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TM: We’ve been putting more money into the NHS every year since we first came into government in 2010. But what we’ve seen in the NHS is the pressures growing and I think we saw that particularly this winter, as people live longer, often with more complex conditions, the pressure on the NHS is growing and that’s why I’m going to be speaking about how we deal with that in the speech I’m making tomorrow.

AM: And the NHS is now 70 years old more or less. What are you bringing to the birthday party?

TM: Well the NHS has been there for us for 70 years. What I’m doing in my announcement tomorrow is about securing its future. How are we going to do that? We’ve worked with NHS leaders. We’re going to ensure there’s a 10 year plan for the NHS. That will be a plan for world class health care – more doctors, more nurses. It means extra money. Significantly more money going into the NHS.

AM: How much?

TM: I thought you might want to ask me that question. It means that by the end of five years, by 2023-24, there will be £20bn more in real terms being spent on the NHS. Now often figures like that don’t mean much to people. Some people might remember seeing a figure on the side of a bus...

AM: 350 million pounds a week

TM: In cash. And I can tell you that what I’m announcing by 2023-24, there will be about £600m a week more being spent on the NHS in cash. Now, of course we’ve got to fund that,
that money. That will be through the Brexit dividend, the fact that we’re no longer sending vast amounts of money every year to the EU once we leave the EU. And we as a country will be contributing a bit more. And in terms of the improvements we want to see, we want to see improvements in performance issues that matter to people today. A&E waiting times. And we also want to see improved survival rates from cancer. We want to see better mental health services. And then there’s one final thing, if I may, because I think it’s so important: we’re making the NHS our priority, we’re putting this significant amount of extra money into it, we need to make sure that money is spent wisely, that it isn’t wasted, that it isn’t just used up on bureaucracy, and we’ll be doing just that because I want that money to be spent in the interests of patients.

AM: I’d like to unpack all of that if I may and carry on, to start with, with the money. Can you give me a percentage figure for what this means in real terms, percentage year by year average increases?

TM: Yes, I mean, it may vary a little from year to year, but it’s about 3.4 per cent average across the period. As I say, it may vary a little from year to year.

AM: So that –

TM: That’s in real terms.

AM: So the Institute for Fiscal Studies said very recently meaningful progress on waiting times, staff shortages and mental health issues, you’ve just been talking about, will need a growth of around five per cent, not 3.4 per cent for the next five years. Much less than growth of four per cent a year, and the NHS and will be able to do little more than tread water. So you’re not giving the NHS as much as the IFS and many of the health charities still say it needs.

TM: Well, I said earlier, Andrew, that we’ve been working on this with NHS leaders, and Simon Stevens, who heads NHS England, supports this and he will now be working with
clinicians, with doctors, with people in the NHS, to put
together the details of this ten-year plan. Now, you know, as
Prime Minister I have to look at the various issues that are
raised with me, people, often asking me to put to more money
into this, more money into that. What we’re doing is saying
very clearly as a government that the NHS is our priority. And
it’s right, because the NHS matters to people. And you know, I
see, I’m a user of the NHS –

AM: The historic annual increase is 3.7, so you’re still below
that.

TM: We have looked carefully at what we put into the NHS to
ensure that we deliver world class healthcare. Because,
remember, what I want to ensure is. We’ve seen, under the
Labour government, under Tony Blair, there was a point where
he put a lot of extra money into the NHS. Nearly half of that
was not actually spent on patient care, on delivering for
patients. So we need to make sure that the money we put in is
being spent on delivering for patients. And I say that because
I, you know, I use the NHS myself. But I also, as Prime
Minister, go into hospitals and I’ve seen the pressure that the
NHS has been under. That’s why it’s right that we make this
our priority, that we ensure that the staff in the NHS have the
resources they need to deliver the healthcare that is right for
people that we want to see.

AM: So for instance, in this country we have a waiting time for
cancer, once you’ve been diagnosed for cancer you should be
treated within 62 days. Do you know when the last time the
government met that waiting time target was?

TM: Well, it’s precisely because there have been problems in
the performance that we’ve seen that I think it’s important
that we look at how we ensure that we improve performance for the future. But you mentioned the issue of cancer.

AM: Two and a half years is the answer

TM: You mentioned the issue of cancer. Actually I think the figure is that there are something like 7,000 people alive today who wouldn’t have been as are alive today as the result of the improved performance we in treating cancer. And that’s important. But I want to see those survival rates improve further in future.

