

ANDREW MARR SHOW

EMMANUEL MACRON

President of France

AM: Mr President, we're sitting here at Sandhurst, at the heart of British military culture, and you've just come to a new military agreement. Can I start by asking you what you've agreed with Theresa May?

EM: We agreed a series of cooperation. Cooperation in terms of capacities on future projects, like the *[inaudible]* I mean, new capacities for new weapons in the future which represents very huge investments, but it's very much important, because we have the very strong relationship in terms of defence. That's a bilateral relationship and a thing to deal with Brexit.

AM: I'm sorry, is this because the Russians are tooling up with new weapons all the time and there's a threat from the East or what?

EM: No, not just a threat from the East. I mean, we have a series of security issues. Obviously we have some – I mean, security issues coming from the East, but we have to deal with the Middle East, with – in Africa, the war against terrorism. And that's why we decided this cooperation in terms of capacities and – and the series of new weapons, because that's very much important from a strategic and operational point of view. We decided on our side to commit ourselves in 2019 for cooperation in Estonia in the framework of NATO. So that's a series of very concrete cooperation on the short run, because we have the same vision of security and collective threats.

AM: Let me ask, if I may, about the wider picture. Do you think it's possible in Theresa May's words, for Britain to have a deep and special relationship with the EU after Brexit?

EM: I do hope. I do hope. Because I think it would be good for the EU and for – for UK.

AM: She said a deep relationship, however. If the UK is – I imagine your view is if the UK is not going to be a member of the customs union or the single market, or accept the four freedoms, it can't be that deep.

EM: Look, it will be by definition less deep than today, because the – the deepest possible relation is being a member of the European Union. So I think you have to be – you have to be lucid and – and you have to be fair with people. As you decided to leave you cannot be part of the single market. But in function of the nature of the negotiation, you can have some deeper relations and some others. For instance, we have a deeper relation with Norway than the – the one we have with Canada. So it depends on the – on the outcome of this negotiation, but for sure, except if you change your mind, but you – you will not be part of the single market, you will – as you will not be part of the European Union.

AM: And in concrete terms, let's talk about what that might mean. So for instance, there are a lot of people in this country who say, well not much of the British economy is actually directly trading with the EU. That bit of the British economy could diverge. But bits of the British economy that are trading with the EU will converge. In other words, we can have a sophisticated bespoke deal especially for Britain. Now, you've said in the past you can have Canada or you can have Norway but you can't have your own special deal. Is that really fair, given how long Britain has been part of the EU?

EM: No, it's not a question to be fair or unfair. I take that as a reference that for sure you will have your own solution, and – and my willingness and that's -

AM: So there will be a bespoke special solution for Britain?

EM: Sure, but you will – I take these two references because this – this special way should be consistent with the preservation of the single market and our collective interests. And – and you should understand that you cannot, by definition, have the full

access to the single market if you don't tick the box. And – and to get full access to the single market you need contribution to the budget, and you have to accept –

AM: The – the freedoms.

EM: The freedoms, and the four pillars, and you have to accept the jurisdiction. As soon as you decide not to join this – these preconditions it's not a full access. So it's something perhaps between this full access and a trade agreement. But what's important is not to make people think or believe that it's possible to have -

AM: Your cake and eat it.

EM: Exactly.

AM: So when I talk to David Davis, our main Brexit negotiator and I say, 'what does Britain really want out of this, David?' He says, 'we want Canada plus, plus, plus.' And by plus, plus, plus he means a deal on services because so much of the UK economy is based on services in general and on the City in particular. But from what you've said today I – guess that you don't believe we can have any special deal involving the City.

EM: I mean, you don't just speak about services but you speak about financial services. Cooking a deal is the job of Michel Barnier. We have a very dedicated organisation. I don't want to start a negotiation country by country, it will be ridiculous and the best way to dismantle the whole EU. I think what we have to do and what we will do is first to take the decision in March regarding the mandate we want to give to Michel Barnier to negotiate. After that he will have to negotiate with your negotiator. And – and they will decide, and it depends on the proposals made by – by the UK, but for sure full access for financial services to the single market is not feasible given the functioning of the single market. So by definition it's not a full access.

AM: So in concrete terms, some form of passporting deal is off the table in these negotiations as far as you're concerned?

