

ANDREW MARR SHOW

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JEREMY CORBYN

AM: Welcome Mr Corbyn. Is there anything that Theresa May could do now that would give you her support? (sic)

JC: Well, she's clearly lost the support of her own party in all of this as well as the majority of people in this country over the deal. So it's kind of desperation stakes that she's in at the moment.

AM: But she's reached out to Labour MPs on the issues of workers' rights and environmental and other regulations. You've said in the past that you would reach out to her in those circumstances. I was wondering what she could do to win you over.

VC: Indeed, I made that point in my speech to the Labour Party conference last year. The problem with her reaching out to the trade unions and others, and I've spoken to a number people that she's reached out to. She offered nothing with any certainty in it. She just said parliament would be able to consider changes in rights at work legislation, environmental and consumer protection in the future. That's not a guarantee of anything. They've been rejected, by the way, by the TUC and all of the major unions.

AM: If she went a little bit further would you talk to her about this?

JC: Well, it's not a question of talking to her, it's a question her coming to parliament and making statements as to what the government's intentions are. The problem has been, all through this process, that Conservative MPs and the Tory government have actually been half-interested in doing a deal with Donald Trump or somebody else rather than getting a comprehensive agreement with Europe. So we ended up with the Brexit agreement that she's put forward which is obviously very damaging in the long run, both to the rights of this country to

trade arrangements and in particular to the situation in Northern Ireland.

AM: So we're going to have a meaningful this week, on Tuesday.

JC: Well, we're only having a meaningful vote because it was Labour that pressed this case very hard from the beginning. Remember at the start of this process all powers were going to be given to the Secretary of State.

AM: Do you know...

JC: We managed to wrestle these things back into some degree of parliamentary accountability. So we're getting a meaningful vote.

AM: So the vote's going to happen. If she loses that vote, as most people at the moment assume - they may be wrong, but if she does lose that vote do you immediately put down a vote of no confidence in the government?

JC: We will table a motion of no confidence in the government at a time of our choosing. But it's going to be soon, don't worry about it.

AM: Barry Gardiner used the word 'immediately'. That's why - I'm getting overexcited perhaps, but I'm assuming that you'll do it very quickly.

JC: Andrew, don't get too excited about it. There's only two days to wait for the vote.

AM: It's my job.

JC: I know it's your job and it's two days to wait for the vote. We'll have the vote and then we'll see.

AM: So you're not promising you'll put down a vote of confidence on Tuesday night or Wednesday morning?

JC: You'll see what happens.

AM: Certainly will.

JC: I'm sure you'll be watching.

AM: I certainly will. Let's just ahead. Let's assume you do put down that vote of no confidence, and let's assume that you win it and we have a general election in this country and you win –

JC: There is a process between that and the delaying of the second vote.

AM: Yeah, I'm fast forwarding.

JC: You're going very fast.

AM: You become prime minister of this country.

JC: Well, we've got to have a general election first.

AM: Let's talk about that election in that case. In that election, in Labour's manifesto are you promising to deliver Brexit on your own terms, but to deliver Brexit?

JC: Well, our manifesto will reflect on the reasons why people voted the way they did in 2016. People were very angry in those areas that voted leave. People were also very angry in those areas that voted remain. They actually have the same interests, as I was pointing out in my Wakefield speech on Thursday. We cannot ignore the fact that a lot of people in this country are very angry about feeling left behind, lack of investment, poor quality jobs, lack of support on housing, health and all this.

AM: Not the fault of Brexit is it?

JC: Well, Brexit is a key part of that as well. Those in remain areas that want to leave, quite rightly so, as I do, in an open an inclusive society which has open relations with the rest of the world. Others just feel very angry. And they didn't feel that the EU was delivering for them.

AM: Clear question, clear answer. In your manifesto will you be promising to deliver Brexit?

JC: We have a manifesto commitment of 2017 which respects the result of the referendum. We had a comprehensive conference motion last year which included a number of events, the first of which comes on Tuesday. Obviously our process will decide

exactly what goes in the manifesto as soon as we know an election's coming.

