ANDREW MARR: Ed Miliband, welcome to you.

ED MILIBAND: Morning to you Andrew.

ANDREW MARR: Morning, if you lost the election in Scotland and you lost the election in England how could you be a legitimate Prime Minister?

ED MILIBAND: I think you are getting way ahead of yourself.

ANDREW MARR: Well I am looking at the polls like everybody else.

ED MILIBAND:
I’m looking at what’s happening in the country and I think there is a huge choice in this election between whether you have a country run for the richest and most powerful, as it is under this government, whether you have a country run for working people again and I’m optimistic about Labour’s message because as I go round the country, I think Labour’s message is being heard by people…

ANDREW MARR:
(over) You’re not suggesting you are doing well in Scotland?

ED MILIBAND:
We’ve got challenges in Scotland but you know I’ve got an old…

ANDREW MARR:
(over) Huge struggle.

ED MILIBAND:
I’ve got an old fashioned view Andrew which is twelve days before an election you allow people to vote and then we’ll see what the outcome is on May the 7th.

ANDREW MARR:
So you think you can win the election in Scotland?

ED MILIBAND:
I think we can, I think we can, look…

ANDREW MARR:
Really.

ED MILIBAND:
I think we can win the election across the country, you know, look very few people have actually voted in this election so far.
ANDREW MARR:
Very few, some people have voted.

ED MILIBAND:
Some people have voted but very few people, some people have voted by post and look the choice for the people of Scotland is do they want the road to the referendum which is what Nicola Sturgeon and the SNP wants because they haven’t ruled out another referendum in the next five years.

ANDREW MARR:
They haven’t.

ED MILIBAND:
You know they used to say it was once in a lifetime, once in a generation, that was before the referendum and now they haven’t ruled out for the next five years.

ANDREW MARR:
And they will coming for you saying…

ED MILIBAND:
(over) Or a road for a fairer economy with the labour party, that is the choice at this election.

ANDREW MARR:
And they will be coming to you saying Ed Miliband that is our price for supporting you, we want that referendum.

ED MILIBAND:
No, look I want to be clear about this Andrew, no coalitions, no tie ins, you know …

ANDREW MARR:
What about supply and support, a deal, one of those deals that will keep you going?

**ED MILIBAND:**
Look I’ve said no deals, honestly I’ve been clear about that.

**ANDREW MARR:**
Of any kind.

**ED MILIBAND:**
Yeah I am not doing deals with the Scottish National Party, but you know I want a majority Labour government and, you know the way the House of Commons works, as you know, is that we’ll…

**ANDREW MARR:**
*(over)* So absolutely clearly no support and supply deal of any kind?

**ED MILIBAND:**
I am not interested in deals, no.

**ANDREW MARR:**
OK that’s very interesting, so what would happen is that the they would then be looking at you from outside, they would be supporting you perhaps on the Queen’s Speech, you dare them, would you agree with Roy Hattersley, you put the Queen’s Speech down and say come on then, vote me down if you dare.

**ED MILIBAND:**
Well I hate to say this again but you know you are getting ahead of yourself.

**ANDREW MARR:**
I know but it’s very important in election campaigns which is what everyone is talking about.
ED MILIBAND:
(over) The way the House of Commons works is that, you know we want to put our Queen’s Speech before the House of Commons and other parties will vote but I want to just go to the substance of my disagreements with the SNP, because I disagree with them on independence clearly, they want to break up the country, that is absolutely be a disaster for our country and it’s something I am not going to let happen. But then there are other big disagreements on national defence, on the deficit and also, and also on a bigger philosophy question you know I think and in a way the Tories and SNP now have something in common which is that they want to, let me just make this point, they want to set one part of the country against another, the Tories say it’s England versus Scotland, the SNP say its..

ANDREW MARR:
(over) But you might need their votes.

ED MILIBAND:
…Scotland versus England. I’ve got a different view, I believe we need a Prime Minister who can unite the whole of our country, who can stand up for working people in every part of the United Kingdom and that’s the Prime Minister I believe I can be because I think you, the things we share in common, the challenges…

ANDREW MARR:
(over) Well let’s talk about Prime Minister you may have to be, which is someone depending on their votes.

