re seeing a rise in reporting of historic sexual crimes, you know, child sexual exploitation, domestic violence, you know, these are things that we want our police to deal with and we’ve got to make sure they’re properly resourced. So what I’ve said to the police is that whilst we have increased resources dramatically in this financial year, by some 460 million throughout England and Wales, I want
to make it a priority of mine in the next spending review next year.

AM: And have you got the agreement of the Chancellor to spend more on the police and the security services?
SJ: Not yet, because we haven’t started – well, on security services, yes, we’ve already made some of those announcements. On policing more generally we haven’t started the spending review process but when we do I’m sure the Chancellor will learn of my views.

AM: When you became Home Secretary you said that your priority was going to be sorting out the Windrush scandal, and you said a lot about that at the time. Are you now on top of it?
SJ: That’s my most urgent priority. I’d like to think I’m on top of it. And it’s not just me, we’ve got a whole team that is focused on this. We’ve done a lot in the last few weeks with a task force has been set up, the work on the compensation scheme, the special Windrush scheme, so there’s a lot –
AM: Let me ask you a few detailed ones.
SJ: Sure.
AM: How many people have been illegally or wrongly deported?
SJ: Not sure of the final number yet. There’s still some work to be done. But we think it’s 63. So let me be clear on that, this is people that we’ve looked at the total number of deportations and/or removals since records began, electronic records in 2002, to the Caribbean. That number’s about 8,000. We think of those there’s 63 that potentially could have been referred to as the Windrush generation, as people that were here pre-1973. Of that 63 it is worth pointing out though that 32 are foreign national offenders, so they were serious offenders that were deported after they finished their prison sentence, and 31 are obviously not offenders and in a separate group.
AM: And so they’re out there. How many of them are you in touch with now?
SJ: Well, of the offenders, of the serious offenders, I’m not in touch with any of them, and I’m not going to get in touch with any of them because I don’t want them back in our country, they can stay where they are. Of the other 31, of course we are going to make every effort that we possibly can to get them – to help them, if they want to return or if they want to look at compensation, and in some cases those deportation removals might have taken place years and years ago so we don’t have their current addresses or the most relevant information. So in every single case, I have contacted the respective governments in the Caribbean, we’re working with them, and so far we’ve managed to reach seven of the 31.

AM: Seven of the 31. So if there is somebody – we see a lot of things on TV about this – if there’s somebody who doesn’t know Jamaica well but has been sent back to Jamaica, is pretty much penniless, doesn’t have a job, doesn’t have a British passport, that person will be helped, will be given an emergency passport and be brought back home again by the British government?
SJ: If they were part of that 31 cohort I’ve talked about they would be helped. And we are trying everything we can to get hold of everything. We’re working with all the governments, we’re working with our embassies and High Commissions in respective countries and we will be doing everything we can.

AM: So that’s deportations. How many people have been wrongly detained?
SJ: Don’t know yet. We’re still working on that. It’s a very complex matter because there’s – obviously the number of people you need to look at is a lot more than removals and deportations.
AM: Yes.
SJ: Some of the information, if it’s not in electronic form it’s harder to get at.
AM: But you know that people have been wrongly detained don't you?
SJ: Yes, yes. In fact we already know of lots of cases.
AM: A lot of examples of cases on the television and so forth.
SJ: Yes, absolutely right. But in terms of priority what I've done is make sure that, number one, we're helping those people that need it right now, and that's what the task force is doing, making sure people have the documentation they want, it's being made available to them very quickly, within days of being – of contacting the task force. Number two are the deportations and number three, I want to get to the bottom of detentions.