EM: I'm not the one to negotiate and I don't want to cause rows, but it depends on what you're ready to put on the table in terms of precondition. If you respect the precondition to get access to single market, it's feasible. But there is not cherry picking in the single market. I mean, if – if I have to wrap up the full philosophy, no cherry picking in the single market. Because it's not feasible. Because otherwise that's - that's a dismantling of the single market. And for me it's one of the pillars of the European Union and something you love in the past.

AM: And you say that you're not negotiating and that's absolutely right, but when you went to China, for instance, you were very much saying that one of the consequences of Brexit, you thought, was to reaffirm Paris's centrality in the financial system, and France has made a very, very strong pitch to British financial institutions to come over to Paris. How's it going?

EM: Look, in China I didn't speak about Brexit, and – and I didn't, I would say, push any message because of sanctions to the Brexit. I – I fully disagree with this idea. Why? Because I think that for China they look at Europe and we have to be very much coordinated, and we are – we are linked and we are closer linked on nuclear and a series of topics very much important for both of us, vis-a-vis China. Second, in – in terms of European dialogue on financial services, but for sure, for sure we want to attract the maximum activity. Why? Because this decision has an impact for a lot of players. So a lot of players will decide to be part of the EU and the Eurozone. And they have to choose between different countries, so there is a competition between different countries.

AM: Of course there is. The case I suppose -

EM: And – and you had this decision regarding the regulator, as you leave, you lost this regulator, and – and it will come to Paris.

AM: I suppose the case for the City is that it has built up a very big part of the whole global financial system, and to unplug the

City from the rest of the European financial structure is a big risk and a danger.

EM: Look, I think first of all, it's absolutely not my willingness and I think not a reasonable perspective. Second, it's something to be taken into consideration by your negotiator and your own proposals. But my willingness is not precisely to unplug, as you say, the British City, I think it doesn't make sense. Because it's part of the whole financing of our European Union. But for sure, if there is no change in terms of full access to the financial single market it doesn't make sense for the other. So I want to preserve what we created post world war, and – and – and what we created is – is this sophisticated organisation called the European Union, which is for the very first time not a hegemony of one on the others but a very concrete, democratic, economic and human construction.

AM: Why do you think the British voted to leave this sophisticated structure?

EM: Look, I'm not the one to judge or to comment the decision of – of your people. But my – my interpretation is that a lot of losers of this new globalisation and this new system suddenly decided that it was not – no more for them. You always take a risk when you – when you – when you have such a referendum with just yes or no in a very complicated context.

AM: If France had had a referendum it might have had the same result?

EM: Yeah. Probably. Probably in a similar context. But our context was very –

AM: very different.

EM: - was very different so I don't want – I don't want to – to make any - I mean, to take any bets. But – but I – I would have definitely fight – fought very hard to win. But I think it's a mistake when you just ask yes or no, when you don't ask people how to improve the situation and to explain how to improve it. That's why

I do believe in these conventions we will organise to ask- better associate people. But as – as for the Brexit vote, my understanding is that middle classes and working classes, and especially the oldest in your country, decided that the recent decades were not in their favour. And that the adjustments made by both EU and globalisation, because for me it was a mix of both of them, was not in their favour. Which means what? First it's not sustainable to have an unbalanced organisation. It probably, when I look at your debates, it was too much favourable just for the City and less favourable for the rest of the country, so I'm very much –

AM: But surely it was about Europe as well and the structure of Europe?

EM: And second – and second I think one of the reasons was precisely an organisation of our European Union probably which gets too far in terms of freedom without cohesion. Towards free markets without any rules and any convergence. And I have to say that your governments had some responsibilities in it. I remember –

AM: So too neoliberal perhaps?

EM: But ten years ago the ultra-liberals on totally and purely free market without any regulation, because all your people saying the Hungarian workers or the Polish workers are much much more favoured than I am. It was exactly the debate we had in France 10 to 15 years ago against some directives that a lot of your governments pushed at the time saying guys, you are not free market. I am, I do believe in free market. I do believe in in a market economy. But we need regulation and convergence, which means that what we lost in the recent years in Europe. That's a convergence and solidarity message. It's no more sustainable to have some countries taking cohesion funds, taking money from the European Union in order to converge and using this money to diverge. It reduce their labour standards or to reduce their corporate taxes. So that's why –

AM: So you – sorry to interrupt but your vision seems to me to be deepening Europe as a response to this. You want a single financial minister over the whole thing, more European taxes, more done at the centre. Again, is that not a terrible risk? Given –
EM: No.