ED MILIBAND:
But the challenges we have in common across our country are bigger than what divides us, now the Conservative and Unionist Party used to believe that but they’re so desperate Andrew.

ANDREW MARR:
All right, all right OK.
ED MILIBAND:
(over) They’re so desperate they’re reduced to trying to set one part of the country against another.

ANDREW MARR:
(over) So you’ve ruled out a coalition, you’ve ruled out confidence and supply, but if you depend upon their votes you might, I don’t know, you might want to extend the A310 or whatever in the West Country and you have to phone up Nicola Sturgeon and say, Nicola, as Prime Minister may I do this and she says no you have to put money into the A9 first.

ED MILIBAND:
(over) For goodness sake Andrew I couldn’t be clearer.

ANDREW MARR:
And that is how it would be, you’d have to otherwise she’d vote you down.

ED MILIBAND:
(over) Let me put it plainly to you, if there is a Labour government it will be a Labour Queen’s Speech, it will be a Labour budget, it’s not going to be written by the SNP, I couldn’t be clearer than that.

ANDREW MARR:
OK but nonetheless on issue after issue after issue when you are actually governing, if you need the votes of the SNP you have to go to the SNP and ask permission, which is why the Tories are putting you as a kind of puppet dangling from Nicola Sturgeon’s fingers.

ED MILIBAND:
Well I think it’s interesting what the Tories are doing, because you know they’ve given up on the central issues of this campaign, they’ve given up on talking about the economy because they know they can’t defend their record, they’ve given up on the health service because they
can’t defend their record, and their extreme spending cuts they’re planning. They’ve given up talking about immigration because they’ve broken their promises on immigration, it’s actually Labour that is leading on the issues of this election…

ANDREW MARR:
(over) If I may say so…

ED MILIBAND:
(over) …And how we may change our country so it works for working people again.

ANDREW MARR:
(over) Party Political Broadcasts are agreed elsewhere, I just need to ask you some clear questions.

ED MILIBAND:
I thought it was an answer to the question.

ANDREW MARR:
Not entirely if I may say so, I want to be absolutely clear you are sitting in Downing Street shall we say and on the phone you see the words Nicola Sturgeon coming up, do you press delete or do you press answer.

ED MILIBAND:
It’s not happening Andrew, it’s not happening, look I just want to be clear about this, you know.

ANDREW MARR:
She will certainly phone you, so do you pick it up or not.

ED MILIBAND:
I go back to this point the way the House of Commons works is that parties will decide how
they vote on the proposals we put forward but as I say, I’m working for a majority Labour government and I do think we owe the British people, and I would say this to the Conservative party too, a debate about the issues. Now I know they feel they are losing the argument on the issues but let’s debate the issues, let’s debate the issues like housing and the health service and all of those things that people at home are thinking, I’m still making up my mind about how to vote in this election.

ANDREW MARR:
The reason I am banging on about the SNP is that there is evidence…

ED MILIBAND:
(over) I couldn’t ever accuse you of that.

ANDREW MARR:
Well you will do shortly I’m sure. The reason is that it seems to be cutting through in the English heartlands and it’s going to become a big, it is already a big, big issue in this general election campaign however much you wish it wasn’t.

ED MILIBAND:
You know that’s not what I am picking up, you know what I am picking up is that people are asking, are you going to sort out the living standards crisis that I face, people are saying for five years wages have fallen behind bills, are you going to do something about that, people are saying I am worried about prospects for my son and daughter are you going to help there.

ANDREW MARR:
(over) Alright, OK, one final go, one final point from me…

ED MILIBAND:
(over) People are worried about the health service so I think those are the big issues that people are asking me about.
ANDREW MARR:

*(over)* … We’ll talk about some of those things in a second but… One final go on this, Paddy, Nick Clegg not Paddy Ashdown, Nick Clegg says that an SNP/Labour government would be regarded by many people as illegitimate and Teresa May has used similar words that there is a crisis of authority for a Prime Minister who depends upon nationalist votes to get measures through the House of Commons.

