

ANDREW MARR SHOW, 12TH MAY, 2019, NIGEL FARAGE

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Leader, Brexit Party

AM: Nigel Farage, in 2016 why did you not advocate no deal?

F: Because it was obvious that we could do a free trade deal. You know Monsieur Barnier and the others were talking about this. The problem is the Prime Minister never asked for it, so we finished up in the mess that we're in and the only way –

AM: It was obvious but it didn't happen.

F: Well because the Prime Minister didn't ask for it. She chose to go for this close and special partnership. Basically right from the start, she was happy for us to be kept very close to the customs union, so where we are now, the only way the democratic will of the people can be delivered is to leave on a WTO deal.

AM: So you accept that you weren't advocating no deal back then which you now –

F: Oh no, no, no. In the referendum itself I was the one that coined the phrase, 'no deal is better than a bad deal,' which of course is pretty obvious.

AM: I've gone back and you said it – if you said it you said it away from the cameras and the microphones because I can't find examples of you saying this.

F: I'm sorry, I'm sorry, no deal is better than a bad deal I was using every day for the last two weeks of that campaign.

AM: All right. We can't find it.

F: Well you'd better look closer.

AM: What I can find is you talking about a deal and the possibility of a deal. Here for an example is what you said.

F: Well a free trade deal.

AM: Well here's an example of what you said at the time.

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The Andrew Marr Show, BBC One

November 2015

"Iceland and Switzerland can get deals that suit them, we can do something far, far better than that.

Norway chooses its own deal. We will choose our own deal."

AM: But we didn't.

F: But we had a Prime Minister who has wilfully deceived us, and by the way, what's she put to parliament three times isn't a deal, it's a new European treaty. I didn't spend 25 years campaigning to leave the European Union to sign up to a new treaty.

AM: My point is fairly simple, that during the referendum you were advocating one thing and now you're advocating something different. You're advocating a no deal Brexit.

F: Well because the only way we can deliver the democratic will of the people is to leave on WTO terms, and I'll tell you something. Once we do that the European Union will be banging our door down to have a sensible, tariff free deal.

AM: So you can accept that from the point of view of the referendum in 2016 there is no mandate for a no deal Brexit?

F: I'm sorry, I couldn't disagree more. We voted to leave. We didn't vote for a deal. We voted to leave once with a referendum. The year after that both the Labour and Conservative parties promised us in their manifestos they would honour the result of the referendum and here we are, nearly three years on from that referendum, Brexit's not been delivered, and frankly, given this government and given this parliament there is no prospect of these parties delivering a clean break Brexit.

AM: We've just heard you and everybody else in the leave campaign saying there was going to be a deal. We are now in a very, very different situation.

F: We didn't ask for a free trade deal. That is a fault of a prime minister who has wilfully deceived the nation from the very beginning. But the point here is you're getting – you are getting hung up on the wrong subject with respect. You are talking about deals and business as everybody does.

AM: Because that's what we're facing.

F: What about democracy? What about democracy? What about the fact that 500 MPs voted for Article 50 which said we would leave on March 29th with or without a deal. That, Andrew, was part of UK legislation, it has not been delivered. And that's why – that's why there is a massive appetite for the Brexit Party right now because people want to live in a democratic county.

AM: Can I put it to you the other way of seeing this is actually disentangling ourselves from the EU without there being an economic hitch after 45 years is very, very complicated, very very difficult. It requires nuance and patience and that is what the government has been trying to do. And in a sense you're sitting at the back of the classroom throwing bottles.

F: I'm sorry, I'm sorry the government has not been doing that. The government is trying to sign us up to a new European treaty which keeps us tied in terms of our military, our security, keeps us effectively inside a customs union. We have been betrayed, not just by the Conservatives, Labour have done the same thing too and ultimately – and this is what people are talking about outside central London, do we live in a democratic country or don't we? That's the debate, Andrew, that is going on in the country.

AM: And you keep using that word 'betrayed' and 'betrayal.'

F: No look, no democracy's the word I keep using. Democracy.

AM: And betrayal.

F: I've used it once.

AM: And one of the things that you say that is a betrayal is a close relationship with the EU once we've left going forward, and again you've changed your tune on this.

F: Every single major player in the referendum, everyone on both sides said, leaving the European Union is leaving the single market and customs union. It could not have been clearer.

AM: But when it comes to something like a closer relationship as Norway has again you're talking about betrayal and during the referendum you used to laud that, you used to present it as a wonderful opportunity.

F: No, no no. I said Norway was doing better than we were. The trouble is the kind of proposal that some in parliament want is Norway without the fish. We wouldn't even get a deal as good as Norway's. Look, this is our chance –

AM: You went further –

F: - this is our chance to break free of a failing political project to open ourselves up to the rest of the world, to get some self confidence back in who we are as a country. And the problem is this. The country very clearly wants us to stand up and be who we are. Our political class do not believe in Britain. They simply don't think we're good enough to run our own affairs.

