

THE ANDREW MARR SHOW

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THERESA MAY

AM: Good morning to you, Home Secretary.

TM: Good morning, Andrew.

AM: If we stay in the EU will immigration go up or down?

TM: Well, first of all nobody who's heard me over the last few years can doubt that I think that we need to control immigration, and I think immigration is too high. But controlling immigration is hard and it's hard whether we're inside the EU or outside the EU. It's hard dealing with EU migration or migration from outside the EU.

AM: Harder to deal if we're still inside. Immigration is going to carry on rising very sharply if we stay inside the EU isn't it?

TM: Well, the thing about immigration is that actually it's affected by many different features. That's why you can never as a government say we're going to change this one rule and suddenly the result is going to be what we want. You have constantly to be working at it, which is exactly what we're doing. So you can't just change one feature and assume that that is going to have an impact. Yes, free movement makes it harder to control immigration.

AM: Ah.

TM: But it doesn't make it impossible to control immigration.

AM: We'll come on to that. But your own figures, your own government figures suggest three million more people in this country as migrants from the EU by 2030. That is a vast number of people, which will worry a lot of potential voters one way or the other.

TM: Well, I understand why people are concerned about immigration, because it does have –

AM: So three million is a reasonable figure, is it?

RM: Well, that was an independent figure, but if I can just say I understand why people are concerned about immigration. They're concerned about immigration because it has an effect on public services, on jobs, and that's why it's important for us to control immigration. But as I say, controlling immigration is hard and we have to keep working at it. That's exactly what we're doing. And if you look at membership of the European Union, if we were to be outside the European Union and have some of the arrangements that people say we could –

AM: Visas, our own controls.

TM: Well, no, if you'd just let me finish this point. If we were to be outside the European Union and still want the sort of access to the single market that people talk about, then actually if you look where that's been done for other countries they have to accept the free movement rules, without any say over those rules.

AM: That's a slightly different point. But just coming back to this – so the –

TM: I'm not sure it is a different point actually.

AM: Three million more people coming into this country, something that worries an awful lot of people for reasons that you have set out as Home Secretary. You've talked about the danger to social cohesion, public services creaking, lower paid people being undercut or losing their jobs as a result of this mass migration. And yet on your watch it has just carried on and there is no reason to think that it won't carry on in the future. If we vote to stay inside the EU we are voting for huge numbers – hundreds of thousands more European migrants coming in year after year after year. That's the reality.

TM: Well, I think if you just look at the facts of what's happened over the last six years, you say immigration's just continued to

rise, actually it did start to fall for a number of years and now it's started to go back up again, and it's gone back up, I fully accept, from not just inside the European Union but actually from outside the European Union as well. That's why I say controlling immigration is hard. This is not an easy thing, because it's affected by a whole variety of different factors. So why is it that the government is bringing in another Immigration Act, for example? Precisely because there are things we now think we need to do to help to bring that rate of control into the immigration system. I recognise why people are worried about it. Being outside the EU and having access to the single market, we would – if countries which have that arrangement at the moment have to accept free movement. And if you're inside the EU you can change those rules.

AM: A lot of the Out campaign say they would not go into that kind of arrangement anyway, so there wouldn't be free movement of people. But we have had hundreds of thousands of people coming in year after year after year, and on your watch that has happened. So in effect what you're saying to people watching is, 'stick with us, vote to stay in the EU, and the immigration crisis will continue as it has before.'

TM: No. I'm not saying that. What I'm saying is that if you stick with us, we are the government that actually accepted the need to do something about immigration. We're the people who have changed the rules.

AM: But it hasn't actually done much about immigration.

TM: We're the people who have changed the rules, we have dealt with abuse in the student visa system. Is there more to do? Yes, there is more to do. I think you and I have had this conversation before, Andrew. But also if you're inside the European Union we have an opportunity to change the rules. Actually that's just what we've done in the deal that David Cameron negotiated. Crucially, we've, as part of that deal we've got – worked to an agreement to

reduce the pull factor of our welfare benefits. But also we've got a very important decision –

AM: I'm sorry, there is an even bigger pull factor, which is the national living wage, going up to £9. Which again government statistics suggest will be a massive pull factor. And the OBR itself has said that the changes that the Prime Minister has negotiated won't have much impact on overall immigration.

TM: Well, can I come on to the point about the national living wage, but can I first finish the point I was making about the changes that we've got over the rules on free movement. Crucially, and I think this is the first time it's happened, this is a landmark decision. We've got agreement that we can overturn – the European Union will overturn judgements of the European Court of Justice that means that it's easier for people to abuse the free movement rules.

AM: This is the shared marriage issue.