ED MILIBAND:

Well I’ve said there’s not going to be a coalition with the SNP so…

ANDREW MARR:

*(over)* You may well have to depend upon their votes.

ED MILIBAND:

*(over)* The truth is about Nick Clegg is that, look, he’s lost, he’s not got anything to say either about the issues, look there is one party leader who is actually talking about the issues in this campaign, who’s actually talking about what’s happening in people’s lives and I think that actually the British people will be looking at this and scratching their heads about a Conservative party that started the election saying they want an election about leadership and abandoned that, then said they wanted an election about the economy and abandoned that. Then said they wanted to talk about health and abandoned that too, so I think it’s telling you a lot about the, about the election campaign. Now I want to say one other thing Andrew, which is I don’t think we should predetermine the election outcome, I mean Boris Johnson appears to have decided the election outcome, is his, election with you…

ANDREW MARR:

*(over)* Lots of people have.

ED MILIBAND:

*(over)* He seems to be saying there will be a Labour government I think this election is still going to be a close and a hard fought election and I am going to fight it to the finish.
ANDREW MARR:
OK, just finally bang the nail into the piece of wood finally, a confidence and supply deal with the SNP is ruled out.

ED MILIBAND:
(over) I’ve made it clear we’re not, no deals, no.

ANDREW MARR:
Not going to happen, OK, well let’s move on to some other issues, people say that the first thing that you will do if you become Prime Minister is start to borrow again because that is your natural instinct, you are a taxing and borrowing politician, always have been, always will be.

ED MILIBAND:
They’re wrong.

ANDREW MARR:
Well, you won’t apologise for the excessive borrowing that you did when times were good in the last Labour government, you have never gone back and said, do you know what, times were good we should have been paying down a bit more of the deficit.

ED MILIBAND:
Let me set out what we are going to do because you made a serious point about what’s going to happen under Labour, we’re going to cut the deficit every year, that’s going to be the first line of Labour’s first budget, we’re going to balance the books and run a surplus on the current budget and we’re going to have the net debt falling. And let me just make this point for you. (over) I just want to make this point to you and then come back, it’s this point about, about spending commitments because I think the test of a party is when you publish your manifesto and you say what you are going to do, is it costed and paid for. Now the Conservative Party have sprayed around commitments on health and tax cuts and all of that
without a clue about where it’s coming from. Every penny of what Labour has set out, we are saying where the money is coming from and I think that is such an important test. And I’m…

ANDREW MARR:
(over) But, but, but…

ED MILIBAND:
And I am absolutely seriously about this commitment to fiscal responsibility Andrew, I couldn’t be clearer about it, we are going to be fiscally responsible, we are going to get the deficit down, and I’m going to be…

ANDREW MARR:
(over) Well let me ask you directly about that.

ED MILIBAND:
(over) I’m going to be cutting spending, cutting spending outside key protected areas, and no Labour leader has gone into an election saying that.

ANDREW MARR:
Fewer police, fewer traffic wardens, fewer this fewer that.

ED MILIBAND:
Well let me say that very clearly look, health and education are protected and international development but outside, outside those areas we are going to have to make reductions in spending.

ANDREW MARR:
So there are going to be fewer police, are you going to hit social care?

ED MILIBAND:
Well let me come to those points, on policing we’ve shown how we can make eight hundred
million pounds of savings to protect neighbourhood policing that’s an important commitment. On social care…

ANDREW MARR:
But you are going to cut the police budget.

ED MILIBAND:
Home office budgets are going to have to fall, yes. I am clear about that.

ANDREW MARR:
Social care?

ED MILIBAND:
Let me come to social care because look that, we are trying to get to an integrated service and we’ve set out plans through a mansion tax on the most expensive homes above two million pounds, clamping down on tax avoidance by the hedge funds and money from the tobacco companies for a whole series of things, more doctors, nurses, midwives and also care workers. And this is the point about, this is the point about social care, five thousand new care workers, a new arm of the NHS and that is going to help ensure that elderly people don’t get stuck in hospital.