AM: Well, that's very interesting, because you have this thing called a clause five meeting, which involves all different parts of the Labour Party.

JC: The clause five meeting is to bring together the national executive and the Shadow Cabinet and a number of other people as well. It's a very big meeting actually.

AM: And in that meeting you don't, as leader of the Labour Party, have control over what happens. And given that nearly 80 per cent of your own members –

JC: I'm not a dictator.

AM: - nearly 80 per cent of your members want to either remain in the EU or want a second referendum, they will be able to outvote you in that meeting and therefore you may not go into the next election committed to Brexit.

JC: Well, it's assuming that I'm going to be outvoted, as you put it. The meeting doesn't actually take place in that sort of atmosphere. We have the conference motion of last year, we obviously have whole lot of opinions.

AM: But you're leading man, you'll listen to you party, do you know what your party will do?

JC: And that's why our conference motion said there was a series of views, which was to go along with May's deal, which a motion of no confidence, which was a general election, and all options on the table including a popular vote, another referendum, if those earlier things fail.

AM: We'll come on to that in a moment. But you know, we're at a moment of real crisis for the whole country. Brexit is right in front of us, and you're suggesting an election right now. What I want to

know is what do you as Labour leader want to happen to Brexit if you win that election?

JC: As a very minimum, a customs arrangement with the European Union that gives us a say in what goes on but that also avoids the whole issues of the problems of Northern Ireland, which this deal does. Secondly access to the market, the single market, which is crucial, as you were asking the Brexit Secretary earlier. Job losses in Jaguar Land Rover and other places as a consequence of this. And thirdly absolute legal protection of rights, consumer and environmental, and a guarantee that we're not going to allow British companies to fall behind European standards in order to entice in American investment in the NHS and all those kind of issues that you know are felt very strongly about in the Labour Party.

AM: You are campaigning to leave on your own terms. ..

JC: No, hang on. What I'm saying is we're campaigning for a country that is brought together by investment – Andrew, you laugh. Andrew, you ..

AM: You're either campaigning to say in or to leave.

JC: I'm very surprised you laugh about this. There are many people in this country are very, very angry about the way they've been treated in their different communities around the country. It's a Labour government, a Labour policy of investment that will help to reduce the differences and tensions within this country. Nothing this Tory government does will achieve that.

AM: Let's look at your plan, because you are campaigning to leave, let's look at your plan –

JC: We're campaigning for a customs union and access..

AM: You've talked about a customs union, and you want a customs union that's an agreement which allows Britain to jointly negotiate global trade deals, yes?

JC: What we say is our customs union would be with the European Union, UK-European Union, and we would want to have

a say in all of those trade deals that are done. And I think that would be a reasonable position.

AM: Have you spoken to anyone of any seniority or heft inside the EU who has suggested to you that that is possible?

JC: I've spoken to many people with enormous heft, as you call it. I'm not sure what heft is but I'll take your word for it. And they believe that the British government is unclear on what it's doing. They've had lots of problems with them. I've made it clear what our priorities are. We're not negotiating, we're speaking about what our views are. I've also got a pretty clear indication that in the event of a general election and a new government in Britain they would obviously want there to be an opportunity for negotiations and time to do it.

AM: What you want is not going to happen, because it would completely contradict the fundamental laws of the EU. The Treaty of Rome as amended – I can read to you – says, 'the union shall have exclusive competence in the following areas. A) or number one, customs union. You're asking them to tear up the fundamental rules and laws of the EU in order to benefit you.

JC: The EU is well known for its ability to be flexible, for its ability to delay things, and the arrangements it currently has, for example, with Norway, the example it has with Turkey and other countries. It is quite flexible in these matters. Look, we are a very large economy, the EU is obviously very large, even larger economy, about half of our trade is Europe. It's actually in a lot of people's interests to maintain that level of trade and interaction. Just in time delivering goes both ways.