AM: - how many European people look at this and say it's too far away already.

EM: No.

AM: I don't feel engaged in this.

EM: Because it's not just my view. I think what we need is first of all to have a much more protective Europe. From the very beginning I'm totally dedicated on making our Europe more protective to our people. So what I do believe is that first Europe should not mean just adapting yourself when you are part of the working classes or middle classes, but the best answer is we have collective risks and threats, Europe is something which will protect you. On digital, environment, migration, collective security, and a fair organisation. But my, I would say, on the mid to long-run view of Europe, is the following: I do believe that we have a European Union, we will be unhappily 27, but –

AM: Inevitably, definitely?

EM: I mean, it's on your own. It depends on you. I mean, I do respect this vote, I do regret this vote, and I would love to welcome you again. I can say, but my vision –

AM: Your vision of a a different Europe.

EM: So my – my vision. On the very short run, be much more concrete, less bureaucracy and more concrete and so to protect people and address their issues. And our collective future. Concrete end. But we have to prepare for me a new organisation, which should be, or could be, the following: We will – we will be 27 at the EU level. For me the mid to long-run perspective by definition is to – to gather some countries within or in some cooperation with this EU, let's say, but it will enlarge precisely to be an actual counterpart of – of –

AM: So a second Europe outside?

EM: Turkey or Russia. I don't know. It's through cooperation or joining this - but this EU should have a pillar of single markets, common values and rights, to be defended. And we see that with the remarkable work of the Commission in Poland. That's the first – that's the first circle. And a series of inner circles on different policies.

AM: So a multispeed Europe?

EM: Based on your own ambition. But by definition it's already the case on Schengen or Euro. But on defence, on migrations, and for me the core of this Europe, the very inner circle is an open avant garde where we decide to have a much stronger integration and to work very closely together in strategic and economic terms. That's my view. But it's not just to strengthen -

AM: Let me move on, if I may.

EM: Sure but – but -

AM: And ask you about France.

EM: More sovereignty, more unity, more democracy, that's the recipe in order to succeed in Europe. If you lose your sovereignty and you don't protect people they don't believe in you. If you are not based on a democratic approach, they will not follow you. If you are not following this unity, i.e. creating consistence and convergence, they will leave.

AM: You said France is back. What did you mean by that?

EM: I mean that we are delivering reforms which seemed impossible for decades. That's it. So we reform – we fix a series of – of internal difficulties and we increase our capacity to produce and be competitive. This is for me the pillar because when you are not credible at home, no chance to be credible outside.

AM: You talk about values, which must involve presumably freedom of the press and human rights and so forth. Did you raise

those with the Chinese president when you were talking to him last week?

EM: I rose with all the leaders I met. And – and – and that's why, because I – I do this job -

AM: What did he say to you?

EM: I do this job in France in order to relaunch Europe, for you to understand the full picture. The job we make in France is good for France. We will I'm sure in the coming years improve our figures in terms of employment, reduce our deficit and so on, that's it. It allows me to be more credible at European level and convince especially Germany to work together to relaunch this new Europe. And third, it allows us to be more credible at an international scale on different subjects, on different topics. Taking the leadership on climate change.

AM: Okay.

EM: Against climate change. On Lebanon and several issues. On human rights.

AM: Can I – can I –

EM: I always –

AM: - jump in on climate change, just since you mention it.

EM: I just wanted to –

AM: Very quickly.

EM: No on human rights. So taking – taking this – this part, I raised human rights directly with all the leaders. In China it's absolutely counter-productive to raise it, there is no press conference. Because I mean, the political system, the regime, President Xi is, I mean, not in a situation in the current – I mean, in an environment –

AM: It's not going to help, you think?

EM: I – I do believe it's totally counter-productive.

AM: Okay.

EM: So what I did is I had a direct discussion. We have tried to discuss this issue. We decided an organisation and I provided, I would say, visibility and the ability for him to be sure that this is not a diplomacy in front of the camera. So that's it. It's different

when I speak with President Erdogan, because we had hours of discussion on human rights and specific situations. But I issued a very clear statement.

AM: Let me ask you, if I may,

EM: What's that?

