

## Transcript

Speaker 1

President Obama has arrived in the UK for a three-day visit, during which he'll make the case for the UK staying in the European Union. Leave campaigners have said he should \*\*\*\* out of the debate.

Speaker 2

We were in a very tough fight, and a tough fight in which we felt the economy was the most important issue. Obama was very keen Britain should stay in the EU. He thought it made us stronger, safer, and better off, to coin a phrase. He said, you know, Well, what can I do to help?

Speaker 3

He'd noticed that a lot of the arguments for Brexit were just crazy. I mean, false. I mean, they were lies.

Speaker 4

I said, Well, one argument they're making is that there's gonna be this easy trade deal in the United States if we tear up our trade deals with Europe. And he says, Well, that's obviously nonsense.

Speaker 3

Obama said, You guys would be... you know, at the back of the queue, um, and, you know, kind of-- as a joke, in a way, and everybody kind of chuckled.

Speaker 4

He said, Do you think it'd be helpful if I said that? And I said, Yeah, I think it will be helpful, 'cause it's gonna puncture this Brexit myth.

Speaker 5

Some of the folks on the other side have been ascribing to the United States certain actions we'll take if, uh, the U.K. does leave the EU?

Speaker 6

And we were all in the campaign gathered around the television set, dozens of us all, in silent anticipation. I figured you might want to.

Speaker 5

Hear from the President of the United States what I think the United States is going to do. And UK is going to be in the back of the queue.

Speaker 6

A huge cheer went up when Obama said this, and we thought, wow, we've done it. He's clinched it. He's made the argument in one fell swoop.

Speaker 3

I was in the back of a black cab, and I was following on Twitter what was the reaction to Obama's comments. And then the cab driver pulled his window back, and he was listening to the same story on the radio. Are you hearing this, Governor? Back in the queue? That's not very friendly, is it? I bet you won't be in the back of the queue when they need another ally for the next bloody war. British people hate being told what to do by people who don't have any skin in the game. It was a reminder of how the Westminster bubble was just talking to itself. Ten years ago, go on, wait. Both seems unimaginably distant and like yesterday.

Speaker 7

The vote to leave the European Union changed the course of British history. Ten years on, this is the story of how it happened. told by those inside the campaigns.

Speaker 5

Love that bus. I love that bus. It was a bus of truth, by the way.

Speaker 2

We had sort of entered the post-truth age of political campaigns. Johnson, you're a liar.

Speaker 8

From about two weeks before, I said, I think this thing's going to go down.

Speaker 1

Let's make June the 23rd, 2016, Independence Day. Let's do it.

Speaker 7

With just four months to go until the referendum, the British media had one obsession. Would Boris Johnson campaign to stay in or leave the EU?

Speaker 9

I was at our house in Colebrook Row, and as the day went by, more and more press were gathering outside. So what starts as a sort of low hum becomes much, much louder.

Speaker 5

I arrive back at our house in Islington to find the whole place absolutely swarming with representatives of, you know, TV journalists, everybody, everybody's there.

Speaker 9

I remember it being incredibly stressful. Just not being able to control this press presence.

Speaker 5

I felt under huge pressure, emotional, psychological pressure, to come up with a decision.

Speaker 10

He walked over to me, stared me in the face, and he said, what do you think I should do? And I looked at him and I said, what do you think, what do I think you should do? I said, you've got to be \*\*\*\*\* joking. I said, you know, I'm just the guy that smokes \*\*\*\*\* outside and does your briefing, right? The decision is yours to make, and no one else's. And there was a bit of harrumphing, and he looked at me and he just went, You're right. Let's do it.

Speaker 5

In order to psych myself up for the ordeal of talking to the media, which I don't want to do, but they're all outside, and they won't go away, I do some press-ups. in the hope of getting some, endorphins or something so that I can kind of, And we.

Speaker 10

Were heading to the door and I said, Hang on, have you let Dave know the decision? And he was like, Oh, Christ, Cameron, let me text him, let me text him.