AM: Well going back to the Norway arrangement which would be a closer relationship with the EU than you now want, you said – you went further than you suggest. You said at the time –

F: Why don't we deal with politics now, you know, and this is ridiculous. I am telling you, I am telling you that in the referendum I said Norway is doing better than we are. However, as I said on this programme, we can do much better than that. We could have gone for a free trade deal, we didn't. We're now three years on, we have to deliver the democratic will of the people of this country and the only way we can do that is by leaving on WTO terms. And d'you know something –

AM: I have to ask a few questions.

F: - even if that led to some short term economic disruption – you know moving house leads to short term disruption, this is our future. We're talking about the next 50 years of our lives.

AM: This is a losing house when lots of your fellow citizens may lose their jobs.

F: Or gain jobs. We could do a lot, lot better outside the European Union and let's bear in mind that actually the vast majority of UK businesses don't trade with Europe. 88 percent of our economy does not export to the European Union.

AM: Now you say that you weren't advocating some kind of Norway style agreement for us. You've also said: "Wouldn't it be terrible if we were like Norway and Switzerland? Really? They're rich, they're happy, they're self governing. We're told Norway doesn't have a seat at the top table, oh yes it does."

That sounds to me like you're advocating a Norway –

F: No, no no. I was replying to David Cameron and then I said after that, on your programme, but we can do better than that. We're not a five million country, we're a 65 million country. We're the fifth biggest economy in the world. We've got phenomenal outreach with English speaking countries, all sorts of other countries around the world. We can better than Norway. We can be better than anybody if we just believe in ourselves.

AM: The tune has changed.

F: The tune has not changed.

AM: Let's move to another area. You now say that a second referendum, or another referendum would be in your phrase, 'the ultimate betrayal.' How can it be the ultimate betrayal when you yourself have advocated it?

F: Oh dear, oh dear. Now look, I've said we have to prefer ourselves on the leave side mentally for the fact there could be another referendum. If there is we have to fight it and win it. But here's the truth.

AM: How can it be a betrayal?

F: Because we haven't implemented the first one. You have to implement one referendum before you can even think about

having another one, that's how the democratic process works with governments and should work with the referendums. But here's the point. If we had a second referendum I think leave would win by a bigger margin. However, with this parliament and this government it wouldn't be implemented anyway and that is why what we need – what we need here is not just to leave the European Union, we need a different kind of politics in the country.

AM: I'm going to come onto that in a second but before I do let's remind ourselves what you said about a second referendum earlier on.

F: Oh.

The Wright Stuff, Channel 5

January 2018

"The Cleggs, the Blairs, the Adonis's will never ever give up. They will go on whinging and wining and moaning all the way through this process. So maybe, just maybe, I'm reaching the point of thinking that we should have a second referendum because

W: On what?

F: On EU membership.

W: The whole thing?

F: Yes, of course."

AM: We should have a second referendum.

F: Because I'm mentally saying to myself, I'm mentally saying to myself if it's to happen let's stop being in denial. And one of the problems here was –

AM: I'm sorry, how can it be the ultimate betrayal if you yourself were advocating it?

F: I'm saying I'm mentally preparing myself for one and I was then and I am now.

AM: So it's not the ultimate betrayal because you were thinking about it?

F: I'm thinking we may well have it forced upon us.

AM: All right, well let's move on to another area which is what you just said just now about reshaping British politics.

F: Yeah.

AM: You want to smash, splinter the current two party system. You think you can take out the Tory party if they go for a referendum. Now your party, the Brexit Party, has no manifesto in this election at all.

F: Oh, we're the only one with a clear policy platform.

AM: Well you don't have a manifesto.

F: Do you know, I will never ever use the word manifesto again. Manifesto to me has a word association with lie, because that's what we've had in election after election. Policy platforms, no manifestos from the Brexit Party. It's a bad, discredited word. And if you look at it – if you look at it, what is the Labour Party policy in this European election?

AM: Well we're coming onto them shortly on this programme.

F: What is the Tory party policy?

AM: We're coming onto them as well.

F: I'll tell you what ours is. Ours is to leave with a clean break Brexit and get on with the rest of our lives.

AM: Trying to ask you some questions. Do you want to be Prime Minister?

F: No, not particularly.

AM: So what's going to happen if you beat the Conservative Party and smash the two party system? If there is a great splintering of the current system? Out of the debris and the falling dust what emerges? The Brexit Party with you.

F: Who knows what the future is? What I do know is we've got a two party system that now serves nothing but itself. There's a complete breakdown of trust between the people in this country and our politicians, and frankly, they've revealed themselves to be grossly incompetent. And what I do want to see from this

European election, if we can win these elections absolutely I'm going to demand that Brexit Party MEPs become part of a government negotiating team 'cause we can perhaps talk some sense into them.