AM: When this all came out you said, 'it could have been my family, it could have been my mother.' If your mother had been lifted from your family home and put into Yarlswood, as happened to many other people, she would want to be compensation I'm sure.
SJ: Absolutely.
AM: What kind of level of compensation do you think people are justified in having?
SJ: I don’t want to prejudge that because I think the compensation process should be properly thought through, and the key determinant of what it is, we should be listening to the people that have been affected. So that's why I've started a process of visiting them.
AM: Alright, I'm not going to push you for a number particularly. But nonetheless you acknowledge that there are people who have lost their jobs, lost their homes, they may be sleeping rough. They're lives have been turned upside down and they therefore deserve to be seriously and properly compensated?
SJ: I absolutely acknowledge that. And I'd go further. I mean, I think that is one of the worst things that's come out of this, there's a few – it's not – it's a small number of people potentially, but it is wrong in every way, it has changed their life and big mistakes were made and I will to do everything I can to rectify
them where I can, but also to get the right amount of compensation to the people affected.

AM: This all came about because of the so-called hostile environment, and you said you didn’t like the phrase. Did you not like the phrase or did you not like the policy?
SJ: I don’t like the word hostile, because I think it’s a negative term, a non-British term. And it’s about – I’ve used the word compliant environment, and what that means is that it is absolutely right that we have a environment in terms of our immigration policy that distinguishes between those people that are here legally and those that are here illegally. And that won’t change. Of course we’re going to have that focus. But there are, from the Windrush, I think there will be lessons to learn about how that compliant environment policy is actually implemented. Is it working the way that it was intended? And by the way, it’s worth remembering that that whole policy began under the previous government and continued under this government.

AM: Sure. It was a very, very aggressive policy towards illegal immigrants. You know, you can’t have a bank account, you can’t drive, you can’t access welfare, you can’t access housing. It was very, very tough. Are you going to look again at the actual policy itself?
SJ: I’m going to look at how it’s been implemented. I want to review aspects of the policy. I’ve already made some changes. Certainly I’ve suspended certain things. So for example, opening bank accounts and whether you can or cannot as an illegal immigrant – you know, I am not sure that the data that we have is accurate enough, so I’ve suspended that action for the time being. I will be looking at it very carefully, but I do want to absolutely maintain a distinction and say we will absolutely welcome those people that are here legally, that want to do the right thing, there’s no question of that, but if you’re here illegally we will clamp down on you and we will not tolerate it.
AM: I get that. But if people are watching and are thinking about the headline, you know, 'hostile environment policy to be reviewed,' that's fair is it?
SJ: I am reviewing aspects of that policy, of course.

AM: Alright. Let's turn to why the hostile environment policy happened in the first place back in 2014, which was great public concern about the level of immigration. Since the days of David Cameron your government has been hooked on the idea of bringing immigration down to the, quotes, tens of thousands. You've never done it, but that's been the policy. Are you yourself committed to an immigration figure of tens of thousands?
SJ: Well, first of all can I just correct you on something there. The compliant environment policy began under the previous Labour government in 2008 when they put restrictions on employers and benefits access and so forth. There were further Acts under the Conservative government, I'm not denying that for a second. But you said it began in 2014, it didn't begin in 2014, it began earlier under the Labour government.

AM: There were two key pieces of legislation.
SJ: There were, on that policy. But you asked me a separate question, which is about the tens of thousands. That's a manifesto commitment of ours, of having a policy that leads to lower sustainable levels of immigration. Wanting it, I think we said – we said we wanted it to be in the tens of thousands.
AM: You as Home Secretary, are you personally committed to the tens of thousands policy?
SJ: I'm committed to our manifesto. But what that means is that over the next few years I'll be working towards, rightly, reducing net migration and bringing it to lower sustainable levels.

AM: But you haven't yet said that you're committed to the tens of thousands.
SJ: I’ve said I’m committed to the manifesto, and that commits every Conservative to the commitments that have been made.

AM: I don’t know what Ruth Davidson would say to that. She says; “I see neither the sense nor the need to stick to an immigration figure devised nearly a decade ago which has never been met and does not fit the requirements of our country.” She’s right, isn’t she? Or why is she not right?

SJ: Well, you get Ruth on your show and you can ask her more about what she said.

AM: Well it’s fairly clear.

