

BORIS JOHNSON

ANDREW MARR SHOW, 5<sup>TH</sup> JUNE, 2016

BORIS JOHNSON. CONSERVATIVE, LEAVE CAMPAIGN

AM: Earlier we heard a pretty stinging broadside from Sir John Major against the leaders of the Leave Campaign, and surely not one that Boris Johnson can dismiss. He's with me now, good morning. Boris Johnson, dismiss it.

BJ: Well, I do dismiss it in a way because I think that you've got a very short time now to go until this referendum and I think what people want to hear are the arguments, and what we're setting out on the Leave side of the campaign is I think an agenda for the government to take back control on June 23<sup>rd</sup> of a lot of things that really matter to the people of this country. So yes, there's the money. Not an insignificant sum. Yes, there's our borders but there's also very, very important aspects of our economic life that invisibly we can no longer control, and we want to take them back and we think it will be great for our country and great for democracy.

AM: Well, I want to get onto the details of all of those things later on if I may, but nonetheless, Sir John, following Chris Patton, following Michel Heseltine, they've all had a really, really personal go at you. Is this because they're trying to take you out?

BJ: Whether it is or not I think that – I'm rather with John McDonnell this morning who says –

AM: Really? Unlikely.

BJ: Well he says that there's too much of this sort of blue on blue action and what he wants to hear is the arguments. And that's where I am. If we take back control – let's go into the money side of it. If we take back control of that money, we talked about the

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350 million. You heard earlier on how that 350 million figure is fictitious –

AM: Squalid.

BJ: Actually it's – squalid or whatever. Not true. Look at it. Imagine I give you – I take out my wallet, which I don't actually happen to have on me unfortunately but gave you – if I had £350 pounds, I gave you £350 –

AM: And I give you back 80 and then you give back another 20.

BJ: Then next year, hang on, next year you gave me back 60 or so then you decided that you were going to spend some of it on my –

AM: On your behalf.

BJ: On my behalf, thank you very much.

AM: That could get your hair cut.

BJ: Whatever priorities you chose, they might not be my priorities, you decide you're going to spend it on what you thought were good things for me, and then you gave about half of it away and we never saw it ever again I think most reasonable people –

AM: But you haven't lost 350 pounds at that point.

BJ: Most people would say, and they'd be absolutely right, that we have lost control of that 350 million. And it's totally wrong, totally wrong.

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AM: You get a lot back in your pocket, just as farmers do, just as universities do, lots of organisations in this country that money comes back to them.

BJ: Absolutely. And the point that we're making is that we would have a lot more –

AM: is that Westminster should be able to stop that happen.

BJ: We'd have a lot more back. £10.6 billion a year net back and all we're suggesting, humbly and respectfully to the government is that yes, they could spend that on one nation policies for the good of this country, such as on the National Health Service. For instance such as on cutting VAT or the cost of fuel for elderly people, which is a huge burden, and which we currently cannot do because of our membership of the EU. Invisibly, many aspects of our life are now controlled from the EU, from abroad, from Brussels in a way that I think is anti-democratic. At the heart of this campaign, coming to the second big charge against us, which is that we're talking too much about immigration and all that, for me this is a question of democracy. It's about public consent and explaining to people and at the moment we have absolutely no power to control our immigration policies.

AM: Okay, so a very quick fire question in that case, do you want to see immigration come down in this country?

BJ: I think I would like a situation where the government was able to fulfil its pledges to the people, and if it is going to say that immigration is going to come down to the tens of – net immigration from the EU is going to come down to the tens of thousands, then it should be in a legal position to deliver that. At the moment we are –

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AM: Not quite the question I asked. I said –

BJ: The answer is yes, by the way.

AM: You do?

BJ: Yes.

