SADIQ KHAN, MAYOR OF LONDON

ANDREW MARR SHOW, 12TH NOVEMBER, 2017

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Andrew Marr: We were just talking about Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe. That terrible story. Among many other things she is a Londoner. I wonder what your reflections are on what now needs to be done and whether you’re thinking of getting involved in the story yourself.

Sadiq Khan: Well our thoughts are with Richard, her husband and Gabriella, Nazanin’s daughter. The local MP, Tulip Siddiq, has been a campaigner over the last 18 months to get the government’s attention on Nazanin’s case. Not in the way it’s gone in the last week or so and of course I think it’s important that Boris Johnson clarifies the huge error he made, because he’s been parading aid by Iranian state TV and others to say that because of what he said it’s an admission on the part of the British government to what Nazanin’s alleged to have done. So I’m hoping he clarifies his position, apologises and helps Richard and the family get Nazanin back home in London where she belongs.

Andrew Marr: Do you think that Jeremy Corbyn saying that he must now resign or be sacked is going too far?

Sadiq Khan: Well look, as your panel just said this is the latest in a long list of gaffs made by our Foreign Secretary. He’s offended the Libyans, in relation to what he said about Sirte being the new Dubai, they should get rid of the bodies. He’s offended the Americans saying President Obama is anti-British because he’s part Kenyan. Offended the Spanish, offended – Sheikhs, what he said about whisky tariffs in the Gudwara and stuff. Look, I think he’s got to go. I think he’s our Foreign Secretary whose job is diplomacy and representing the best interests of our country. If
Theresa May was a strong Prime Minister, she’d have sacked him a long time ago. There’s questions about why she appointed him in the first place. She did, but now surely he must have had enough to go.

Andrew Marr: Can I turn to your own record as Mayor of London now. You’ve had 18 months or so. In your original manifesto you said this: “I want to be crystal clear, no ifs, no buts, what you will pay if I’m elected Mayor in 2016 as a traveller in London is what you’ll pay at the end of my four years in office.” Have you stuck by that promise or not?

Sadiq Khan: Absolutely. I’m really proud that in the 8 years before I became Mayor TFL fares went up by 42%. I’ve frozen them for the first time ever when there’s been a Mayor, so Transport for London fares are frozen for four years. The problem’s this. The government is in charge of the private train operating companies. My point to the government is very simple. If I can freeze TFL fares why can’t you? And if they froze the private operating company’s fares, travel cards will be frozen as would be Oyster cards. For reasons – they’re not willing to do so.

Andrew Marr: I was going to suggest to you you haven’t actually frozen fares ’cause if you go into any tube station and you watch people going through the barriers, almost everybody is using a contactless credit card or a travel card or an Oyster card. And in all those cases those fares have gone up. They have not been frozen, have they?

Sadiq Khan: No, 7 million people every day benefit from my fares freeze. Bus fares the same. Trams the same. Unless you get to the cap while the travel card – there’s been an increase but that’s the increase because of the government’s unwillingness to stand up to private companies. If I can –
Andrew Marr: But this is a small print issue isn’t it really?

Sadiq Khan: Well no, if I can freeze TFL fares, 42% under the previous guy, zero increase under me, why can’t the government stand – and these companies are making huge profits –

Andrew Marr: But you said all fares. And for huge numbers of people using London transport that promise has not been kept.

Sadiq Khan: Look, there’s still a chance for the Chancellor in a week and a half’s time to do what I’ve done which is to reduce inefficiencies and freeze the TOC fares, the train operating company fares. And look, if I can do it for Transport for London I don’t see why the government can’t and it’s a good example of the government being scared to say boo to a goose when it comes to private companies making huge profits and Londoners, commuters losing out.

Andrew Marr: So you don’t regret the slogans that you’re using in the campaign?

Sadiq Khan: I’m really proud we’ve frozen TFL fares. We’ve also brought in the new Hopper, two for one within a hour and also the night tube. All things Boris Johnson said he couldn’t do when he was Mayor.

Andrew Marr: Let’s turn to housing. You said again in your manifesto that 50% of housing under you would be affordable. That’s not happened, has it?

Sadiq Khan: Well we’re publishing our draft London plan in the next few weeks and that will set out the ambition for half the homes to be affordable. You will be aware –
Andrew Marr: You said it was a target. It was going to be a target. In fact it’s now become, quotes: “a long term ambition” which is something very, very different.

Sadiq Khan: No it is a target. In my first year of being the Mayor we increased from the number of affordable homes given permission from 13% in the last year Boris Johnson was Mayor, to almost 40% in my first year, using his policies. I’ve not changed the policies yet. It takes some time to draft the draft.

Andrew Marr: But meanwhile the number of houses being built in London is falling pretty sharply. The last quarter according to the National House Building Federation is down 30 odd percent. I mean it’s a really big fall in house building in London. Why is that happening?