TM: It's one of – that's one of the issues, yes. I think that's very important, that we can effectively say that we will overturn those European Court of Justice judgements.

AM: So are we now going – to

TM: Can I come onto the –

AM: On that point, are we now going to see a whole host of challenges by the British government against the ECJ and some prospect of actually winning those? Is that what you're saying?

TM: Well, what I'm saying is that we have got an important decision inside the European Union which is about a willingness to say that those European Court of Justice decisions that were taken in these cases like – I won't go into the detail of them, the names. But those cases meant that there was an increase, we did see an increase in abuse of free movement rules. I think for the first time ever, sitting around that European table we have negotiated a deal that says we're going to overturn those

judgements through the use of a new directive. That's a landmark decision and I think it's very important.

AM: Alright. But it's had no effect really on the numbers, raw numbers of people coming in, which remains enormous. Let me read you what Michael Gove said about that. He said that the latest announcement from the Treasury, 'is an official admission that if we stay in the EU, then immigration will continue to increase by hundreds of thousands year on year. More than 250,000 people came to Britain from Europe last year. As long as we're in the EU we cannot control our borders.' And that is all factually true, isn't it?

TM: Well, actually control of our borders and immigration policy are two different things. Crucially, inside the European Union we're not part of this area that's called the Schengen area. What does that mean? It's a border-free zone that a number of countries have.

AM: I understand that.

TM: We have control of our borders so we can decide –

AM: We don't have control – we don't have control of our borders, Home Secretary. People living inside the EU can come and move in here as and when they want, as they do in huge numbers every single year. That's not control of our borders.

TM: No, Andrew, you are conflating immigration policy and free movement with control of our borders. People are checked – no, control of our borders means we can stop people entering the United Kingdom, which we can. But crucially, we can only do that if we've got the information we need to have.

AM: Sorry. We can't stop members of the – citizens of other EU countries from coming to the UK.

TM: We can make judgements about people and whether they should be coming into the United Kingdom. That's why it's important we have control at our borders, we have checks on our

borders. So – but what is – what matters for us to be able to stop people who we don't want to see coming into the United Kingdom, criminals, terrorism suspects –

AM: Oh, I see. You can stop a few criminals on the edges, but you can't stop the vast majority of people coming in, and that is not control of our borders.

TM: But no, this is very important actually, Andrew, in these arguments, because control of our borders, when you say we don't have control of our borders it suggests that everybody can just walk into the UK. That is not the case. We check people at our borders. But what matters at the border is that you have the information about people that enables you to make that decision about whether somebody should enter the UK or not. We are more likely to have that information if we're inside the European Union working with other countries in Europe and have access to the various tools, the various things – these are, you know, I can get jargonistic about the names.

AM: No, don't get jargonistic. But I come back to the basic point, the vast majority of people come in as of right, and do as of right. And you're saying that there are some people who are criminals, because of our relationships with other EU countries we know who they are. That's only the case if they have done something really heinous and they have been flagged in advance. Mostly they will just walk straight through.

TM: No, well nobody – I don't know when the last time you went through one of our airports, for example, and came back into the UK, you probably had your passport checked or went through an E gate. So people are -

AM: They looked at my passport, thanks, and in I went.

TM: Well, you're obviously a person of utmost integrity. But what is important, the point I'm making, Andrew, is I think a very simple one. But I think it's important as people are coming up to this decision that we are very clear about some of these

arguments. There is an issue about free movement, about the free movement rules, about what that allows people to do. As I say, as part of the negotiation, we have negotiated changes which help us in terms of dealing with abuse of free movement, which reduce the pull factor of our welfare benefit system.

AM: Okay.

TM: There is a separate issue about whether or not we can check people coming into the country, and that's why I'm saying we shouldn't conflate those to issues, they are separate.

AM: Let me, if I may, make two points on the second of those. We have stopped, I think, about six thousand people since 2010 from the EU coming into this country. That's way less than one per cent. And second, if we were outside the EU there would be a visa system so we'd know much more about who was coming in.

TM: Well, first of all, we don't know what the system would be if we were outside the EU. That's one of the uncertainties. But secondly –

AM: Wouldn't you like a visa system as Home Secretary.

TM: We – we don't know what the system would be, because that's one of the uncertainties. But you say that actually we have stopped people coming from the European Union at the border.

AM: Not very many.

TM: One of the other things we've negotiated in the deal is actually making it easier for us to stop people. It's about the definition of criminality. We've made it easier, we'll be able to stop more people, we'll be able to deport more people as a direct result of the deal that David Cameron negotiated.