AM: For people at home, they hear all this about new money and new this and new plans and so forth and they wonder what does it mean for me? So if there’s somebody with cancer who’s watching this programme, worried about how long it takes to get treated, when will they start to see a change in the service as a result of money that you’re announcing today?

TM: Well, this will be about the ten-year plan that the NHS itself will work on and put together. Because I don’t think it’s right for me as a politician to say well, you’ve got to do this by this point and so forth. I think what we need is the doctors, the staff in the NHS, to come together and to put that ten-year plan in place. But what I want to see, as I say, is those improved survival rates. I want to see – you know, we have some fantastic hospitals up and down this country, but we don’t see every hospital able to perform an operating best practice. I want to see that across the country, across England.

AM: You mentioned the Brexit dividend a moment ago. Can I ask you straightforwardly, would you have been able to make this announcement if we were still inside the EU?
TM: Well, we are making an announcement which has, as I say, as a country we will be contributing more, a bit more, but also we will have that sum of money that is available from the European Union. The question as to whether I’d be sitting here and saying this if we were – we were going to carry on in the EU, it’s completely hypothetical because we’re not going to carry on in the EU. People voted and we’re going to get out.

AM: But this from your point of view this is a real Brexit dividend which can now be spent on the NHS?

TM: Yeah. I look at it in very simple terms. At the moment, as a member of the European Union, every year we send significant amounts of money into the – we spend significant amounts of money on our subscription, if you like, to the EU. When we leave we won’t be doing that.

AM: So the question is –

TM: It’s right that we use that money – it’s right that we use that money to spend on our priorities, and the NHS is our number one priority.

AM: Absolutely, but the question is timing. Because you are spending, if I may say so, more than 40 billion pounds of our money on the price of leaving the EU, and that’s money that’s going out of this country. So the question is at what point does the tap reverse, as it were, and we start to get a net income flowing in? Because, you know, you’re announcing this money now but there’s no Brexit income yet is there?

TM: Well, we haven’t left the EU yet.

AM: Exactly, exactly.
TM: But we’ll be leaving – we’ll be leaving the EU on the 29th March 2019. As you know, there’ll be an implementation period to end December 2020. The figure that you quote about the amount of money that’s been – that was agreed last December as the financial settlement is about money that is a part of what we will be paying to – we signed up to the EU to pay over a particular period of time. Because I said to the other leaders that for this budget plan period in the European Union, which ends in 2020, actually they shouldn’t worry that our leaving was going to cause them to have to pay more or to see less.

AM: So after 2020 the money will start to flow back in the other direction?

TM: Well –

AM: That is the theory anyway.

TM: The timing, one of the issues that was left open when we agreed the sum was the timing. There’s a certain expectation over the time (AM: Okay) profile of that.

AM: A certain number of crossed fingers in all of this.

TM: It’s not crossed fingers. These will be issues that will be finalised when we put the actual withdrawal agreement together into legal treaty.

AM: And you’ve also said several times that the rest of us, as it were, will have to make our contribution to this payment as well. It’s been suggested this will be done through some general tax rise, either through freezing tax thresholds or something like that. Will it also require extra borrowing?
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TM: Well, if you look at what we’ve been able to do as a country so far in terms of putting more money into the NHS, because we’ve taken a balanced approach in our economy we’ve been able to do that. As we look to the future, as I say, there will be this Brexit dividend, we will be contributing more as a country, but there are many aspects that – and the Chancellor will announce the details in due course, and before the spending review. But there are many aspects of course that will change over the next few months potentially, in terms of we’ll be looking at economic growth and at other – at other issues.

AM: Alright. The other big part of this, something that you got into a bit of trouble with during the election campaign, is social care. I mean, it’s been suggested that we have to spend more money on social care and have to find a new way of funding social care. And after the election you say you were on to that. How close have you got to an answer?

TM: Well, we’ll be publishing a Green Paper in due course on social care. But it is absolutely right that we must recognise the impact that social care has on the NHS and the way in which these work together, and I’m very clear that we need to ensure that in dealing with social care it doesn’t put added pressures onto the NHS. We want to see this long-term plan for the NHS delivering for the NHS. And just –

AM: To be absolutely -

TM: Just on the point of –

AM: To be absolutely clear on that, if I may just for a second, is any of the money that you’re announcing now for the NHS for social care, or is that a completely separate issue?
TM: This is money for the NHS. So we will address the social care issue, we’ll publish a Green Paper on social care. We’ve actually already, as the Chancellor announced last year, put £2bn pounds extra into social care because we’ve seen the need there and we’ve put more money into it.