Speaker 5

Text Dave a slightly emollient text, you know, trying to sort of cheer him up, saying that I'm sure, you know, I'm sure we'll lose anyway, but there you go. This is what I have to do.

Speaker 2

It was such a Boris phrase, saying, I know that Brexit will be crushed like the toad under the harrow, but I feel I have to support it. Hi there, hi there.

Speaker 5

The last thing I wanted was to go against David Cameron or the government. But after a great deal of heartache, I don't think there's anything else I can do. I will be advocating vote leave, or whatever the team is called.

Speaker 9

I thought it was a brave thing to do. and rather idealistic, in a way. None of us knew what was going to happen. And it was a leap in the dark.

Speaker 11

Anyone would think he'd like some attention, love him or loathe him. You can't ignore him. Boris Johnson has just taken a huge political jump that could change this campaign.

Speaker 2

Look, it was a big blow. He had the, you know, a high favourability rating. He was listened to on this issue. It was going to make a massive difference in the campaign.

Speaker 7

The next day, Cameron prepared to launch the referendum campaign in Parliament, knowing his most dangerous opponent was now on his own backbenchers.

Speaker 2

I don't think at that point he really believed in it. He believed it was going to lose, but he thought he was on a sort of bet to nothing by supporting leave, because he would be, you know, a sort of patriotic hero.

Speaker 4

I remember thinking it was nothing to do with the EU, Britain's place in the world, the single market. It was Game of Thrones. That's what Boris Johnson was playing, and he could see the Iron Throne right there, about to be vacated.

Speaker 2

Order, statement, the Prime Minister. Thank you, Mr Speaker. We are... a great country, and whatever choice we make, we will still be great. But I believe the choice is between being an even greater Britain inside a reformed EU or a great leap into the unknown.

Speaker 3

So, in the statement, there were some very, very clear barbs there which were designed to put the idea about that Boris Johnson, maybe he's just positioning himself so that he can get the keys to number 10 when it's all done.

Speaker 2

And, Mr. Speaker, let me end by saying this. I'm not standing for re-election. I have no other agenda. I have no other agenda than what is best for our country.

Speaker 5

It was clear that the attack on our campaign was going to be personal, and that the way they were going to try to defeat the arguments for leave was by playing the man, not the ball.

Speaker 7

It wasn't just the Conservatives who were divided. Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn was preparing to give his first speech of the campaign.

Speaker 8

Jeremy wanted to use that speech to set out his own personal development on the issue of the EU, because he was constantly being attacked for being a closet Eurosceptic. I was under a lot of questions all the time about it, and so I thought it's important that we actually stop this question of sort of corridor conversations the whole time with everybody.

Speaker 12

We sent the draft to him that was very clear.

Speaker 6

That's why I want Britain to remain in the European Union. And it would come back amended to that's why Labour wants Britain to remain in the European Union.

Speaker 8

Changed it around quite a bit, actually.

Speaker 6

Well, they're very keen on I. I'm not.

Speaker 8

There's no I in Corbyn.

Speaker 6

We.

Speaker 8

I was trying to present we as the campaign, we as the party, we as the movement. It's now a crucial democratic opportunity for people to have their say on our country's future and the future of our continent as a whole. As Alan explained, the Labour Party is overwhelmingly for staying in.

Speaker 12

I thought, well, at the end of the day, this guy is never going to give his whole high support here.

Speaker 8

A lot of people saw the referendum as a cipher for their own anger at their life in our society. Going around and telling them to vote for the EU, which is trying to bring in more free-market economics, isn't going to work and isn't going to cut it.

Speaker 7

With 2 months to go, Cameron sent out his troops to launch the government's campaign.

Speaker 11

So the four of us walked out into this big manufacturing hall with podiums lined up one after the other. The rifleman at the front of the battle.

Speaker 4

It was a big moment for us because it was us launching The number that we could then put on billboards and put in the adverts and put in the leaflets that would go around the country.

