ANDREW MARR:
Now UKIP at their annual conference rarely fail to make headlines. They’re not always, it has to be said, the headlines they want to make. Now there’s a split between two rival anti-EU campaigns and a bitter row between UKIP’s only MP Douglas Carswell and its prime financial backer Arron Banks. I caught up with Nigel Farage, the bounceback man of British politics, yesterday afternoon. Could he explain what on earth is going on?

NIGEL FARAGE:
Well sometimes people disagree and you get big personalities that don’t get on, but I would call that broadly irrelevant compared to what we’ve been talking about here in Doncaster, which is getting cracking with the referendum campaign. And UKIP already is out there on the road. We’ve got 300 public engagements planned. We’re getting bigger crowds coming to those than we’ve ever had in the history of the party and what Arron Banks’ consortium have done is put together Leave.EU. They’ve clearly got money, they’ve clearly got expertise, and they’re out there campaigning there as well and we’ve joined forces.
**ANDREW MARR:**
What about the other group, Business for Britain, because ultimately the electoral commission is going to choose which one of those is the official voice for the No campaign? If it’s Business for Britain, the other group, will you join them, will you support them?

**NIGEL FARAGE:**
Well, look, what’s interesting is that every single group that exists in this country that wants to leave the European Union was represented on the stage here in Doncaster yesterday. The Business for Britain group, you know a Westminster group – with the backing of MPs from the Conservative Party and I think one or two Labour as well – they haven’t yet made their minds up whether they want to leave the European Union. So at the moment I don’t think they’re relevant.

**ANDREW MARR:**
Douglas Carswell is supporting them. Have you made up your differences with him? Have you talked to him?

**NIGEL FARAGE:**
Well Douglas is in Westminster and is part of a committee of Westminster MPs who are supporting Business for Britain, you know, and let’s see what comes of it. My argument has been there are too many particularly what I’d call soft Conservative eurosceptics who are saying let’s wait until the Prime Minister gets back from Brussels and then make our minds up – by which time he will have set his own agenda and there won’t be time for a proper campaign to get Britain out of the European Union. I’m not doing this and Mr Banks isn’t doing this because we want some sort of noble loss and then finish up getting peerages. We’re doing this because we want to win, we’re doing this because we want our country back. And we will work with Leave.EU and if somebody else gets the designation, look I’m prepared to work with anybody. I said if Jeremy Corbyn had stuck to his original ideas, I’d have been happy to share a platform with him.

**ANDREW MARR:**
It sounds to me as if you think Douglas Carswell is rather out on a limb on this and
still too close to the Conservative mindset. Is that a fair assessment of your view?

**NIGEL FARAGE:**
No, I think Douglas has got some residual loyalty to people he’s worked with for the last twenty years in the Conservative Party and he is a member of that committee you know for Business for Britain. I mean there’s nothing wrong with Business for Britain – I mean they produced a wonderful paper the other week saying stay or go, you know what they’d like to see Mr Cameron get in the renegotiation – but that’s not the same thing as getting going with the referendum campaign.

**ANDREW MARR:**
Time and time again over the last few years, we have seen populist upsurges and opinion which has taken Westminster and the commentariat if you like by surprise. We had the original UKIP surge, we had the Yes campaign and the SNP in Scotland, we had Jeremy Corbyn in the Labour Party. Do you think we’re on the edge of something very similar when it comes to Europe?

**NIGEL FARAGE:**
I think over the summer we’ve seen the migrant crisis. We’ve seen the EU not just rowing with themselves, but clearly incapable of coming up with a coherent policy. We’ve seen the way Greece has been treated. They voted for a government, they wanted to end euro austerity, and were then bullied into submitting. And I think the way the British public now view the European Union, they’re beginning to say do you know what, why would you stay part of a club that costs this country a fortune, that doesn’t benefit our industries anymore at all? I’m certain of one thing: if the referendum was to join the European Union, we would say no overwhelmingly. So I now think that the chances of leaving the EU are probably at about 50 per cent, but at the moment the momentum is on our side of the argument.

**ANDREW MARR:**
Now you yourself, many people adore you, they get your head tattooed on their limbs and so forth, but for other people you’re a very divisive politician. Do you think that there are circumstances – this is so important, you’ve said it matters much more Brexit to you than UKIP – where you should stand slightly to one side and let others
take the lead in the campaign to get us out of Europe?

**NIGEL FARAGE:**
No, I don’t believe that for a moment. I don’t think if I … If I hadn’t done what I’d done, with the support of my UKIP colleagues and backers, there wouldn’t even be a referendum. And yes of course there are those in Westminster who would love to try and paint me out as being this divisive figure because they themselves would love the glory of being big players in the referendum campaign. The truth is if you look at the polling many of the things that I’ve talked about – and in particular borderless Britain, our inability through EU membership to control who comes here, my desire to have an Australian points system instead – you know even now six months on from the German Election these views are becoming increasingly popular and people say well actually it was Nigel that’s been saying this for many, many years.

**ANDREW MARR:**
Clearly you and Jeremy Corbyn differ on lots of issues not least Europe. Nonetheless he has seized the mantle of maverick at the moment. He has got the country talking in a way that Nigel Farage did perhaps a couple of years ago. Do you credit him as an effective incendiary leader?

**NIGEL FARAGE:**
I mean look you know he won that campaign, he won it by a mile, he took it by storm. Clearly within the Labour Party there are lots of people who want to abolish the Queen, give away the Falklands, cosy up to the IRA and who now think we should remain members of the European Union. Good luck to them. All I would say from here in Doncaster is that there are huge numbers of old Labour voters that have loyally stuck with Labour who will look at much of what Jeremy Corbyn with his North London views stands for, and I think actually a whole flank of the Labour vote is now open to UKIP.

**ANDREW MARR:**
Nigel Farage, a man who isn’t going to quit the national stage anytime soon, it seems, thank you very much indeed.
NIGEL FARAGE:
Thank you.

INTERVIEW ENDS