ANDREW MARR:
So it doesn’t sound very draconian to me because you are already talking about more jobs and more spending and more this.

ED MILIBAND:
(over) No but we are not, we are not guaranteeing for example the local government budgets, so for example in local government we set out how we can make five hundred million pounds of back office savings and, and you know I think I am the first Labour leader but you will know this better than me…
ANDREW MARR:
(over) Let me come to the crucial point if I may which is that you have distinguished between current spending and capital spending, so you’ve allowed yourself leeway to spend, to borrow and spend billions of pounds on new infrastructure projects, new roads, new hospitals, new schools, new railway systems.

ED MILIBAND:
No that’s wrong Andrew, let me explain why.

ANDREW MARR:
Well Chris Lesley says that you have allowed yourself, you have distinguished between those two things haven’t you?

ED MILIBAND:
(over) We’ve got no commitments to additional borrowing in either the capital budget or the current budget and we are actually going to run a surplus on the current budget and have the debt falling.

ANDREW MARR:
So why is the Institute of Fiscal Studies saying that, say that you are going to be borrowing another nine billion pounds. Or beyond. Ninety sorry, ninety billion pounds, out by a factor of ten, ninety billion pounds.

ED MILIBAND:
Well look I don’t agree with the IFS’s analysis and I will tell you why because we’re going to have a surplus on the current budget, their plans, their analysis just says we’re going to have, we’re going to balance the current budget, but let me make a bigger point, I want to make a bigger point because there are three positions in British politics today, there are those who say no cuts, I’m not saying that as I’ve shown in this interview. There are people who want to double the cuts next year, the Conservatives and UKIP and mine is a sensible and balanced plan including fair taxes.
ANDREW MARR:

(over) Middle of the road. Middle of the road plan but can I…

ED MILIBAND:

Well that is one way of describing it.

ANDREW MARR:

Can I come back to the other big, big question about the public spending cuts and so forth which is that you have a party to your left, the SNP, and you have a party to your right, the Conservative party. But inside your party you have a lot of MP’s, a lot of them are going to be Unison sponsored who are going to be very hostile to cuts in public services of any kind and are going to challenge you again and again and again just as happened during the 1970’s. Aren’t you going to be facing a revolt from inside the Labour Party too?

ED MILIBAND:

Well I think the difference is with me and David Cameron is I lead my party and I decide what happens in my party, and I’ve set out very very clearly our plan, and we’re going to stick to our plan Andrew.

ANDREW MARR:

Why did you never ever apologise for the over spending in the last Labour government, did you agree, did you believe seriously at the time that you had abolished boom and bust?

ED MILIBAND:

Well let me take two parts of that question because I think there are two parts to that question.

ANDREW MARR:

There are.
ED MILIBAND:
We got it wrong on bank regulation, we apologised for that, and…

ANDREW MARR:
(over) That is not what I am asking you about.

ED MILIBAND:
… And rightly so and you asked about, about what happened to the economic cycle. We’ve apologised for the bank regulation which caused the economic crisis, but if you are asking me do I regret spending on health and education and ..

ANDREW MARR:
(over) Do you regret borrowing so much in the good times?

ED MILIBAND:
No, I regret the financial crisis, I regret the financial crisis. No Andrew…

ANDREW MARR:
Are you saying the financial crisis has got nothing to do with borrowing?

ED MILIBAND:
What I am saying is the deficit didn’t cause the financial crisis, the financial crisis caused the deficit, that’s why President Obama is dealing with the deficit too. It wasn’t because Labour invested in schools and hospitals in the UK, and look the question for now is getting that deficit down and balancing the books and that’s what we’re going to do.

ANDREW MARR:
OK. Now is it not the case that you are in effect saying you did borrow a lot the last time, that has been your instinct and you are saying to British people here’s the credit card, I’d like the pin number back.
ED MILIBAND:
No.