Sadiq Khan: A number of complex reasons. From Brexit to the uncertainty caused to developers and investors by Brexit. Concerns in relation to the investment the government’s given to infrastructure. Concerns round the construction sector. The good news, in my first six months as Mayor we’ve managed to increase the numbers of permissions for affordable homes and at record levels. What we need to do though is for the government to commit to investment in housing, commit to infrastructure, release councils from the burdens on them so they can borrow to invest in council homes, but also make sure we get a good deal for London. I’m afraid we need to build much, much more homes in London. We have a housing crisis affecting all parts of the London. Not simply those who are cleaners, porters, lowest paid, but also start-ups, chief executives, head teachers as well.

Andrew Marr: Are you still an Uber man?

Sadiq Khan: Look, I’ve never knowingly used an Uber. I’m quite clear though were in a flourishing taxi and private hire business in
London. What I’m not willing to do is take risks with safety and security. So I support – and it’s really important to say – that I support TFL’s decision to say to Uber, and to others –

**Andrew Marr:** But it looks like there’s going to be a really big punch up and it now seems that you’ve made nice.

**Sadiq Khan:** Not at all in relation to TFL’s decision. Look, Uber are challenging Transport for London through the courts as is their right to do so. There are not one but four reasons why TFL were not persuaded that Uber were safe and secure, but I welcome the contrition and humility from the Global CEO of Uber who’s recognised that Uber have been wrong in the past and wants to talk to TFL and I support the TFL Commissioner meeting with the Global CEO of Uber to see if we can reach a compromise. But it’s important to recognise that Uber have apologised for the mistakes made in the past and are willing to make sure in the future the quality of service they provide is safe and secure.

**Andrew Marr:** Staying with four wheels by the large you’ve been very aggressive in some of your targets for removing diesel emissions from the capital. Diesel fumes kill a lot of Londoners. What do you want to see from the Budget in terms of scrappage schemes and so forth, because a lot of poorer Londoners have diesel cars they bought a long time ago and telling them they must get rid of them is very tough.

**Sadiq Khan:** Well I’m hoping when Michael Gove speaks to you shortly he’ll say he’s managed to persuade the Chancellor to have a diesel scrappage fund to support those families, those charities and those businesses to move away from diesel. I’m hoping he’ll be able to tell you we’ll have a Clean Air Act fit for purpose for the 21st century. And more investment and powers for mayors and regions around the country. The reality is -
Andrew Marr: What about some taxes?

Sadiq Khan: Let me tell you why it’s important. More than 40,000 people across the country die prematurely because of the poor quality air. We need a combination of carrots and sticks. We need to move people away from diesel, but not send them back to petrol because of concerns around carbon emissions. I’m investing record amounts in walking, cycling, public transport. We need to make sure the government now does their best. That’s really important that Michael Gove when he comes here has some good news, not three, four, six years down the road, good news for now.

Andrew Marr: There was a little bit of a controversy between you and Donald Trump I recall not so long ago on Twitter and elsewhere. You didn’t want him to come to this country, he is coming here next year. Are you planning for this visit and would you yourself like to meet him?

Sadiq Khan: Well hold on a second. Look, I’ve been a reluctant participant in the fisticuffs on Twitter from President Trump to myself. My point is this. We must have really good relations with our closest ally. We have a special relationship with them. It’s good –

Andrew Marr: Theresa May ..... 

Sadiq Khan: Well no, no, no. It’s good that Theresa May and Donald Trump have a good working relationship. What I’m not in favour of is a State visit with all that entails, with the red carpet being rolled out and all that’s involved in a State visit. I welcome the good relations that Theresa May and Donald Trump have. What’s important though is to recognise –
Andrew Marr: And if he comes here, as Mayor of London, should you meet him?

Sadiq Khan: Well if he wants to meet with the Mayor of London of course I’ll be happy to meet with him and show him parts of London where Muslims, Christians, Jews, Buddhists, sheikhs, those who are members of organised faiths and those that aren’t. Not just tolerate each other but respect, celebrate and embrace each other. I think we can be a beacon, not just to the President of the USA but to the rest of the world to show how we should do things.

Andrew Marr: One final question. Do you still want to stop Brexit?

Sadiq Khan: Well look, I accept the verdict of the British public that we’re leaving the European Union. What I’m against is no deal with the EU. What I’m against is a hard Brexit. What I want is a Brexit that’s good for jobs, good for prosperity.

Andrew Marr: I said last question, I’m going to ask you one more. Is it not a ridiculous idea that London could have a different deal in this from the rest of the country? London is part of the rest of the country. London can’t be separated by a little border and have its own arrangement with the EU, can it?

Sadiq Khan: I’m not suggesting that unilateral declaration of independence as much as I like the sound of El Presidente. What I’m in favour of - nor is there is going to be a border or walls built around the M25. What I’m in favour is that the government recognising that London needs to do well for the country to do well. That means recognising membership of the single market, being members of the customs union, welcoming talent to this country, giving a cast iron guarantee to those Londoners. They’re Londoners by the way who are EU citizens who are scared about their future. That means a pro jobs, pro growth deal with the EU.
Andrew Marr: President Khan, on your way off to the Cenotaph.
Nice to talk to you.