AM: And yet when it comes to the couple in Wolverhampton who are bludgeoned to death by somebody who'd come in, and many more cases in the newspapers, what we have you have no control over who people are until they commit an offence, until they commit a crime. And in terms of people coming in who are flagged they have to have done something absolutely appalling

before they can come in. (sic) Now judges have been saying, are we now in the situation we can't send people back if they've been – we can't stop people from coming in if they've been child molesters, if they've been child killers. The system is simply not working.

TM: Well, there is no doubt that we need to do more in exchanging criminal records, but I also have no doubt that we're not going to be better exchanging those criminal records through the systems that are available if we're outside the European Union. Actually, it's being inside the EU that gives us access to – I mentioned the jargon earlier, you know things, they're called CIS2, Excess. This is about ensuring at the border we've got the alerts, that we can exchange criminal records. These are important tools. They're tools that are shared within the European Union.

AM: They're tools which you need because we've got free movement.

TM: No. They're tools – I think it's important that we're able to stop people coming into the UK who we don't want to have in the UK, regardless of where they are coming from and that we can work with others to do that inside the European Union. We have a number of systems that we are members of that help us to do that. It is easier to exchange that information, it's easier to have access to that information inside the European Union than it would be outside the EU.

AM: Three million people coming in by 2030. Good thing or bad thing?

TM: First of all that was an independent estimate. Secondly I've already said –

AM: It came from the Treasury.

TM: - I think immigration is too high and we need to control immigration.

AM: Well it came from the ONS, the Organisation of National Statistics.

TM: Which is independent of government.

AM: Well, yes, but it's an official figure and they say another three million people. No reason to think they're wrong. This is the system that has developed – happened on your watch and looking ahead it's going to carry on as it has been in the past. I'm asking you, good thing or bad thing? It's a bad thing surely from your point of view.

TM: I think immigration is too high.

AM: Right.

TN: I think that's, you know, and we need to control it. That's what we're working at. But as I said earlier, and I return to this, because it's an important point. Controlling immigration is hard. It is something that you constantly have to be dealing with, constantly have to be looking to see what new measures we need to take. Constantly looking at changing the rules. We've changed some of the rules on free movement as a result of the negotiated deal. We need to keep looking at what we need to change to ensure we can have the control we want.

AM: But people watching this programme, wondering how to vote will conclude from this that if they want immigration to come down dramatically and in real terms we should be outside the EU. They look forward to a situation where our national living wage is going to be £9 an hour and the equivalent figure in Bulgaria for instance is less than a pound, 90 odd p an hour. People are going to be drawn into this country, as they have been for very, very

good human reasons, in very large numbers so long as we remain in the EU.

TM: Well, first of all, can I just answer the National Living Wage?

AM: That's the very basic.

TM: No, can I just answer the National Living Wage point, because you raised it earlier and I said I would come back to it and wasn't able to. I think, yes, obviously the National Living Wage is going up and people look when they're looking to move at what they're going to be able to earn. But of course what we have at the moment is we see people in the UK – migrants coming in to take jobs that people in the UK aren't taking and of course one impact of the increased living wage, the National Living Wage, could be that more people here in – resident in the UK take some of these jobs. But when people are looking at the vote on the 23^d of June, this is not a single issue vote in terms of they need to look, as I have done. What I have done is looked across a range of issues and a range of challenges that the UK will be facing and this is not a question on the 23^d of June of whether we can survive outside the European Union, it's a question of what is best for Britain's future. And I think if we look at the challenges we will face, the challenges of security, of trade and the economy, but actually looking ahead, Britain's prosperity, the opportunities for people living here in the UK will be more secure, will be better if we're inside the European Union.

AM: That's your journey, but as part of that and your particularly responsibility has been mass migration and what you're saying to people really is over the next 10 or 20 years if we vote to stay in that carries on.

TM: No.

AM: Well you haven't been able to give me any – any reason as to why it wouldn't.

TM: Well, Andrew, what I've said is very simple. That in dealing with the migration issue you have constantly to be looking at the steps that you can take in order to deal with that. We have shown that you can take steps that reduce migration. It's now gone back up again and we need – and that's why, you know, we're bringing further measures in through a new Immigration Act. But when people look at this the question is what is right for Britain's future? Where will our prosperity best be, most secure? I think that is inside the European Union. And this is not a black and white decision.

AM: And we have heard this weekend – it's a very important weekend I think in this debate. We've heard President Obama tell us that we will be at the back of the queue when it comes to trade, that could be five to ten years he said in Huw Edwards' interview. That, to a lot of people, feels a rather sad and diminished moment for this country, that an American President comes over here and tells us what to do and tells us to pay attention to him. We are not the great proud, independent country we like to think we are, we are being pushed around by the Americans again, and the British Prime Minister is nodding his head as it's going on.