SJ: I think where Ruth and I would absolutely agree, and I think every Conservative colleague of mine is that overall migration today, net migration is still too high. It’s coming down. It’s down significantly from where it was a few years ago, so we need a policy for the longer term that’s going to bring it down to that sustainable level. So we want to absolutely have this policy that welcomes people that want to make a contribution, brings those high skills in that we need, but overall we do need a more sustainable level of net migration.

AM: And tens of thousands is still something that you’re happy with?

SJ: It’s a commitment in our Manifesto.

AM: Different question. Answer to a slightly different question.

SJ: Aren’t we happy with our Manifesto?

AM: Okay. Let me ask you about inside that envelope of tens of thousands using students are part of the figures to a lot of people this seems completely bonkers, because you know students come in, we earn money from the students, it’s part of our economy and then they go away again and they work elsewhere. Why should they be part of our immigration figures?
SJ: Well, first of all I think it’s great we get so many foreign students wanting to come to our country, it’s a great export, it’s great for our universities. That said, I do understand this argument. The argument that you’ve made and others have made. It is worth remembering though that as long as the students coming in and then leaving at the end of their studies, in terms of net migration numbers in the long term shouldn’t make any difference. There is a perception problem around this and it is –

AM: It doesn’t sound very welcoming.

SJ: Well actually I empathise with that point and it is something that I’ve long considered and it is not my most urgent priority when it comes to immigration right now. We talked about Windrush and other issues, but it is something I would like to look at again.

AM: So it needs to be reopened. There was another group, and Tory MPs have been writing to you I know about this, which is highly experienced and capable would be immigrants, particularly doctors -

SJ: Yeah, the so called tier 2 visas

AM: Tier 2. Now we have thousands upon thousands of vacancies for doctors in the NHS up and down the country. Last year your department refused the visas of 1,500 would be doctors who wanted to come from overseas and help us in our NHS. One NHS manager described this policy as completely barmy. What’s your view?

SJ: I think – I can understand when the policy was put in place there was a cap that was established of 20,700 a year of these highly skilled immigrants and for years and years that cap wasn’t hit. It’s only in recent months the cap’s being hit and the doctor that you referred to there is probably referring to the fact that
that includes a number of doctors that are qualified, that our NHS needs, that are being turned away.
AM: Yeah, exactly. It seems very odd, doesn’t it?
SJ: I see the problem with that and it is something that I’m taking a fresh look at. I know a number of my colleagues certainly want me to take a look at this and that’s exactly what I’m doing and I hope to bring you know think about this more carefully and see what can be done.

AM: A lot of these issues are about knowing exactly who is in the country and what they’re doing, who’s leaving, who’s coming in. And some of your predecessors have said in terms that the only way to really get a grip, if you’re the Home Office on all of this, is to change direction and introduce ID cards in this country. What is your view of that?

SJ: I don’t agree with that.
AM: Why not?
SJ: I just think the kind of –
AM: Wouldn’t that be a simple – you know –
SJ: No, I think there are many other ways and as we develop a new immigration system, which we’re going to have to anyway as we exit from the EU, and something I’ve already started work on, I think there are many other ways that we can look at – especially with newer technology on immigration and control of immigration and border control, but the idea that every single Brit needs to carry an ID card is not something that I’m convinced by.

AM: All right. You’ve described yourself as a proud British born Muslim. You’re not a practising Muslim but you come from a Muslim background. So in that regard I want to ask you about Baroness Warsi’s comments recently. She says; “there is a simmering anti-Muslim underbelly of Islamophobia within the party.” Do you agree with her?
SJ: Well, I’ve got a lot of time for Baroness Warsi but I’m afraid I do not agree with that. I mean for a start look at who –
AM: She goes on to say, “there are certain parts of the party that are in denial about it but it’s true.”

SJ: For a start just look at who the Home Secretary is in this country. As you just described me my name is Sajid Javid. I’m the Home Secretary in this country. That said there are issues with anti-Muslim hatred in the country, as there are issues for example with anti-Semitism. All types of hate crime is wrong at every level. We’ll fight it and continue to have that strategy that deals with it and we’ll listen to anyone that wants to help us in that fight.