AM: Looking what's going on at the moment we're seeing the EU is not very flexible at all. From your perspective you want them to go much further and tear up the Treaty of Rome? The crucial part of the treaty to help the Labour Party?

JC: No, we're not tearing up the Treaty of Rome any more than the EU wants to tear up the Treaty of Rome. What we're saying to the EU is this is the situation, political situation in Britain, where we have a country that's divided on this issue. We want to bring them together. A trade arrangement with Europe helps to bring people together. I think they understand that. Listen, you might understand, I'm sure you do. The reasons that people in this country voted leave in some very left-behind parts of the country, exactly the same conditions apply. I've discussed this with Michel Barnier and many others. In many parts of northern France and eastern Germany they are very well aware of the feelings of many people in post-industrial areas who feel very angry at what they see as the inability of political elites all over Europe to respond to their needs and give hope to young people in those communities as well as in metropolitan areas like London and Paris.

AM: The next thing that you say that you want is the exact same benefits of EU membership as we have now, once we've left. Again have you ever got anybody anywhere in the EU who has said to you that could happen?

JC: Those words were actually uttered by David Davis at the beginning.

AM: But you owned them yourself and put them in your six tests, so I'll ask you again, has anyone said that's possible?

JC: We've put them into our own legislation, We haven't negotiated with the EU. We can't, we're not the government. We have met the European Union people on many occasions. Keir Starmer and myself have had many meetings with them, some jointly and some individually. I've also met many of the political leaders across Europe, particularly through the Party of European Socialists, so they're not unaware of our views and they're not unsympathetic to what we are trying to get across as political – this is not – people in Europe...

AM: Has anyone said to you or any of your colleagues that you could have the exact same benefits after leaving the EU?

JC: We haven't discussed the exact same benefits. We've put forward –

AM: When you do they'll say no.

JC: Well, have you got some hotline to the EU?

AM: No, I've just been reading the newspapers and reading what they say, and again and again they're against cherry picking, as they call it, they're against having your cake and eating it, which is Boris Johnson, and they don't allow the same benefits for non-members of the EU. It's a break point.

JC: It would be the opposite of cherry picking would be saying that we want to maintain those rights and conditions, which are very, very important, because actually any company investing in Britain would need to know what its obligations would be to its workers, would also need to get a pretty clear message that a Labour government would not allow undercutting, would not allow a diminishing in workers' rights, paternity, maternity leave, all those very important issues.

AM: You quoted Michel Barnier just now, here he is talking on 6th December, 2016. 'Being a member of the European Union comes with rights and benefits. Third countries – that's now us – can never have the same rights and benefits. Never.' ... negotiation.

JC: No, well it will be up to the third country to decide what rights and benefits it has within its own society.

AM; But not the same as the EU. You can't have the same access to EU markets and all the same benefits inside the EU as if you were a member.

JC: I think you will find that when we get into serious negotiations as a government determined to have that good relationship with Europe, that there will be an ability to negotiate.

AM: Let me ask you about another area which is the free movement of people. Why are you against the free movement of people?

JC: I'm not against the free movement of people. What I want to end is the undercutting of workers' rights and conditions which has increasingly happened in some parts of western Europe, and I did in the referendum actually make quite a lot about the whole issue of what's called the posting of workers directive on that issue.

AM: But in your own manifesto, not long ago you said, 'freedom of movement will end when we leave the European Union.' Why?

JC: Because we would not be in the European Union. We would obviously have an immigration based policy which would be based on the rights of people to move in order to contribute to the economy here and obviously what's happened with the uncertainty surrounding Brexit is two things. One is many EU nationals feel deeply uncertain. We would unilaterally legislate straight away to guarantee them all permanent rights of residence in Britain, including the right of family reunion. The second is that many workers that are vital in this country to agriculture, to the care sector, to the NHS and to education have either left or are contemplating leaving. We have 100,000 vacancies in the NHS. Our economy relies in people coming in from other countries. I want to keep that.

AM: It is in your gift right now to say that you would allow the free movement of people from the EU to continue after Brexit. It would make it much easier to negotiate and it's something you could say and you could do right now.