TM: No. Look, let's just look at what President Obama actually said and did. What he said was, lots of people are talking about the sort of trade deal that the UK could have with the United States if it was outside the European Union. As President of the United States he said he would tell us what his view was and how he saw it. How he saw the facts from his point of view. I think that's perfectly reasonable.

AM: But you knew before he came over what he was going to say, surely?

TM: Well, it's not the first time it's been said by the American administration. US Trade Representative had said it before. So this is an issue that obviously they - you know - they're setting out the facts as they see them. And I think if we're talking about, people say you can leave the EU, you can have trade deals with various countries like the United States, like Commonwealth countries, actually it's right that we listen to those countries and what they're saying about that.

AM: Don't you think though if you were a Leave or a Brexit voter and you looked at today's paper and there are the Obamas and the Royal family and Prince George and there's President Obama playing golf in the golf buggy with David Cameron and there's President Obama being interviewed by Hew Edwards on the BBC, you would say this is an absolute establishment classic stitch up. This is the big people ganging together to try and bully voters into reclaiming their country - against reclaiming their country.

TM: Every individual voter who goes to vote in the Referendum on the 23d of June will have a very important decision to take about our future. I think we have a positive, optimistic future inside the European Union. I think our prosperity will be more secure, I think look across the issues of security, trade and the economy, all of these I think say to me as Home Secretary, and obviously I've been dealing with some of those issues over the last six years - say to me that we are better off inside the European Union. And I think people will listen to what is being said by our friends and allies, will want to see the facts, President Obama said, here's from this point of view, as President of the United States, a fact about a trade deal between the United Kingdom and the United States.

AM: So what did you make of Boris Johnson's comments about President Obama?

TM: Well, I'm very clear that I think President Obama it's perfectly reasonable for him to come over and to say – set things out in the way that he sees them.

AM: You don't think there is a visceral dislike of the history of British imperialism playing as part of this story?

TM: I think President Obama was being just very clear with people. People talk about this trade deal with the United States. Here I am as President – here he was as President of the United States saying this is how I see it, these are the facts. The facts as I see them. And I think people will take that onboard and then they'll make their judgements looking across the whole range of issues that they need to consider when they're making the decision whether to vote to be in or out.

AM: The Labour MP, Gisela Stuart has written you today, with many others, asking you not to allow Marine Le Pen into this country because of the history of the views of her party and so forth and the danger of public disorder in the final stages of this campaign. Will you pay attention to that? What will you do?

TM: Well, I never talk about individual decisions, but what I would say about that is actually contrary to what I think you were trying to say earlier Andrew, I think the fact that she's written to me to suggest that I should stop somebody coming into the country rather does suggest we have control of our borders.

AM: Well it depends. Maybe be able to control Marine Le Pen but there's still the hundreds of thousands of others. Anyway, we've had that argument. One other thing I wanted to ask you about is the proposal that there is now a way out of the big hospital dispute next – the strike coming next week that will affect your constituents and many others and there is a proposal that if Jeremy Hunt was able to carry on with his contract as proposed,

but use pilot schemes and bring it in as it were piecemeal, that could be a compromise which could save the country a major and damaging strike.

TM: Well, first all I think the intention has always been to introduce the new contract in phases and as I understand it under 20% of doctors will have the new contract in August. So that's always been part of the plan, that phased introduction. And I think Jeremy Hunt has also written to the BMA –

AM: So there is room to compromise here, isn't there?

TM: Well I think Jeremy Hunt, as I understand it has written to the BMA and asked them to come round the table and discuss with him.

AM: Finally, you may have heard that the discussion about these poor children who are abandoned by their parents inside the EU, refugee children. There's a vote in the House of Commons tomorrow. Isn't it a simple matter of humanity to allow these children to come into this country and rebuild their lives?

TM: Well, I think the question we need to ask ourselves, and we've worked with the UNHCR, is what is in the best interests of these children. And what we're doing is several things. If I may just set that out. So we have a new programme with the UNHCR, which we just announced last week. That is about children at risk coming from the region, not just unaccompanied children because sometimes children can have a family member or a guardian with them but still be at risk for example of exploitation or forced marriage so working with the UNHCR on children at risk. And also we're putting £10 million into being able to provide help and support for children who are in Europe. And that will be the range of support but working with organisations

like Save the Children and helping where children have a right to be reunited with family in the UK for that to happen.

AM: We'll hear a lot more about this tomorrow. We're out of time, Home Secretary thank you very much indeed for joining us.

ENDS