AM: Because your Social Care Minister says like, putting money into the NHS, very, very welcome but it’s a bit like running a bath with the taps full on and the plug out, if you don’t do social care as well.

TM: Well of course there’s a link between social care and health. Why did I put responsibility for social care, into the Department of Health after the last election? Precisely because I recognise that these need to work together. Of course they worked – people see it, you know, what people see when they see the sort of run-up between social care and health is about elderly people often kept in hospital longer than they need to be because there isn’t the place perhaps in a care home available for them. We need to be addressing these issues, but the money I’m announcing, the £20bn pounds in real terms more in 2023-24 going into the NHS is for the NHS.

AM: Do you think the fact that you had to deal with your diabetes in the NHS predisposed you to be more willing to spend this kind of money?

TM: Well, as an MP before I was diagnosed with diabetes, of course I used the NHS, I saw the NHS. But I think as a type one diabetic, at the time when I was diagnosed I very much felt the NHS was there for me. Because when you get something like that, a diagnosis like that, you immediately think well, how am I going to deal with it, how will I cope with it? And I’ve had fantastic support from my local GPs practice, from my consultant, and also from the specialists, the clinical
specialist nurses who are there, who can advise you and help you. And I’ve really seen what the NHS means to somebody, not just, you know, on the odd day -

AM: And you –

TM: - but actually for me it’s day by day.

AM: Can I turn to another issue on your plate and ask you, first of all, are you a woman of your word?

TM: (laugh) Yes, I am, Andrew. And I expect I know what the second question is going to be.

AM: The reason I’m asking that so bluntly is that a lot of your MPs this weekend wonder about that, because they thought they had had a private meeting with you, you were about to lose a vote – it seemed you might lose a vote on the floor of the House of Commons on the Withdrawal Bill and you brought in a group of Tory rebels and you told them that you were going to give them a certain kind of support, and then afterwards they think you changed your mind, you broke your word.

TM: No. What I did, I did talk to people. if I can just set the context for this. the EU Withdrawal Bill is an important Bill, it is part of the legislation we need in order to be able to leave the European Union. And we’re leaving the European Union because parliament asked the British people what their choice was and they clearly chose that we should leave the European Union. And we’re going to deliver on that. But as we put the Bill through, there were some concerns expressed about the particular role of parliament in the future. I did indeed meet a group of my fellow MPs. I listened to their concerns and I undertook to consider their concerns, and the next day I stood up in Prime Minister’s Questions and said I’d put an
amendment down in the House of Lords. I’ve done exactly that. But if I may, what’s important about this is that we recognise the concerns that people have about the role of parliament, but there are two things I’m also very clear about, which is first of all that parliament cannot tie the hands of government in negotiations. If you think it about, we’re sitting there negotiating on the details of our future relationship or our withdrawal agreement, we can’t have a situation where every time we have to take a decision we have to go back and have a lengthy debate and, you know, parliament can’t tie government’s hands in negotiations. But it’s also important that parliament cannot and should not overturn the will of the British people, which was to leave the EU.

AM: Can I put it as it’s seen by people on the other side of this argument, which is that this only happens in the event of no deal, which you don’t want – not many people want a no deal – and it’d be a solemn and difficult moment possibly for the country if that happened. And they say that parliament, as our sovereign legislative and decision making body, ought to have, as it were, a hand on the wheel or some sense of guiding the country about what happens next, and that your amendment doesn’t allow them really to do that, and their amendment did. And therefore it is about the centrality of parliament. After all, this is about reclaiming the sovereignty of parliament.

TM: Well it is, and parliament – but parliament is – we’ve always said that parliament was going to be able to express its view on this issue, to have a meaningful vote on this issue. There’s a debate about what those words mean. I’ve listened carefully to the concerns. I’ve put an amendment down that I think balances this issue of the role of parliament together with the need for us to ensure that we don’t overturn the decision of the British people. But what we’re talking about
here, Andrew, if you just think about it, we’ve just spent some
time talking about a really significant announcement about the
future of our National Health Service which matters to people
in this country on a day to day basis. What we’re now
discussing is whether a particular motion in the House of
Commons should be amendable or unamendable.