Speaker 11

The Treasury has run the numbers. Liz Truss wasn't Liz Truss then. She was one of the team on remain. If productivity falls, we will see lower wages in Britain, consumption will fall, and people will be permanently poorer.

Speaker 4

It was very clear in the EU referendum that people emotionally were quite attached to the idea of independence and standing up for Britain and being against Europe. But the thing that concerned them, those people, was the economic cost, the risk. The central estimate is that in the long run, GDP would be over 6% smaller and Britain would be worse off by 4,300 pounds per household.

Speaker 3

It was all over the focus groups. And it went down like a bucket of cold sick. Why isn't 4,250 or 4,150? They said, how could you possibly know?

Speaker 11

Which, by the way, is a good question. This equation that's in the 200-page Treasury document, which comes to the conclusion that if Britain votes to leave the European Union, it will cost each and every household 4,300 pounds.

Speaker 3

You can't sit down with them and say, well, let us explain our economic modelling to you. Do you have Excel on your computer? I mean, you know... You can't do that.

Speaker 11

Try and say that out loud, because I'm not sure I could do that. It's...

Speaker 3

Oh, my God.

Speaker 11

Get your glasses on. Really? Yes.

Speaker 3

I N brackets I FDI, close brackets equals A to the power of IJ plus A1IN brackets YIT, close brackets plus... I went back to the team and I said, it's very simple, guys. We are never using the words 4,300 pounds ever again.

Speaker 4

The treasury got a real bashing, and I got a real bashing. But this is how we'd won the last general election. This is how Tony Blair and Margaret Thatcher had won elections in the decades before us.

Speaker 2

If we vote to leave on the 23rd of June, we will be voting for higher prices.

Speaker 7

Vote Leave had produced their own figure.

Speaker 12

The point of using that really was to try and to try and drive through a main campaign and people running it crazy.

Speaker 3

Probably one of the happiest moments of the campaign was when it was all agreed and just knowing how certain people were going to react when we used the 350 million pound figure.

Speaker 12

Essentially, you have a powerful government that's won the election and had a very powerful ability to control how the media reported the campaign.

Speaker 7

Vote Leave now had their messenger.

Speaker 12

Can we do it? Yes! I think we can.

Speaker 7

And to attract non-Tory voters, Labour's most prominent Brexiteer, Gisela Stewart, was sent around the country with him.

Speaker 12

Vote Leave. Vote Leave. Vote Leave.

Speaker 11

I had the first experience of what it's out to campaign with someone like Boris Johnson. People would be in upstairs windows, opening their windows, waving at him and shouting at him. You almost got the sense that Boris's presence gave people permission. to be enthusiastic about something which they were told by everybody else they should not be enthusiastic about. Thank you. Thank you very much. Cameras were there. We were given ice cream. At that moment, I start to panic because ice cream has a habit of dripping. A woman in the crowd just stepped out and said, Mr. Johnson, can I eat your ice cream?

Speaker 5

Go on, you have the whole thing.

Speaker 11

There you go.

Speaker 5

It's a delicious ice cream. So these were the days when people were still so loving and trusting, is to take an ice cream from my hands and eat it. It was wonderful.

Speaker 10

Boris had sort of chuckled nervously over the fact that 350 million, we send the EU 350 million a week, was plastered on the side of the bus. And I think he was like, how are we going to defend this? Let's deal with your arguments.

Speaker 3

One of them is on the side of this bus.

Speaker 10

We send 350 million to Europe.

Speaker 3

No, we don't.

Speaker 5

And you know we don't.

Speaker 10

No, we don't. Yes, it is. No, it's not. Yes, it is. No, it's not like some comedy caper on the bus.

Speaker 5

Admit that figure is grotesquely misleading at best. No, I won't. I won't. I won't.

Speaker 10

Dominic's view when we raised it with him was simply, just let them keep raising the issue.