ANDREW MARR:
That is not what you are saying?

ED MILIBAND:
No.

ANDREW MARR:
Because you are not going to borrow more. Let’s turn to your rental policies which you did, virtually every single economist says it may be a nice idea, may be a kind idea to people renting in private accommodation but it just doesn’t work. Rent controls are the single thing that all economists agree never works.

ED MILIBAND:
This is the right policy, there are eleven million people…

ANDREW MARR:
Even if it doesn’t work?

ED MILIBAND:
Let me explain, there are eleven million people in generation rent. They’ve been forgotten, they’ve been forgotten by this government and they’ve been actually forgotten in the past as well, and we’re not going to do that. Right, that’s why we’re going to introduce three year tenancies and in the three years it will mean the rents can’t go up by more than inflation, because you know what Andrew…

ANDREW MARR:
Then what happens, simply, private landlords before you get there will jack up rents in a big way before this happens, to protect themselves.
ED MILIBAND:  
(over) I don’t buy that and let me…

ANDREW MARR:  
(over) Why not?

ED MILIBAND:  
Let me explain the point of this policy, you get security of home ownership, I have security of home ownership, if it’s not good enough for me, it’s not good enough for the British people and there is a bigger argument here about the election, does our country just work for the richest and most powerful or does it work for working people again. Now I make no apologies for being somebody who is going to say, we’re going to help those people who are renting, we’re not going to forget those people who are renting.

ANDREW MARR:  
(over) I completely understand the principle, my question is will this policy actually work.

ED MILIBAND:  
Yes.

ANDREW MARR:  
Because most economists say it won’t. How do you know that it’s going to work and they all think it won’t.

ED MILIBAND:  
Look at what happened in Ireland, in 2004 they introduced this system and it has worked and you know what, there are more people renting in the private sector in Ireland than there were eleven years ago, that shows the policy can work and you know we are…

ANDREW MARR:  

Professor Lindberg, eminent Swedish economist, says..

**ED MILIBAND:**
(over) I was reading, I was reading his works last night I can assure you.

**ANDREW MARR:**
I’m sure you were, the most effective way of destroying a city apart from aerial bombardment.

**ED MILIBAND:**
I think that is a little bit over the top, look let me just say to you this will work and you know what Britain is almost unique in the world in having these insecure one year tenancies. Now, I think by the way, I think this is worse for tenants and worse for landlords as well because it’s insecure system where people are churning around, where landlords can jack up rent at a moment’s notice, that isn’t actually great for landlords either.

**ANDREW MARR:**
(over) Sorry we had rent controls in the 1970’s and they went because they weren’t working.

**ED MILIBAND:**
This is a different proposal because at the beginning of the tenancy the rent is determined by the landlord and the tenant, it’s within the three years that has a period of stability. Now you would expect it, I would expect it. You know, we’ve got families who don’t know from one day to the next whether they are going to be kicked out of their home or their rents are going to be jacked up by ten percent. That is not good enough for the Britain that I plan to lead.

**ANDREW MARR:**
So when I say but the problem is that people will jack up the rents before this policy comes into effect and you shake your head, why do you shake your head, why won’t they?

**ED MILIBAND:**
That’s not been…

**ANDREW MARR:**

*(over)* Isn’t that the logical thing to do, or…

**ED MILIBAND:**

*(over)* Because that’s not been the experience elsewhere, that’s not been the experience in Ireland, look, there is a bigger argument here, whenever change is proposed…

**ANDREW MARR:**

But there’s nothing to stop them.

**ED MILIBAND:**

*(over)* Whenever change is proposed there are always people, special interests, Boris Johnson who say, we can’t have that change because they want to defend the status quo. But this country needs to change so it works for working people again and that’s what I want to do.

**ANDREW MARR:**

You can talk to him directly in just a moment.

**ED MILIBAND:**

I will look forward to it.

**ANDREW MARR:**

And now thank you very much indeed Mr Miliband.

**END**