AM: The only way that we can really judge the Brexit Party in the round at the moment is by looking at its leader, looking at you, so let's look at you for a moment.

F: Well –

AM: Do you still want to replace the NHS with a private insurance basis?

F: I never did. I would like – I would like to take the burden off the NHS. I mean if you want to go back –

AM: Yes, I do want to go back.

F: I mean this is really very boring, isn't it?

AM: No, it's not boring.

F: All you want to do – all you want to do is go back to stuff from years ago. Why don't we talk about now in British politics? Why don't we talk about the sea change that is going on out there?

AM: You are trying to lead an insurgent party to replace the main parties, therefore you're an important figure in this. "I think we're going to have to move to an insurance based system of health care, I would feel more comfortable, my money would return value. If I was able to do that through the market place of an insurance company than just trusting giving us a hundred billion pounds a year to central government." Do you still hold that view?

F: If I was encouraged to opt out of the system to relieve the burden of the National Health Service I would do so gleefully. Do you want to discuss these European elections or not?

AM: Yes, I certainly do.

F: Go on then, go on then, let's try.

AM: Do you still believe that global – worrying about global warming is the stupidest thing in human history?

F: I believe that if we decide in this country to tax ourself to the hilt, to put hundreds of thousands of people out of work in manufacturing industries, given that we produce less than 2% of global CO2 that isn't terribly intelligent. But as I say, here we are with one of the biggest changes in politics that's ever occurred and you're not even interested.

AM: Do you still want to –

F: What's wrong with the BBC? What is wrong with the BBC?

AM: Do you still want to roll back gun controls and reintroduce handguns into this country?

F: This sums it up. D'you know, I've been going round the country speaking at packed rallies every night. And do you know who's not there? The BBC. And from this line of questioning now I can see why. You're just not interested, are you?

AM: Do you still feel uncomfortable with foreign languages being spoken on trains?

F: You are just not interested, are you? Let's talk about democracy, let's talk about trust, let's talk about competence in politics. This is ludicrous.

AM: Do you still feel that people with HIV shouldn't be allowed into this country?

F: Do I think the National Health Service is there for British people? Yes, I absolutely do.

AM: So you still do.

F: This is absolutely ludicrous. I've never in my life seen a more ridiculous interview than this. You are not prepared to talk about what is going on in this country today. You're in denial, the BBC's in denial, the Tory and Labour parties are in denial. I think you're all in for a bigger surprise on Thursday week than you can even imagine.

AM: We have talked about it. Do you still admire Vladimir Putin?

F: No. I've never admired Vladimir Putin. I said I wouldn't like to live in his country, and this is absolute nonsense.

AM: Well you were asked which current world leader you most admired you told GQ Magazine, 'as an operator but not as a human being. I would say Putin, the way he played the whole Syria thing'

F: Well you are. Not as a human being. So I don't like him as a human being. What is your question? What is the relevance of this?

AM: I'm trying to work who you are and where the Brexit Party, which wants to destroy the party system is going.

F: You haven't asked – you haven't asked about a single other member of the Brexit Party. You haven't commented on the fact we're got the most diverse list of candidates of any party fighting in this election.

AM: From the Revolutionary Communist Party right through to the right.

F: No, well that's worth discussing, isn't it? How have we managed to get left and right together? These things are really interesting to your viewers. Not trawling back through a series of quotes from years ago.

AM: Do you still want to slash the size of the state?

F: Absolutely. I want people to have more freedom. Absolutely. And you know particularly 5.4 million people out there acting as sole traders, running small businesses and there's nobody in government on their side. Let's make their lives easier. They'll create more jobs, pay more taxes and it'll be good for our country.

AM: Well let's return to the thing that you are most well-known for to a lot of people watching which is that famous poster, the breaking point poster that UKIP put up.

F: Right.

AM: Can I ask you, would the Brexit Party put that poster up?

F: Well, we're in different circumstances 'cause Mrs Merkel is not suddenly saying let's open our doors to everybody. And as you know – or maybe you don't – as years go by, decades evolve, different issues come to the fore. Throughout that period of time there is no question that the number one issue in British politics was immigration, people's concerns over open borders, it's impact on wages, access to public health care. The number one issue in British politics now is democracy. The failure of our political parties to keep their promise. That is what the country's debating.

AM: That poster sent a very, very clear message about migrants. Are you saying the Brexit Party would not put up a poster like that?

F: Well it wouldn't because it isn't the burning issue of the time.

AM: Do you regret it?

F: Do I regret helping –

AM: That poster?

F: Do I regret helping to win

AM: Do you regret that poster and the message it sort of said?

F: Well no it was the truth and if you think about that poster it's transformed European politics, it's changed Italian politics. Mrs Merkel made a very big mistake.

AM: Nigel Farage, thanks very much indeed for talk to us.

Ends