

ANDREW MARR SHOW

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AM Welcome to you. Now, you may have heard Tony Parsons pointing out that he feels that the Labour Party really let down a lot of Labour voters by allowing so many migrants in from the EU for so long, and that's had an effect on wages and job security and on creaking public services. And you've spoken about this in the past. So how do you feel about your leader saying that we didn't let too many people in, in his speech this week?

YC: Well, you and I have discussed this many times before, and I've said I think that we should have had transitional controls on Eastern Europe. We should have done that. And we also should have done more when we were in government on issues around exploitation and undercutting. But actually that is something that we have all been campaigning for for a long time. It's something that Jeremy talked about in his speech, about the need to deal with undercutting, and it is something where you have to work with other European countries to do that, otherwise it doesn't happen.

AM: But he did say, 'I don't think too many have come,' and he's wrong in that, you think?

YC: I think we should have had transitional controls. So I didn't hear him talk about transitional controls, I don't know, you know, what the issue is there. And I do think there is also concern about immigration across the country. But you know, look, where does this – what's the implications of this for the European referendum, is I think there's a big problem with a lot of the leave campaigns of promising that we're going to have the single market and then we're going to restrict all immigration. And actually all the evidence shows that if you want to be in the single market you

end up having to agree to the free movement rules that Europe currently has. If you want to change the rules, then you actually have to be in there in order to actually argue for that and to argue for reform. You can't get reform if you just stay out on the outside.

AM: I think this argument is changing. Nigel Lawson, sitting in that chair last week, said that he didn't think the single market was a very big issue, and implied strongly that we would be out of the single market if we were out of the EU. But coming back to immigration, can I be absolutely clear, you talk about transitional controls because you think too many did come?

YC: Well, I think you're actually in danger of recycling an argument that you and I have had many, many times.

AM: No, I'm just interested.

YC: I think that the pace of migration as a result of not having immigration controls and not having the transitional controls was too fast. But we have to deal with the situation that we're in now, and you know, if we want to – we're outside Schengen, so we obviously have border controls, we obviously have things that other parts of Europe don't have.

AM: But we also have to allow in EU people if they want to come.

YC: Well, actually you have proper border controls and proper checks you can do, all the security checks that some of the leave campaign have said that you can't have.

AM: But in terms of raw numbers you can't stop people coming in, so a lot of people watching will say, if I'm worried about immigration actually the obvious and clear answer is to leave the EU.

YC: Well, yeah, but here's the problem. They've been, I think, given false promise on this because they're being given the promise that what you can have is you can have – you can close off your borders and also have the free trade and the single market access that we've always had as part of Europe. And you can pick and choose – and I think that –

AM: Some are saying that and some are not...

YC: Well, those who are not saying that, what are they saying instead? They're saying that actually it's okay to have, what? Ten per cent tariffs on cars. It's okay to have tariffs on our financial services. That's a real risk that is a real risk isn't it?

AM: I'm going to come on to this with Chris Grayling later on.

YC: But it's important because the Labour approach is we have got to protect our manufacturing jobs, and industrial towns depend on this. We could lose 100 billion pounds worth of trade, we could lose the jobs that our industrial towns depend on. And also some of the employment rights, the workers' rights that our trade unions have been campaigning for. There is a good reason why you've got the TUC as well as the Engineering Employers' Foundation, as well as the IMF, all talking about the real risk to our jobs and to our economy, and it is working people across Britain, it's working class people across Britain who'll be most – who'll be hardest hit if we end up losing those jobs.

AM: Jeremy Corbyn suggested this week in his speech that there should be an EU-wide minimum wage adjusted to local conditions. How would that actually work?

YC: Well, I don't think that's not actually what he said, he's talking about Europe-wide employment rights. So for example –

AM: No, he said a minimum wage, I think.

YC: For example, you have things like paternity leave, sorry, maternity leave rights. So that stops other companies right across Europe getting rid of maternity rights in order to undercut our companies here in Britain. That kind of undercutting...

AM: What he actually said, what he actually said is there has to be a case for a minimum wage tied to economic conditions across the continent, which implies that the EU centrally would set minimum wages for all the EU countries.

YC: Well, actually now because if you have different economic conditions –

AM: Are you suggesting it wouldn't work?

YC: - I think that's linked to economic conditions.

AM: Okay, do you understand this proposal.

YC: No, because the economic conditions are different in every single country. What you do need, though, is a way to stop other countries undercutting. And that's why you work together. We have to deal with the kind of things that you cannot deal with alone. If you want Google to pay tax, if you want big global companies to pay their tax, one country can't do it on their own. We have to get countries to work together in order to do that.

AM: Now, you're a Labour politician. One of the things that people say is that if Britain leaves the EU there is a strong chance of Scotland then leaving the UK, and if that happens then that is an existential moment for Labour. The party is completely over,

there's no way back in for England. Do you see it as starkly as that?

YC: Well, do you know what? I think it's an existential moment for the country, and if we end up coming out of Europe –

AM: I was talking about the Labour Party.

YC: Well, the most immediate issue is the existential crisis for the country. Look, parties respond to the circumstances that they face. I think it would be terrible for our country if we ended up, first of all, pulling out of Europe, losing the ability to have an impact across the world, and then losing Scotland, breaking up as well. In the end it is a Labour value, we are stronger if we stand together than if we leave people to sink or swim alone, and whether that's the Labour Party making that argument or even the Catholic Church, I think, was making that argument this week as well, it is an important value that we believe in.

AM: We were talking about Scotland a moment ago. Surely it would be catastrophic for the Labour Party if you come third in the Scottish elections coming up?

YC: Well, Kezia Dugdale, she's a great Scottish leader, she's working immensely hard. We know we still have the shadow of the, you know, of what happened before...

AM: If you were beaten by the Tories in Scotland that would be a horrendous moment. Hideous and horrendous- horridius moment for the Labour Party.

YC: We're campaigning for every vote. We're campaigning for every vote. But before we finish Andrew – I can see you're coming to the end – it is important, I think this issue about the economy and our public services is really important. You should

ask Chris Grayling about this later. He's been claiming that somehow pulling out of Europe is going to somehow save our national health service. We should be really clear, it is the Tory government that is responsible for the state of our national health service, not Brussels, and we would be a poorer country with less resources to support our national health service if we pull out.

AM: I've a great big sheaf of questions for Chris Grayling inside there, but thank you very much indeed for joining us.

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