Speaker 5

You're wandering around this country with a dirty great lie on the side of your bus. No, because that gross figure is the right figure.

Speaker 10

Because if they say it's not 350 million, it's 170 million, Anyone at home is just going to be looking and thinking, 170 million quid a week, that's a \*\*\*\* \*\* a lot of money.

Speaker 11

This bus has a lot of miles to travel in the coming weeks. There's a lot of debate to be had on both sides. Tamsin Melville, BBC Spotlight, St Austell.

Speaker 3

I remember having a conversation with the BBC saying, every single interview you do, every single piece of film that you use, has got this in it.

Speaker 11

It's full throttle for the Leave campaign.

Speaker 3

You are allowing them to put their campaign message across that is not true over and over and over again. And I remember the person at the BBC just sort of like shrugging their shoulders and saying, what do you expect me to do about it?

Speaker 12

You can see Boris Johnson attempting to angle grind it into oblivion.

Speaker 7

Nigel Farage was determined not to let Boris Johnson steal the show. He was running a separate Leave campaign and took his own bus and message on tour around the country.

Speaker 1

Boris comes out and says, yeah, you know, I'm going to embrace Leave. And I said, well, thank goodness for that. He'll help get us over the line. But never for one moment did I think I could step back. I'd already been on this journey for well over 20 years. So we did it with a bit of noise. We did it with a bit of colour. Do you like the theme tune, The Great Escape? Because that's what we've got to do, isn't it? We've got to escape.

Speaker 6

Who do you think came up with the idea? Nigel. He's A pantomime vaudeville act.

Speaker 1

Are you voting for Brexit, sir?

Speaker 2

Fifty-fifty. It's going to be really close.

Speaker 6

This bus was \*\*\*\*. Actually, to get it repainted was more expensive than the actual bus. It was falling to bits. It was a mess inside. No toilets, no seats downstairs. And a driver who should never be allowed to drive, ever.

Speaker 1

We knew that borders, mass migration were huge, huge issues. And we knew that we had to prosecute that argument because a softer Vote Leave campaign, particularly with Johnson on board. were unlikely to make it.

Speaker 6

We piled into immigration, and the engagement was extraordinary. The places we had chosen, these were all Labour heartlands. We realised that it was in the Labour heartlands, the working men and women that felt left behind and disconnected from the political discourse.

Speaker 1

Boris and I did speak on the phone very regularly through the campaign. Compared notes, talked about who was doing what, who was visiting where, so we did talk.

Speaker 5

I do remember talking once, at least once, probably at most once, to Nigel about the way the campaign was going and what we could do together.

Speaker 1

I said to Boris one Sunday morning, what about we all merge in, I don't know, Andover, any way you like. Oh, yes, he said, it'd be like the Russians and the Americans meeting on the Elba in 1945. I said, I hadn't quite thought of it that way, but I've been fine, And he was very enthused by it. And then he said to me, let me ask my people. I said, sorry, what do you mean?

Speaker 3

Dominic Cummings' view was that Nigel Farage had ardent support, but there was a ceiling to it, and that you would never win a campaign that Nigel Farage led if you needed more than 50% of the public to support it.

Speaker 10

There was a sense that there was a possibility that Farage could somehow taint the campaign, and engagement with him was not a good look.

Speaker 3

I was really clear, Dom was really clear, everyone in the campaign was clear. Absolutely not.

Speaker 7

Cummings may not have wanted to join forces with Farage, but he wasn't above stealing his message on immigration.

Speaker 9

We are giving 2 billion pounds to Macedonia, Serbia, Albania, Montenegro, and Turkey to join the EU. David Cameron now claims Turkey won't join the EU, but that's not what he said before.

Speaker 2

This is the same thing. I feel very strongly, very passionately about. Together, I want us to pave the road from Ankara to Brussels.

Speaker 10

I was at my in-laws in Wiltshire, and I got a call from Boris, and I went outside to the front gate to take it. And when I pressed the button, I went to put it up to my... It was like that.