AM: Well, that sounds slightly –

TM: And that’s what I’m clear about is that we need to
recognise the role of parliament, but ensure that government’s
hands can’t be tied in negotiations, and that parliament does
not overturn the will of the people.

AM: Because on the other side of the argument, as it were,
the ardent Brexiteers fear that bit by bit, compromise by
compromise, prevarication by prevarication, there’s lots and
lots of clever complicated language and great, great
complexity, we are being drawn into a relationship with the EU
so that we do leave legally but actually don’t really leave. You
know, we’re inside or close to the customs union, we’ve very,
very close to the single market, and in effect we haven’t really
left.

TM: Well, first of all we’re not going to be inside the customs
union. I’ve said that on a number of occasions. I’m happy to
repeat it now. But what do we need to ensure when we leave
the European Union that we have, we want to continue to
have a really good trading relationship with the European
Union, and customs is part of that, but there are other issues
that will be part of that as well. But we want to make sure that
we’ve got an independent trade policy so we can negotiate
trade deals around the rest of the world. There’s some other
aspects where, you know, we will continue to work with the
European Union.
AM: There is a sense that we’re getting stuck, we’re getting ground down and being tougher and tougher day by day, week by week as they see drift and division at Westminster.

TM: No, if we step back, Andrew, before December, when we were coming to the Council meeting that was looking at moving on in our considerations in our talks with the EU, there was a lot of scepticism about, oh, you’re not going to get a deal there, you’re not going to get an agreement. We got it.

TM: Similarly before March everybody said, oh, you’re not going to get agreement on the implementation period. We got it. We got it because we’ve been sitting down and negotiating in British interests –

TM: And that was important for business and it was important for citizens.

AM: You could say clearly –

TM: Negotiations are continuing at the moment. You know, I can set your mind at rest.

AM: Well –

TM: If you think nothing is happening.

AM: It’s not – it’s not my –

TM: Don’t worry, there’s lots of negotiation continuing.

AM: It’s not my mind we need to worry about. It’s the Foreign Secretary’s mind. And he says there is a risk that we will be locked in orbit around the EU and the customs union and to a
large extent still in the single market, so not really having full freedom on our trade policy, our tariff schedules, or indeed our regulatory framework either. That’s what he fears. What’s your message to him?

TM: Well, the message is government has agreed that we will have an independent trade policy, we will be free to negotiate those trade deals around the rest of the world. But it isn’t a case of replacing everything we’ve done with the EU with trade with the rest of the world, it’s about adding to the trade we have with the EU. It’s about making sure we can take advantage of that independent trade policy, of being outside the EU. So a good relationship with the EU and, you know, we will be continuing to cooperate with countries in Europe because we’re leaving the EU, we’re not leaving Europe. But also this gives us opportunities for the future. There’s a really – I believe, a real bright future for the UK outside the European Union, and it’s this government that’s going to deliver it.

AM: How important is it to you that there is no friction – friction-driven border between the two parts of Ireland? Between Northern Ireland and the Republic.

TM: It is important for the people of Northern Ireland that we do not see a hard border between Northern Ireland and Ireland. The way I would put is about people being able to lead their lives, carry on leading their lives as they do today.

AM: Okay, so it’s a crucial question.

TM: Can I just explain why? It’s about people, but it’s also really important about the United Kingdom and about this government working for all parts of the United Kingdom. What we’ve seen from the European Commission as an idea, as one
idea in particular, that would effectively put a border down which would separate off Northern Ireland from Great Britain.

AM: That’s not acceptable.

TM: That’s not right. That’s not acceptable. We’re one United Kingdom.

AM: But it’s not acceptable to a hard border on the island of Ireland either you’ve said. That’s crucial. And again your Foreign Secretary says this is allowing the tail to wag the dog and he says it’s absurd, beyond belief that we’re allowing the tail to wag the dog in this way. We’re allowing the whole of our agenda to be dictated by this folly. That’s your Foreign Secretary.

TM: The issue of the border between Northern Ireland and Ireland is an important element in the talks that we’re undertaking with the European Union. But of course it is one part of a very big picture, because as a country we’re ambitious for the partnership that we can develop with the European Union, on the economy, most focus is on the economy, but also on security matters as well, we want to be able to continue to cooperate with countries inside Europe in the best interests of the UK. And I think that cooperation in the best interests of the UK will also be in the interests of the EU.