AM: - about yet another leader. I wonder what you thought when you got up the morning and read what President Trump – I can't say the word – had said about certain African countries, S-hole countries. He denies it but a lot of people say he used that word. And among the African countries who were outraged and very offended by that were many francophone counties. Many French-speaking countries in Africa. I wonder did you share their outrage?

EM: For sure.

AM: So –

EM: For sure. It's not a word you can use. And – and – and if we want precisely to build peace, development in this country and a respectful relationship -

AM: You can't use those kind of words.

EM: But by definition. And I think a lot of our issues in both the Middle East and in Africa is due to a lot of frustrations due to a lot of humil- past humiliations.

AM: Humiliations, yeah.

EM: And – and – and we have to understand that, and – and I do believe that we need – we have to respect all the countries.

AM: Are you one of those –

EM: That's what we owe them and that's – and that's much more efficient. So I have a very direct relationship with President Trump, we have a very good relationship.

AM: You sat down with him for dinner at the top of the Eiffel Tower.

EM: Sure.

AM: I wonder what you make of him as a person, having come across him closely.

EM: Look, I think he's a – he is not a classical politician, so he first of all, he was elected by his humouring people. He is the President of the United States, and that's a great country and that's a great [*inaudible*]. So I want to work with him, and I think we've built a very strong relationship. We disagree on several topics.

AM: Sure.

EM: I call him very regularly. I'm always extremely direct and frank. He is. Sometimes I manage to convince him, and sometimes I fail.

AM: Do you wake up in the morning thinking what has he tweeted this night?

EM: No. No, because I think we should not overplay the situation and – and – and these tweets, because –

AM: I'm sorry, I'm asking you –

EM: - that's a sort of – of mix between personal and political reaction, and I think it's not feasible when you are president of a Republic like the US republic, but like the French one.

AM: To respond too much like that. The reason I'm asking with a slight smile on my face, but it is very, very serious. You've got something like the North Korean situation, when Trump basically says, 'my nuclear button's bigger than your nuclear button.' A lot of people in the world think this is just slightly unhinged and very dangerous.

EM: Yes. But the best answer you can provide to that is what? Just to say we have to work very closely and seriously to force North Korea to come back to the table of negotiations. We have to follow the UN sanctions and implement them and the critical, the critical country, in order to deliver, is China.

AM: Absolutely.

EM: And that's – that's what we discussed with President Xi. So -

AM: Talking about bringing countries back -

EM: - it's just calm down everybody.

AM: Do you think that there is any chance at all of persuading the Americans to come back to the table on the Paris climate change agreement?

EM: First of all, I don't think there is any option to come back to the table of negotiations for the Paris agreement. I've always been very clear, it's negotiated and signed. It's just deciding to sign what is – what is done. Why? Because –

AM: To sign it then. Do you think they can?

EM: we have – I mean we negotiated. 100- more than 180 countries signed and are being ratifying. But come on, we will not renegotiate for one people. So I do believe that's a big mistake, I told him but there is no new negotiation. You join or you don't join. China decided to – to remain in the loop. And – and we will deliver, I think we have to accelerate. But what I see is that the private sector and states in the US are following this line. They are trying to comply with the agreement. So we will do it. I think that's a mistake, that there will be no re-negotiation, but I hope an option to join the treaty as negotiated.

AM: Very final question, you said you were going to be a Jupiter-like president. What did you mean by that?

EM: I think I – I never used like that this expression. When – when I was asked – but you know how it functions, and people just capture one word and – and take it without a context. I think I was just commentating that the – the – the full context, but my point was just to say when you preside you have to preside, it's different from governing, and you have to be – to avoid permanent comments, to avoid a sort of day to day presence without strong decisions.

AM: You have to have a bit of élan, a bit of gloire...

EM: I – I – I would not say that's exactly.. You need efficiency, authority, humanity. So that's why the third pillar is not compatible with Jupiter or anything of this – of this kind. But what's important to me and the message I want to say is that our

credibility is to explain what we want to do, to deliver, to change the country, to prepare the country to the new centuries. That's what we are doing in France. Because that's a precondition to succeed in Europe. And our role in this world is to help everywhere to build peace. That's it, that's my job.

AM: President Macron, thank you very much indeed.

EM: Thank you very much Andrew.

(end of interview)