AM: Okay you want to see immigration –

BJ: Yes and I do. I'll tell you why. Because I think that if you look at the figures last week, we had a net increase of 330 thousand all told, 333 thousand, 270 thousand from the EU, 184 thousand net. A city the size of Oxford from the EU. Now, the question the Remain campaign have to answer is what is their long term vision? What is their programme for the country if the numbers continue at this rate? Because at the moment, if we grow the size of a city like Newcastle every year we will see our population rise inexorably to about 70 or perhaps 80 million. Now, what the Remain campaign have to say is, what's their vision for this. Where are they – it may be a great vision for Britain by the way, it may be a positive thing, but where are they going to build the homes? What's going to happen to the greenbelt? How will it work for schools and hospitals and all the public services that will be affected? We're not hearing anything. We're not hearing any description of how this is supposed to work in the absence of control. What we're saying is that on day one post June 23<sup>rd</sup>, you take back control of that, but you also take back control of loads of the management of our economy and our policies.

AM: Let me move onto something else. Last time we were discussing we have a bit of a round of disagreements about the single market. I had Michael Gove in that chair and I said, after

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Brexit will we be in the European single market, yes or no and he said no.

BJ: And he was right.

AM: So we won't be in the European single market?

BJ: Michael – yeah absolutely and let me explain. One of the – I remember you and I we both covered the dawn of the single market, remember what it was all about.

AM: We did, yes.

BJ: the great joyous moment of 1992.

AM: Which was a British achievement actually.

BJ: Yes. And one of the stunning things about it is in the 20 years since the creation of the 1992 single market, actually there were 27 other countries not in the EU who have done better than the UK at exporting into the single market goods and I think 21 countries who've done better at exporting services, in which we excel into the single market. Now, you have to ask yourself why that is so and I think one of the reasons is that this country is – yes we're members of the single market, but we're also caught in the toils of regulation coming at a rate of 2,500 a year from the EU that costs our businesses about £600 million per week. I think – the whole programme is one of the factors that is making the European Union the slowest growing continent on Earth apart from

AM: Antarctica. I saw the quote.

BJ: Our messages are getting through comrade.

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AM: I saw the quote. But the single market, you said leaving the single market would cause business uncertainty and you've used the image of the Nike swoop so you do accept –

BJ: I haven't actually used that image, but what I certainly accept

AM: Yes, you have, haven't you?

BJ: - is that – I think a hockey stick might be a good –

AM: All right, a hockey stick so it's a bigger thing but it still goes down first.

BJ: No, if you study a hockey stick closely you'll see it doesn't go down. It just goes up. But anyway, the people I'm inclined to credit on this –

AM: After Brexit, after leaving the single currency there would be a bit of a downward shock. You can call it a blip, you can call it a shock, we can discuss how long it is, how big it is but we would go down a bit.

BJ: I think it's very telling that you use the word single currency there just now Andrew, because actually we didn't join the single currency, and a lot of people –

AM: No, we didn't, my mistake.

BJ: - prophesied boom if we did and actually the British economy powered on and it was the Eurozone

AM: Pretend I said single market, then.

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BJ: It was the Eurozone that suffered. And that goes to the heart of I think the current protestations of - prognostications of gloom. They were wrong then and they're wrong now. The two authorities that I'm inclined to listen to on this are the head of the Remain campaign, Lord Rose of Marks and Spencer, who went before the Treasury's Select Committee if you remember and was very, very clear. He said there would be no shock. What would happen and he made - there was one economic prediction he made -

AM: He did say jobs would go down.

BJ: He said that wages for the low paid would go up. And that for my money is a good idea. Because if you look at what's happening in our country at the moment -

AM: I understand that argument.

BJ: Well I don't think people are aware of quite - of the differentials that are now opening up between the pay of the FTSE one hundred chiefs who are parading through Downing Street and urging us all to remain in the EU and the people in the - the average pay of people in their companies. So I think he was right about that. The second authority -

AM: So you listen to those.

BJ: second authority is the Prime Minister who was I think probably in this chair.

AM: But you don't trust him.

BJ: and he said - and he said to you -

AM: You say he's untrustworthy.

BJ: He said to you,

AM: You say he's dodgy Dave, he's untrustworthy.

BJ: You're putting words into my mouth, I'm afraid. What he said to you then, and these words I certainly am inclined to credit, he said to you then that a lot of people would scare monger and there'll be all sorts of talk about how Britain couldn't manage on its down but actually he said Britain could prosper outside the EU and -

AM: But we'd be better in of course he thinks.