Speaker 5

I hated it. And I was very angry. I thought this wasn't agreed, this wasn't what we wanted. And, you know, I hit the roof.

Speaker 10

Have you seen the \*\*\*\*\* poster? Have you seen the \*\*\*\*\* advert from Dominic?

Speaker 5

You know, I've got Turkish ancestors myself, very proud of it. I thought that I'd start casting it purely in terms of being hostile to immigrants, which is partly, by the way, sorry, the problem with, you know, the other chat we've just been talking about. Because he was all, their campaign was all about being hostile to immigrants. And that wasn't where I was.

Speaker 10

I put the phone on the gate and stepped back a few feet, and I could still hear him. And I went back to get the phone, and I urged him to calm down.

Speaker 5

Everybody who knows anything about that subject knows that there was not a catch chance in Hades of Turkey joining the EU. That wasn't going to happen.

Speaker 10

He said to me, I'm getting in the car, I'm driving back to London, I'm going to have it out with him. I'm going to have it out with him. And I thought, Christ, he's going to go, he's going to go round to Dominic's and whack him.

Speaker 5

I wish I had. God, this will save me a lot of trouble. Only a brilliant idea. God, I wish I'd done that. What a fantastic thing to have done. I think I thought about resigning, but in the end I just dissociated myself from that.

Speaker 2

There were moments in the campaign where you just couldn't believe what you were seeing. A sort of nativist, faragist bunch of claims about immigration that simply aren't true. And the idea that Turkey was going to join the EU anytime soon was nonsense.

Speaker 3

I constantly said to David Cameron, we need to be clear on this. We have to make clear that we have a veto and that we would use it in any suggestion that Turkey was going to join the EU.

Speaker 2

It was very difficult because I was a campaigner, but I was also the prime minister. And there were, important relationships, whether with Turkey or other European countries, that, you know, you're trying to think, I have to think about these relationships as well as about the campaign.

Speaker 9

This idea that there was going to be a sort of, you know, reasoned debate just disappeared out the window. And, I mean, it was a political campaign, and it was a very hard-fought sometimes quite grubby campaign.

Speaker 11

Good morning. It's 13 minutes to eight. The Sun in its lead says claims have been swirling around Westminster and online that Marina Wheeler was the QC caught in a drunken clinch with another lawyer at Waterloo station last summer.

Speaker 9

I got wind of the fact that there was a rumour around about me. I don't remember the details, but definitely involved. some knickers somewhere. Anyway, first I didn't think very much about it. And I thought, well, it will be obvious it wasn't me because I wasn't in the country at that time. But then I did start to think people were avoiding me.

Speaker 5

I was very, very wound up by the personal attacks. Not just playing the man not the woman, playing the man's wife. And, you know, what kind of politics is it where they go for... people's wife.

Speaker 7

Dominic Cummings saw an opportunity.

Speaker 3

We convene in Dom's office, and Dom says, this is Osborne. This has to be Osborne. And we immediately just explain it to Boris. An additional healer tongue of ivory entered his soul at that point.

Speaker 5

I probably thought, well, solid, you know. Don't get mad, get even. And I thought, we've got to, we've just got to win this thing.

Speaker 3

And it was from that moment that he said, I am prepared to go on TV tomorrow and talk about immigration.

Speaker 7

George Osborne says it's utterly untrue he was the source of the article. Nonetheless, Cummings' claim worked. Boris Johnson took the gloves off at a crucial moment, the day the annual immigration figures were announced.

Speaker 10

We went to Fourmill Bank, where we do all the interviews for the various broadcasters. And I remember walking up the stairs as the numbers arrived, and they pinged into my inbox on my phone. And I remember looking at it and thinking, crikey.

Speaker 5

So it's more or less double.

Speaker 2

What was the case to get net migration?

Speaker 10

Down to 10s of thousands.

Speaker 2

It wasn't just new money, it was the whole thing.