JC: I think I've made it pretty clear the need for workers to go both ways, 'cause obviously there's an awful lot of British workers that work in other parts of Europe. I meet them all the time as I'm sure you do.

AM: But you're not saying that you would allow free movement to continue?

JC: What we're saying is that we would want –

AM: Why not?

JC: - we'd want that migration to be able to take place, we'd want those conditions to take place, we would not be part of the European Union if we were outside it, so clearly that ..

AM: But you could allow free movement as a non-member of the EU?

JC: It will be open to negotiation but the point has to be about the treatment of EU nationals in this country, which we would radically change straight away. Remember Andy Burnham proposed

AM: You can just say we're going to end free movement, why not?

JC: Andy Burnham proposed straight after the referendum guarantee rights of all EU nationals here. Government voted that down. They ignored the vote in parliament and then opposed it.

AM: I'm talking about you, not about the government and I'm just saying again, you could say we're going to allow free movement of people to continue after Brexit. You could say it now, it will be clear – why not?

JC: Diane Abbott has made it very clear our migration policy will be based on the needs and rights of people to work in this country just as much as British people who work overseas and we will guarantee all those rights of EU nationals that are currently here and their rights of permanent residence and of family reunion.

AM: You become Prime Minister in a couple of months time. What's the first thing you do?

JC: First thing we do – well there's many first things to do but one of them would obviously be to set up an immediate process of negotiation with the EU around the customs union, market access and protection of rights and privileges. But parallel –

AM: To do that you have to extend Article 50, don't you?

JC: Andrew, parallel with that would be a rapid programme on housing, on investment, on health, on social security, on education. Please understand the anger of so many people in this country at the way they feel the political elite establishment has let them down and ignored their communities. It's Labour that will speak for them.

AM: I think that's very clear to an awful lot of people, but can I ask you, would you extend Article 50? Do you think as a country now we need to extend Article 50?

JC: Clearly if Theresa May's deal is voted down and clearly if a General Election takes place and a Labour government comes in an election would take place, what? February March time? Clearly there's only a few weeks then between that and the leave date. There would have to be a time for those negotiations.

AM: Now maybe for the reasons you've given already you seem very reluctant about the idea of another referendum. Can I ask you, if Theresa May's deal is voted down, if you don't get the General Election you want, so we're into the new areas as described in the Labour Composite Motion from the conference, do you then go for a People's Vote?

JC: We're then into the consideration at that point, but we've got to go through these stages first.

AM: What's your own view of that?

JC: My own view is that I would rather get a negotiated deal now if we can to stop the danger of a no deal exit from the EU on the 29th of March which would be catastrophic for industry, catastrophic for trade and the long term effects of that would be huge. I think parliament did vote for an amendment to the Finance Bill this week which indicated its opposition to no deal, but that isn't totally specific on it. We will do everything we can to prevent a no deal exit.

AM: If Theresa May came to you said, 'd'you know what. In these extraordinary and unexpected circumstances I've changed my mind and I want to stay in a customs union in perpetuity.' What would you say to her? Would you give her your support?

JC: What I'd say to Theresa May is that she's spent the last two and a half years on these negotiations – hang on – with three Brexit secretaries, she cannot control her own Cabinet, her own party, never mind the House of Commons. Surely when a government loses something so major as this vote on Tuesday in normal circumstances that would trigger a resignation of the government and a General Election. Surely, the people of this country have a right to decide who their members of parliament should be, who will be in government and who's been negotiating and on what principles they'll be negotiating.

AM: You've told us yourself that back in 1975 you voted against staying in the EU. Have you really changed your mind since then?

JC: I've had a lot to do with the European Union since 1975 actually on human rights issues, on environmental issues and I did actually strongly support the social Europe idea. I'm a Socialist. I want to see social justice all across Europe. I do understand the motives that people had when they voted both ways in the referendum. I campaigned for Remain and reform. I voted to Remain so that we could be in the EU to reform it. I have concerns about competition policy.

AM: What fundamental democratic issues?