BJ: - and there would be no difficulty doing free trade deals. And one of the things that we're saying today, is actually you'd be able to do free trade deals, according to the European Commission's own statistics, not fantasy, according to the European Commission's own statistics, we'd be able to do free trade deals that would generate 300 thousand jobs.

AM; We've been talking about the Prime Minister, so let me show you this. That's one of your campaigns. 'You can't trust David Cameron on Immigration.' And you've put out other things saying you can't trust David Cameron on Turkey.

BJ: That is the first time I've seen that and my view is that the -

AM: Well disavow it.

BJ: That's the first time I've seen it and I certainly think -

AM: How do you feel about it?



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BJ: I think, well let me – I would put it in my own language, okay. And my own language would be that um – by the way I backed David Cameron in 2005 because he's the best man for the job, he's the best man for the job now. But what I think is certainly true is that if you tell people that can cut immigration to the tens of thousands and we all stand on that manifesto –

AM: 'Corrosive of public trust,' was your phrase.

BJ: That's exactly what I'm going to say. And if you then are unable legally to deliver what you have pledged, because of our membership of the EU, I think it is frustrating. And I think people want an answer.

AM; But also untrustworthy?

BJ: So what we want to hear I think – well, we're all convicted of the same crime by that token because all of us Conservatives stood on that manifesto. We all thought that we were going to get reform of the EU as a result of the renegotiation to adjust our immigration policy so that we would be able to cope with that, we didn't get a sausage, we didn't get anything in that renegotiation. We weren't able to change our - and so that what I really want to hear from the Remain campaign is how they see this thing going. Because contrary to what we've been hearing just now the Eurozone is still mired in catastrophic unemployment.

AM: It's getting better.

BJ: 51 percent youth unemployment in Greece. Are you saying that's getting better?

AM: No, but Spain is improving.

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BJ: 45 percent youth unemployment in Spain.

AM: it's terrible, but it's improving.

BJ: It is an abomination.

AM: It's improving and their case is that eventually they will get out of that and therefore the migratory pressure on our shores will ease.

BJ: Well, we've seen no sign of it over the last ten years and – or over the last twenty years. We've seen a steady increase in migratory pressure and what is going to happen unquestionably, is that – conceptually. Andrew, you remember this from when we first covered this. The ideology of the EU is to think of the difference between the furthest reaches of the Balkans and Iberia and Italy as being no different from Britain – as

AM: (OVER) Because they're trying to create a single market.

BJ: - as no different from Britain than say Surrey and Lancashire. Right. It's all one territory throughout which they want people to circulate totally freely. I don't think that's feasible.

AM: But since we're talking the big picture –

BJ: I don't think that's feasible in circumstances where you've got real economic crisis cause by the Euro and massive migratory flows across Europe.

AM: I said I wouldn't interrupt. You said you wouldn't give me speeches. We're veering towards that.

BJ: Sorry, forgive me.

AM: In terms of the big picture, isn't it pretty abominable to compare what the EU as it is today with Hitler and don't you regret that? Hitler believed in strong nation states fighting each other which has been a long European tradition going right back to Gustavus Adolphus and all the rest of it. It's what the Europeans did and we were drawn in again and again and again. And the EU was set up to stop that happening and we have both lived through a period of peace which the EU has to be given some credit for.

BJ: Of course, of course and I don't write the headlines, you know. The key point I would make is that there is something worryingly anti-democratic about the EU as it is currently set up. I do think that it is – it should concern everybody in this country that 60% of our laws now come from Brussels, primary legislation secondary legislation together in – I think it should concern everybody that since the Lisbon Treaty - we have been outvoted more and more often and there are fundamental ways now in which we cannot control our lives. I've mentioned the money, I've mentioned immigration policy.

AM: Well let's talk about immigration which we haven't done properly.

BJ: Look at VAT.

AM: Can I just show you this poster. Again I'm sorry I'm showing you Vote Leave posters all the time now. Turkey is joining the EU. Is that true?