Speaker 5

The whole thing.

Speaker 10

And the whole thing is 3-3-3.

Speaker 5

Yeah, right. OK. That's the city, what side of Newcastle? Colchester. Colchester.

Speaker 10

He went and articulated and bossed an argument that was all the more compelling because he was a pro-immigration mayor of London.

Speaker 11

These figures have just come out. What do you make of them in the broad sense?

Speaker 5

I think that they show the scandal of the promise made by politicians repeatedly that they could cut immigration to the 10s of thousands. We've now got a city the size of Oxford from the EU alone, 333,000 net from all around the world. The situation is completely out of control. The only way to sort it out is vote leave on June 23rd and take back control.

Speaker 2

I was very concerned about this because, to be frank about it, when we were talking about the economy, we were winning. When we were talking about immigration, we were losing.

Speaker 7

The team running the Remain campaign wanted the Prime Minister to challenge Vote Leave's immigration offensive. I.

Speaker 6

Said, we've really got to make a blockbuster speech and confront them over this issue of immigration.

Speaker 3

I think I was very clear, I think Peter Mandelson was clear, that it wasn't enough simply to go on the economy. That while our economic message was critical, it was necessary for us to win the campaign, it was not sufficient.

Speaker 6

I said this to number 10. They said, nope, no, We've got to stick to economics. The moment we start, talking about immigration, we'll start playing their game.

Speaker 3

The decision was taken that we shouldn't go out there and add more fuel to the fire, that we actually needed to double down on the economy and wrecking the economy being the centre of our campaign.

Speaker 9

Now a referendum campaign broadcast by the Stronger in Europe campaign. This is Sam. He's 14 months old. How you vote in the European referendum will shape his future, and the future of everyone in our country. If we remain in Europe, there'll be more opportunities for our children to follow their dreams and make the most out of life. Because being in Europe helps our businesses grow.

Speaker 4

We had to keep doubling down on the economy, because that was the one issue that might switch BeBlue, otherwise we're going to vote Leave.

Speaker 7

Despite refusing to confront immigration head-on, Cameron chose to share a platform with Nigel Farage, hoping to expose the leader of a party he'd once described as a bunch of fruitcakes, loonies, and closet racists.

Speaker 3

So we arrived for the debate with Nigel Farage in the prime minister's official convoy, only to see this purple open-top bus with Nigel Farage arriving at the same time.

Speaker 1

He was coming into the green room, and I was wandering out with a cigarette, actually, if I'll be honest with you.

Speaker 6

So I said, Nigel, go, let's go, go, go, see them walking. And so Nigel was, literally, we're running to get to this door, knowing that this collision would be news.

Speaker 1

So, how did anybody sort of... I mean, we sort of asked how I was and we exchanged pleasantries. I looked at him and I thought, well, I'll tell you what, if I feel nervous, you look really nervous.

Speaker 2

You know, the concept of doing something with Farage was different. But on the other hand, I was persuaded, well, actually, having a moment where you can see what lies

behind the campaign, i.e. Farage, and what the Prime Minister is saying, that's a good contrast.

Speaker 11

Good evening. There are now just 16 days to go before the UK makes a momentous decision to stay in or to leave the European Union. First up this evening is Nigel Farage. Hi, Nigel. I know a lot of people, I have access to a predominantly black British audience, and a lot of the concerns that they have raised is that you are going to increase... the fear and discrimination of black British people through your anti-immigration rhetoric? Are you encouraging racism?

Speaker 1

I don't think you could be more wrong, and here's why. I take a very strongly pro-Commonwealth view. I think it was very bad and wrong of us to turn our backs on the Commonwealth in favour of a European political project.

Speaker 11

You're still anti-immigration, so I don't see.

Speaker 1

I'm sorry, I won't help that.

Speaker 11

You are anti-immigration. You scaremongering and inflammatory claims in your campaign that have gone against people that look non-white. How are non-white British people going to stop making discrimination about their identity and nationality in this country? That is what I really want to know. I'm sorry.

