

ANDREW MARR SHOW 1st May, 2016

NIGEL FARAGE, UKIP

AM: Good morning. Now these are local elections we're talking about mainly here. With this big, big choice coming in on June 23rd, why should people be voting for UKIP councillors? What can UKIP councillors do that's distinctive?

NF: We are the only political party in this country who wants Britain to leave the European Union and are serious about reducing immigration numbers into this country, and every single

AM: But local councillors can't –

NF: every single local council in this country is under massive pressure. Housing. You know we have to build a new house every seven minutes just to cope with current immigration levels. And every other public service is under pressure because of the rapid increase in our population. So that's the English local elections, but remember, you know, UKIP are contesting the London Assembly, the Scottish Parliament, the Northern Irish Assembly and Wales and I think we've got a sporting chance of getting people elected to all four of those. If we do that there'll be more elected voices campaigning for Brexit.

AM: But there's only a couple of weeks, a few weeks after these elections before that vote happens and then there's four years or so of these people being in place. So my question is really, what kind of politics does UKIP represent at a local level and in the Scottish Parliament?

NF: Well, we stand for direct democracy. You know, we believe that big issues should be put to people and people should be able to call local referendums on really big issues. But you will also get, you know, with UKIP politicians at all levels, you will get people who are not afraid to speak their mind. And we've made some big calls in politics over the course of the last ten years, particularly

about opening up the doors to former Communist countries and what it would mean for us here and we've been right. So if you want people to represent you who are not tied by political correctness and will stand up and fight for what they believe in, we're the guys.

AM: Outspoken, slightly fruity councillors who want lots of referendums. I'm not sure how popular that's going to be.

NF: Well it depends whether you believe in democracy or not. I do and I think you know there is a feeling that at national level we don't get a say on things, but equally many at local level feel that way too.

AM: We are obviously on a knife edge when it comes to this vote. The EU vote. But if your side of the argument wins, then the Conservative right and people like you will be much much more powerful and influential in the future direction of this country, so it's a fair question. What kind of country would you like to see us being after Brexit?

NF: Self-governing, self confident and much more global in outlook. We've become too obsessed with Europe. It's an important market place but there's a big world out there.

AN: Okay, so those are as it were, foreign policy answers.

NF: No, they're trade answers too.

AN: In terms of the sort of the nature of the state, do you think the state is too big, would you like to see a smaller state? In the past you said you greatly admired Margaret Thatcher, would you like, as it were, a more Thatcherised Britain to emerge?

NF: No. You admire people because they're right for their time. I think Thatcher was right for her time in the early 1980s, painful

though it was. Do you know the big thing I can see is there are 7 percent of people in this country – people like you and me – whose parents are rich enough to send us to private school and that 7 percent are now dominating business, politics, the media, even sport. And the rest of the population is being left behind.

AM: So a big social shakeup?

NF: Yeah, I think we need a lot more social mobility in this country. I think much of that comes through the education system and I just think we need to look after our own people rather ...

AM: Does that mean a return to grammar schools and more?

NF: Very much so. Very much so. I just think the gap between rich and poor is getting bigger and bigger and bigger. We've been through a decade now where for people earning average salaries they're 10 percent worse off than they were back in 2007. That simply can't be right.

AM: When it comes to the future of the party – that's an obvious big question as well, because UKIP in a sense, was created for this moment of the Referendum. Win or lose what happens to UKIP afterwards? Don't you lose your purpose?

NF: Well if we win the Referendum we have to make sure that a British government carries out the will of the people. I've seen referendums all over Europe where the people's voice has been ignored. So UKIP being strong and making sure that the government and the Prime Minister, which won't be David Cameron in my view, but whoever it is, making sure they do go for Article 50 of the Treaty and start the process of political divorce.

AM: So you said it wouldn't be David Cameron. Ken Clark, not normally somebody you agree with on many, many things. He said he thought he'd last 30 seconds. If we see a change in the Tory leadership and we get the likes of Boris Johnson and Michael Gove becoming in effect the new leaders of the Tory Party after this vote, is that the moment when you think there could be a kind of rapprochement in that huge historic split on the right of British politics between your party and them?

NF: You know, I rather doubt that. And people talk about UKIP as being on the right. Actually, you know, a growing number of our voters come from the left and this Thursday, there's a big test as you've said across the United Kingdom. What will be really interesting is to see how UKIP do in Labour areas. We're not an offshoot of the Conservative Party, we are our own independent party in every way.

AM: I'm just going to be talking to Nicola Sturgeon of the SNP. She has said repeatedly that's almost certain that if Scotland votes to stay in the EU but the UK as a whole votes to leave, that would trigger another Scottish referendum and therefore potentially the end of the UK. You've been a Union Jack man all your life. How would you feel being part of the process which led to the end of the UK?

NF: Well, this Referendum is about whether we want independence. So if the UK votes for independence, Nicola Sturgeon's then going to have a referendum against independence and with oil at 37 dollars a barrel? I don't think so. It isn't going to happen and if there was a referendum she's lose by a much bigger margin than she did in 2014.

AM: Well, I'll put that to her now.

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