BJ: That is the government's policy.

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AM: The government would like it to at some point in the future, maybe, but the statement, Turkey is joining the EU is not true, is it?

BJ: Turkey has been joining the EU since 1963, by the way.

AM: Well you join or you don't join, but it's not true is it? That's what John Major was talking about.

BJ: Frankly I don't mind whether Turkey joins the EU provided the UK leaves the EU. I mean that's where I am on this on this matter. But look, I'm very pro-Turk and I'm very proud of my Turkish ancestry and my Turkish family.

AM: And you always wanted Turkey to join the EU for big historical reasons, you know, end that great gap between the east and the western Roman Empires and all of that.

BJ: Yes, but - and I think you've shown that on your - but that was, you've got to understand Andrew, that was back in the days when some of us and perhaps John Major himself, thought that widening the EU would not mean this federalising, centralising deepening process that we've seen. The really disappointing thing was the Lisbon Treaty which I think let -

AM: Let's not talk about the Lisbon Treaty just now.

BJ: Why not?

AM: Well because I'm trying to talk about Turkey actually.

BJ: Well no, because I think the EU has changed out of all recognition since people like me first starting advocating Turkish membership.

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AM: Okay well let's not talk about back in the day. Let's talk about two months ago when you said there was no prospect really of Turkey joining the EU, you said it was between zero and 20 percent or less than that. No prospects, not on the cards at all. And now you're responsible for this poster that goes up saying Turkey is joining the EU. That is a flat lie.

BJ: It is the government's policy that Turkey should join the EU.

AM: That's a different poster, that's a different poster.

BJ: It's something that they've said is their - they've simultaneously said it's their number one priority

AM: That's a very different poster.

BJ: And they're going to pave the way between Brussels and Ankara and they're also saying it won't be achieved till the year 3,000. So they can't be -

AM: Do you regret that poster? It is hogwash isn't it? It's an inverted column of piffle whatever the phrase is.

BJ: I believe it's government policy. If that means it's hogwash then -

AM: if the poster said, it is government policy that Turkey at some stage should join the EU that would be a truth. 'Turkey is joining the EU' is not true.

BJ: No sorry, no actually it's government policy that Turkish membership of the EU should be accelerated.

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AM: Well at some point in the future, but they've got lots of hurdles.

BJ: No, no, no I'm sorry Andrew, it's government policy that Turkish membership of the EU should be speeded up and there are clips of the Prime Minister in Ankara advocating the speeding up of this.

AM: in the heat of this campaign you have all gone – and you particularly – you've gone a bit wild. That's not true that poster and you've said things, you've got the 350 million all the rest of it which are not the case. I mean both sides are doing, what Faisal Islam said, both sides ... untruth politics

BJ: No, well I wondered whether you were going to say that. I think the 350 million genuinely is a reasonable figure to use for the reasons I've explained. If I give you £350 and you then spend some of it on my family and give me a bit back.

AM: We've done this. The ONS...

BJ: This is money we cannot control and a lot of it frankly you fritter and you spend some of my money on supporting Iberian bullfighting which is not what I want you to do.

AM: Looking from outside this seems that the Conservative family is terminally falling apart.

BJ: No.

AM: You're saying the Prime Minister is untrustworthy, Boris Johnson is saying you're a court jester, and so forth.

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BJ: I think you're confusing me with John Major for some reason which is the first time I've ever been confused with John Major.

AM: That's most unlikely. But can this party be put together again and how do you respond to John Major's suggestion that you were doing this really for personal ambition? You used to be in favour of joining the EU and now you've decided this is your best way to Downing Street.

BJ: No, nonsense. Absolutely nonsense and I think that the – obviously there is going to be a temptation by one side or other and particularly the Remain side to try to turn it into a personality driven conversation. My view about the EU has changed but that is because the EU has changed out of all recognition and it is now totally different from what we signed up to in 1972 and it is turning into a federal state, we'll be safer taking back control and voting Leave on June 23<sup>rd</sup>.

AM: One last interruption, Boris Johnson thank you very much.

ENDS