JC: Hang on. I have concerns about issues of workers' rights, obviously. I have concerns about those issues. But on human rights issues I have made it very clear all the way through we would maintain our support and membership to the European Convention on Human Rights, the European Court of Human Rights which is only in part in an EU institution, but also, which is not guaranteed in the government's future political arrangements

document, we would sign up to the Charter of Fundamental Rights. Because I do not want to see a diminution in human rights indeed I want to lead a government that has human rights internationally as a core foreign policy.

AM: At this stage I'm slightly confused as to why Labour is going to be as it were enabling Brexit at the next election. But if I look back to you –

JC: Because we will decide our manifesto content as soon as we know there's an election coming.

AM: Oh so that's still open? That's interesting. Jeremy Corbyn, 1996 at the Labour Conference. 'The other issues concern about democracy in Europe,' you're talking about the EU here. 'We have a European bureaucracy totally unaccountable to anybody. Powers have gone from national parliaments, they haven't gone to the European Parliament, they've gone to the Commission. These are quite serious matters.' Do you agree with yourself?

JC: I made that point then and I think an awful lot of people would actually share my concerns, that there has to be greater democracy and greater accountability within the European Union. Our proposals were remain and reform. Remain and reform in order to deal with the issue of competitions policy, to allow –and also for state aid to industry, but also the question of democracy and accountability within the EU. You've got to understand people feel a bit uneasy about some aspects of that. Is there anything wrong in saying to any institution maybe you need to look at yourself again? We do that all the time in Britain, don't we?

AM: Sure, absolutely.

JC: That's what your programme does every week.

AM: In the same spirit let me ask you about what's happened in parliament at the moment and this idea that there is an agreement being struck between the Speaker and Conservative rebels which would allow the House of Commons, as the House of

Commons to take back control of its own timetable from the government, from the Executive. First of all do you think it's happening and second would you applaud it if it was happening?

JC: I'm not sure it's happening in the way that you say and I think the treatment the Speaker received from a number of MPs earlier this week was absolutely disgraceful.

AM: Do you think he's been a good Speaker?

JC: I think he's a very good Speaker because what John Bercow has done is allowed far more time for debate and discussion by backbenchers in the House than any other Speaker I've ever known and I've been there since 1983. What he's also done, I think is popularised parliament and reached out in a very good way. This is a Speaker who visits schools and colleges and lots of community groups and talks to them about parliament. I think he's somebody that's done a lot to open up parliament in a very good way and what he's trying to do is ensure that MPs on all sides of the House, both sides of the House have a chance to take part and propose in this proposed amendments and so on in this whole Brexit process. I think John Bercow has been a good Speaker and the attacks on him are really unfair and unwarranted.

AM: Do you think he's trying to stop Brexit in any way?

JC: No. What I think he's trying to do is ensure that parliament has an absolute say in it and he is religiously fair in his Chairing of the Parliamentary procedure. Look, he shuts me up as much as much as he shuts anybody else up. Isn't that the right thing to do?

AM: We're told that –

JC: No, don't answer that one.

AM: I won't answer that one. We're told that it's possible that if this Amendment goes through that's being discussed and MPs can grab control of the agenda back and therefore they can put down

legislation themselves, we can legislation proposed by the House of Commons in the House of Commons, that, and that is probably the only thing that could stop Article 50 or delay Article 50 being triggered.

JC: Well the Dominic Grieve Amendment only applies to this process, it doesn't apply in general to everything else in parliament and the passing of his Amendment does mean there will be a change in the process in parliament if this deal is voted down on Tuesday. But everything depends on Tuesday's vote.

AM: Very briefly, would you welcome – do you think this means that parliament can actually stop Article 50 being triggered. Yes or no?

JC: I think parliament may well want to do that, but let's see what happens. But the crucial thing, Andrew, is Tuesday and then if this government can't control parliament it's time to move on and have a General Election so the people can decide who they want to be their government.

AM: Kind of thought you'd say that. Jeremy Corbyn thanks very much.

Ends