AM: But they’re not behaving like that are they? Not when it comes to Galileo, not when it comes to passport issue for criminals and so forth. They see a Prime Minister who is caught between different Tory factions and you’re kind of frozen between the hard Brexiteers and the soft Brexiteers and you’re trying to placate one group and then the other group,
and therefore they think they can take you for a fool really, in the end.

TM: No. No, Andrew, that is – that’s not right at all. Let’s just look at Galileo. Because this is an issue, it’s about the future – elements in terms of security for the future. The UK’s been contributing significantly to the Galileo programme so far. Yes, the EU are saying that they don’t think in the future, as not being a member of the EU, we can continue to contribute and have the access that we would have as a member of the EU. We’re still discussing that with them. But what I have said, what we as a government have said, what we’ve been very clear about with them, is that may be your decision, if that is we’ll still discuss it, but if it is your decision then we will ensure that we have what Britain needs and we will do it ourselves.

AM: When it comes to all of these issues, again your Foreign Secretary has said you need a different tone, you need to be more combative. You’ve been described famously by Ken Clarke as a ‘bloody difficult woman’, and the question is are you being difficult enough when it comes to the EU? Do we need a change of tone? Is it time to play hardball?

TM: It is time to ensure that we get on with the complicated, intricate job of actually sitting down and working through all the various issues we need to work through. I’ve been clear that we are going to do is in the week beginning the 9th July we’ll publish a White Paper which will set out in more detail than the speeches any of us have given, David Davis has, Philip Hammond, Liam Fox, on these issues – we’ll set out in more detail the ambition we have for the relationship with the European Union in future. But can I just say this? We’ve reached the agreements we’ve reached so far – AM: So far.
TM: - in December and in March by the UK being very clear about where its interests lay and ensuring that those decisions reflect UK interests. And the deal that I want to negotiate will be a deal that will be good for Britain.

AM: When Jeremy Corbyn again quote the Foreign Secretary, saying you should be more like Trump, you kind of froze and you gave him the death stare. What was going through your mind at that moment?

TM: (laugh) Well, you know, somebody else actually yesterday talked to me about this thing they call the sort of death stare. I’m not really conscious that I’m doing it at the time. What –

AM: But you were very cross weren’t you?

TM: What was going through my mind was that actually I don’t think Jeremy Corbyn understands what these negotiations are really about. I don’t think remember Jeremy Corbyn is a man who said we should trigger Article 50 immediately after the referendum vote.

AM: Yes.

TM: When no preparation had been made for the discussions for the negotiations, nobody had done work on what the issues that needed to be addressed. We have been ensuring that we do the job for the British people. We’re leaving the EU and we’re going to make sure we get a good deal.

AM: Just one final question, if I may, in one final area, which is why do you think it is possible for a Conservative MP to stop a law going through the House of Commons that would have banned men taking photographs up women’s skirts? Why did that happen?

TM: Well, first of all, I think that upskirting is invasive, it’s degrading, it’s offensive, and what I’m going to do in response
to what happened is to ensure that Bill was blocked, we’re going to take the Bill that was blocked, the legislation that was blocked and going to put it through in government time.

AM: Some people won’t know who Christopher Chope is. He’s blocked Bills to pardon Alan Turing, he’s blocked a Bill to prevent revenge evictions, to ban wild animals in circus and end hospital car parking charges. He also in 2009 proposed abolishing the minimum wage. Why did you give him a knighthood six months ago?

TM: Well, first of all let’s be very clear on some of those things you’ve talked about. Actually the pardon for Alan Turing we did put through. We put through as a government.

AM: He voted against it.

TM: We put through as a government. And what we’re going to do on this upskirting issue is put, in government time, make sure that legislation is there on the statute book. This is an invasive, offensive act and we need to take action against it.

AM: So why did you give him a knighthood?

TM: Christopher Chope has been a longstanding Member of Parliament. What is important is how we respond to the legislation that was going to be there, because the concern is not the issue of an individual, the concern is about are we going to ensure –

AM: It’s about civility.
TM: - It’s about something that is offensive to people, that is invasive of people’s privacy. Are we going to ensure that action is taken about that? Yes, we are.

AM: Prime Minister, very clear. Thanks very much indeed for talking to us.

TM: Thank you.

(ends)