INTERVIEW WITH:
NIGEL FARAGE, LEADER, UKIP

ANDREW MARR: Nigel, Mr Farage, is with me now. Good morning.

NIGEL FARAGE: Good morning.

ANDREW MARR: Let’s start with Mr Bloom.

NIGEL FARAGE: I thought we might.

ANDREW MARR: Now, he’s clearly very irate and he, your problem it seems to me is that you lead a Party of colourful individualists, not easy to herd and the question is whether you can keep them on side, when you crack the whip as well. You can’t be both a disciplinarian and....

NIGEL FARAGE: (over) No, I think there is a big change going on in UKIP. We were a vehicle in which people could give vent to their views and in electoral terms, lob a few grenades around. Over the last eighteen months we’ve changed. We are a Party that are taking elections seriously and to do that you need some discipline. Now that doesn’t mean we won’t push the boundaries of argument I want all UKIP people to think feely and do that but it does mean that we don’t need people causing massive disruption.

ANDREW MARR: Does it mean perhaps that you have to kow-tow a little bit to the liberal media because I’m sure some of the things that were said, that you wouldn’t actually be personally outraged about, but you have to pretend to be outraged because that’s what the media want.

NIGEL FARAGE: What it means is that we have got to focus on our key questions. Look, we are challenging the liberal elite, the media, the middle class on major issues like immigration, the Romanian and Bulgarian entry next year. You know, we are not here trying to win friends amongst the liberal elite but we are here to focus on our main policies and Godfrey’s problem was he kept making comments about women. That’s not part of our manifesto.

ANDREW MARR: No, indeed. Turning then to the policies that are part of your manifesto, let’s talk about immigration since Theresa May is going to be joining us later on. In Nigel Farage world, what should she be bringing forward to deal with the issue of immigration right now.
NIGEL FARAGE: Well, I think what’s really interesting is that at the three big speeches, Labour, Lib Dem and Conservative, not one of them mentioned the fact that we’re opening the doors to Romania and Bulgaria next year. Now Theresa May this morning in the Sunday Times is saying she’ll deport foreign criminals. Well, can she tell us please what she’s going to do about Romanian criminals and can she tell us what she’s going to do about the fact we’re opening up the door next year to more foreign, sadly Romanian criminals. So the honest truth is I’m challenging them and saying, are you prepared to do anything.

ANDREW MARR: Do you feel that you can’t actually do anything while we are part of the European Court of Human Rights. (interjection and overlap)

NIGEL FARAGE: I think there are two things. Firstly as part of the ECHR, there isn’t much we can do. But secondly, as a member of the European Union we cannot control our own borders and that’s what really, when the referendum comes, I think that will be the central issue.

ANDREW MARR: So this is a constitutional question, the Conservatives can only go so far without dealing with a constitutional issue, which takes me on to the story in the Mail on Sunday about bringing forward the referendum. I mean you’re plugged in to parts of the Conservative Party. Do you think this is going to happen, bringing forward the referendum. Would that suit your flocks if it did.

NIGEL FARAGE: That isn’t what matters. We are not in politics, I’m not in politics for the usual reasons. This is not about climbing the greasy pole. It’s not about obtaining rank. It’s about winning and it’s about getting back the independence and democracy of this country. If Adam Afriye (interjection)

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ANDREW MARR: ... (overlaps) But for you a referendum next year would be a big win wouldn’t it?

NIGEL FARAGE: I’d be absolutely delighted and do you know what, so would British industry and British business because the argument that we shouldn’t leave this for four years, that actually renegotiation is pretty futile, they’re strong arguments, I think the Conservatives problem is that what Adam Afriye has done, he’s put his finger on the real problem and ... four years ago, Mr Cameron gave us a cast iron guarantee of a referendum, this time last year he was saying no referendum, he’s now saying there should be a referendum and people aren’t quite sure what to believe.