Speaker 1

I'm sorry. It was quite difficult with a very, very engaged... quite noisy studio audience to get through. If you want to think that, and you don't...

Speaker 11

I don't think that. That's the majority of people that look black, British or non-white.

Speaker 1

Well, lots of them... Well, I can't do a lot unless I'm allowed to talk. Which is sort of a very clear question to you. Now, look, I'm explaining to you our current open border policy is damaging all of our communities. And here's our chance, maybe our one and only chance as a nation to get a grip on this issue. Thank you.

Speaker 7

Next, it was Cameron's turn. But the immigration issue didn't go away.

Speaker 3

I voted for you in the last election because one of the things on your manifesto was to get immigration down. You haven't been able to do that because you're not allowed to do that. That's the bottom line.

Speaker 2

I don't agree with that. I think the biggest risk we can take is to pull out of the EU, pull out of the single market, damage our businesses, damage jobs, and there'll be fewer opportunities for our children and grandchildren. And I say again, I hope that when people go to vote on June the 23rd, they vote to say, We don't want Little England of Nigel Farage. We want to be Great Britain, and we're great if we stay in these organizations and fight for the sort of values we believe in.

Speaker 7

With a fortnight to go, the Remain campaign sought to demonstrate another cost of leaving the EU.

Speaker 5

Two retirees on a morning stroll. Except John Major and Tony Blair were in Northern Ireland on business, walking the famous peace bridge for a purpose.

Speaker 7

The two former prime ministers argued a vote to leave would put at risk the peace they had painfully constructed.

Speaker 2

So throw away the membership of Europe, and don't be surprised if, in the end, as a consequence, we accidentally throw away our union as well. We say to the Leave campaign very directly, you have fundamental questions to answer about Northern Ireland, about the common travel area, about the effect of leaving the EU and the future makeup of the United Kingdom.

Speaker 7

That night on national TV, remain drove the point home.

Speaker 11

We've had two former prime ministers in Ireland today pointing out the issue there, where once more vote leave have no plan for what the border would look like. We don't know. There is danger to the union as well from this proposal to leave. There's a

successful union, and it's in the United Kingdom. There's an unsuccessful union, and it's called the European Union.

Speaker 10

What really, really mattered was repetition of take back control.

Speaker 11

Boris Johnson.

Speaker 5

On June the 23rd, we all face a historic choice. To remain locked in a European Union or to take back control?

Speaker 11

Take back control. Take back control.

Speaker 5

Take back control.

Speaker 11

It was destabilizing to have them constantly saying, take back control at us the whole time. Take back control. To take back control.

Speaker 5

Take back control of huge sums of money.

Speaker 11

Being repeated, repeated and repeated.

Speaker 5

Take back control of our borders. Take back control of our economic policy, our tax, our trade. take back control of our democracy.

Speaker 11

It was a simple answer to a complicated question, and it had sort of implied to people that they had some sort of control as well. Dictating to us how we run our country. I want my country back.

Speaker 7

As door-to-door campaigning ramped up in the final two weeks, Leave's message was clearly resonating with traditional Labour voters.

Speaker 8

People realise now nothing changes. That's why they're looking for an alternative. I know the 1% in the ivory towers are just laughing their \*\*\*\* off. It became clear to me the remain message was not cutting through at all in working-class communities in the Midlands and the North. Jeremy was continually campaigning throughout. I mean, he was actually probably more extensive than any other party leader. I mean, he did rallies in every part of Britain. I went to Aberdeen because I was told this is going to be great. People in Scotland are totally going to vote yes, you'll get a great reception there and they'll understand your message. OK.

Speaker 2

Those who want to tear up regulations are those that want to tear up workers' rights. We know which side we, the Labour Party, are on. OK.