AM: So you don’t think there’s a need for a new investigation into what’s been said by some Conservative people?

SJ: I don’t, because who said this? It’s the Muslim Council of Britain. They’ve written recently to the Chairman of the Conservative Party making these allegations. The Muslim Council of Britain does not represent Muslims in this country. You find me a group of Muslims that thinks that they’re represented by the MCB. And secondly, I would be very suspicious of anything that they’ve got to say, not least because under the last Labour government and a policy continued by us, we don’t deal with the MCB and we don’t deal with it because too many of their members have had you know, comments on extremists and that’s not acceptable.

AM: Overnight we’ve had two more stabbings in London, we’ve had a huge number of deaths this year from knife crime in London and from shootings and a lot of people are getting really, really concerned. Are you going to increase the number of frontline policing, not just in London but in cities up and down the country where violent crime is going up?
SJ: Look, I’m very, very concerned about that, as my predecessor was. She put in place, my predecessor the Serious Violence Strategy, we’ve got a new government Bill, the Offensive Weapons Bill. We’ve got more money going to community projects for early intervention. Those are the things first I’ll be focused on, but as I’ve said earlier to you I will also be looking at police and what we can do to help.

AM: When it comes to guns and knives Raheem Sterling, the footballer, has famously had an M16 machinegun tattooed on his shin. What did you think of that?

SJ: That’s up to him what kind of tattoo he wants, it’s got no business of government.

AM: You don’t think it’s a particularly important issue?
SJ: It’s not a business for the Home Secretary.

AM: All right. Fair point. Let me turn to Brexit. We did get to Brexit eventually.
SJ: I thought you’d ask me about this.
AM: Yes, so the front page of The Sunday Times, these various no deal scenarios, this allegedly explosive document locked in a safe in Westminster but helpfully described to The Sunday Times and their source says in the medium range scenario for a no deal Brexit, not even the worst. ‘The Port of Dover will collapse on day one. The supermarkets in Cornwall and Scotland will run out of food within a couple of days and hospitals will run out of medicines within two weeks. At the end of week two we would be running out of petrol as well.’ Do you recognise that? You’re the Home Secretary, you must have seen this document.

SJ: I have to – I don’t recognise any bit of that at all and as Home Secretary, as anyone would expect, I’m deeply involved in no deal preparations as much as I am of course in getting a deal. And by
the way I’m very confident that we’ll get a deal but it’s right that we look at no deal and all these different scenarios, but I don’t recognise any of that.

AM: Would there be any problem with supplies flowing in and out of the country if there was no deal?

SJ: So far from the work that I’ve seen and the analysis that’s been done those outcomes that you sort of refer to there and they’re in the sort of article more generally I don’t think any of them would come to pass.

AM: Because I mean if there’s no deal, we can keep the border open from our side, but if the French don’t then we are scuppered, aren’t we?

SJ: Look, as we work towards getting a deal, I mean that’s rightly our focus, but in terms of no deal you know it’s important for the French and for the Dutch and others that trade continues, even in a no deal scenario so they will be making preparations I have no doubt about that.

AM: You sit on all these important committees, are we going to see when it comes to the June Summit new fresh British proposals when it comes to the customs border and all the other really key issues?

SJ: I think we’re going to see good progress, you know. As is well known within government we’ve been looking at the different trade options for example, we’ve been looking at the sort of so-called sort of fall back options and things and there have been good robust debate on that. And I am absolutely confident, as we get to the June council meeting that the Prime Minister will have a good set of proposals and our colleagues in York will respond positively to them.
AM: New proposals we haven't seen yet?
SJ: No, I think we'll be focused on what the Prime Minister’s already set out in broad terms in her Mansion House speech and before that, and there will also be a White Paper from the government before that which I think will help the debate.

AM: Home Secretary, thanks very much for talking to us today.

Ends