ANDREW MARR: Everybody seems to think that you’ll do well in the European elections next year. But they also then go on to say what will happen is that when it comes to the General Election, the single argument against it, it will work is vote for UKIP, vote for Nigel Farage and you’ll let in Labour. That’s what the Conservatives...
NIGEL FARAGE: (over) What we saw in the elections on May 2nd across the English counties was this argument being tripped out, you know, if you vote UKIP, Labour will get in. What actually happened at 150 seats was if you voted UKIP, you got UKIP. And what we’ll be doing, after the European … (interjection)

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ANDREW MARR: … are a bit different.

NIGEL FARAGE: After the European elections next year, we will be targeting our seats for the General Election and we’re not doing it to split anybody’s vote, we’ll be doing it to get a decent, representation of UKIP MPs in Westminster.

ANDREW MARR: Nonetheless there are 36 seats, marginal seats I’m told where a decent UKIP vote would defeat the Conservative incumbent and let in a.. (interjection)

NIGEL FARAGE: That is the Conservative narrative. You know, the reason the Tories are doing badly isn’t because of me or UKIP, it’s because their leader has marched them off towards social democracy since he became leader in 2005. That’s why the Tory party is doing badly and everybody is ignoring the fact that UKIP’s greatest growth has been amongst old Labour voters in the North of England. We take our vote from across the spectrum.

ANDREW MARR: Nonetheless, if I take the example of somebody like Jacob Reece Mogg, who’s a Eurosceptic Conservative MP. Presumably UKIP is not going to target him in quite the way that you would target a Europhile conservative.

NIGEL FARAGE: We will target our resources where we’ve won county council seats, where we’ve won district council seats, following the model that the Lib Dems used under Paddy Ashdown, building on local strength and if you can win at council level, you can win at parliamentary level and that, that… Our focus is not to worry about the others, our focus is to get UKIP into Westminster because if we do then there really will be a referendum.

ANDREW MARR: What about idea of doing deals from the bottom up, allowing local parties to work together.

NIGEL FARAGE: There’s been huge speculation about whether there will be a deal or not a deal. It’s perfectly clear that Mr Cameron and the Cabinet, view us as being part of the lower orders and we’re really not good enough for them. All I’ve said is if people like Jacob Rees-Mogg, if his association wants to talk to us in Somerset, then I’m perfectly relaxed about that. But I think, quite frankly, I don’t think it will happen …

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ANDREW MARR: (obstructed) What would the price be for that?
NIGEL FARAGE: *(overlaps)* The legislation has changed. You can now run on a joint ticket, so somebody could run as a Conservative, joint UKIP candidate or even in some cases a Labour, joint UKIP candidate.

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ANDREW MARR: ... *(obstructed)* But they have to want to get Britain out of the EU, presumably.

NIGEL FARAGE: Well of course.

ANDREW MARR: ... *(both together)* ... and they have to want to end immigration.

NIGEL FARAGE: Not end immigration, have controlled immigration. It’s a totally different thing.

ANDREW MARR: Sure. As to your own position, it’s been speculated that you’re going to stand possibly in Thanet South.

NIGEL FARAGE: I know, I know, I read all that in the papers yesterday.

ANDREW MARR: And.

NIGEL FARAGE: Actually, it’s the last thing on my mind. The one thing the media are forgetting, when they talk about the next election, they’re talking about 2015. We, in 8 months time, have a European election on the same day there are five thousand ... *(interjection)*

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ANDREW MARR: I think I’ve got a first.. I think I’ve got a politician’s answer from Nigel Farage

NIGEL FARAGE: Well to be honest, I was thinking about Folkestone but it doesn’t really matter. I’m not going to say where I’m standing, I’m not even going to think about where I’m standing.

ANDREW MARR: But you are going to stand.

NIGEL FARAGE: Oh, I’m going to stand. But let’s get the European elections out of the way first.

ANDREW MARR: Okay. Nigel Farage, for now, thank you very much indeed.

END OF INTERVIEW WITH NIGEL FARAGE