Speaker 8

It ends up with a whole lot of people from the fishing industry turn up. They've seen cuts, they've seen austerity, their kids are in debt, their kids can't get council housing, and you expect us to stay in the European Union?

Speaker 7

Fearing the worst, Cameron wanted Corbyn to campaign at more high-profile media events in the final stretch.

Speaker 2

There was a speech at De Montfort University where I stood aside and gave the platform the leader of of the opposition to the leader of the Labour Party and they didn't.

Speaker 8

Step up I only actually heard about this sort of secondhand basically because it was people said to me uh Cameron wants you to speak in the Mont for the University I said well whatever Cameron wants is not my business.

Speaker 13

I came in at the last minute I I wasn't really I was supposed to be doing that speech. Maybe I was the fifth, sixth or seventh choice, I don't know, but I ended up there, and we had a good meeting. 45% of our exports go to the European Union. 3.2 million jobs related to these exports to Europe. And if we lost these jobs, it would be a huge disaster for industrial communities who depend on them. Of course, if we didn't have all labor figures working together, doing the same things, and saying roughly the same things at the same time, it wasn't going to have the difference it should have made.

Speaker 8

From our point of view, our kind of approach, which was favored by the kind of traditional labor establishment, was really having no impact at all. It was, if anything, turning people off more.

Speaker 7

With just eight days to go, remain worried their warnings had not got through. Standing alongside his Labour predecessor, the Chancellor threatened voters if the UK left the EU, he would introduce an immediate emergency budget.

Speaker 4

There'll be a hole in the public finances. You've got chancellors from two different political parties saying that taxes will have to go up, spending will have to be cut. That is the reality of quitting the EU. I was utterly committed to trying to win this campaign, because I was utterly convinced that it was a disaster for Britain. Sorts of tax rises we could see include a 2P rise in the basic rate of income tax, a 3P rise in the higher rate, 5% increases in duties on alcohol, and on fuel, a 5% increase in the basic rate of inheritance tax. Suddenly, all these Tories came out, many of whom have been my friends in the past, and said, George Osborne has crossed the line. This is outrageous. We won't support this budget.

Speaker 12

It was plainly...

Speaker 3

Untrue that these things would come to pass, which it promised. It was plainly not what would ever happen. We recognise that this is just a scary story, a campaign tactic. We don't expect it ever to be brought forward. It would be a repudiation of many of our manifesto promises, and that's why we won't stand for it.

Speaker 7

Within hours, Steve Baker had got more than 50 Tory MPs to sign a statement threatening to bring down their own government if Osborne proceeded with his budget.

Speaker 3

It's a great campaigning moment to to take the wheels off George Osborne's nonsense. And it actually gives me some pleasure to have done it, given the contempt, which actually I feel, for that kind of campaigning tactic, to have destroyed it.

Speaker 4

That's definitely the moment when, you know, Second Lieutenant George Osborne got out of the trenches and got shot by the machine guns on the other side. And, you know, my own kind of ambitions to be leader of the Tory party probably died that day.

Speaker 7

With civil war breaking out inside Parliament, outside, Nigel Farage was heading there with an armada of angry fishermen who believed the EU was destroying their livelihoods.

Speaker 1

We had little boats that had come from Bradwell and Essex. We had a huge pelagic vessel that had come down from the north of Scotland.

Speaker 7

But some ardent remainers were determined to drown out Farage's flotilla.

Speaker 1

\*\*\*\* \*\* down. On board is Bob Geldof, Boris Johnson's sister. Many of the great were good from Kensington and Chelsea.

Speaker 7

Bob Geldof called and said, would I like to be involved in some crazed stunt that he was organizing? So I said no.

Speaker 12

And I said, Why not? And she said, Because I don't want to just publicly go against my brother. I said, It's got nothing to do with Boris. It's about stopping Nigel.

Speaker 6

And they were trying to cut us up, and so our boat was going like this with all these little trawlers, like wacky races.

Speaker 12

At which point, the husband of an MP, Joe Cox, came swarming out from amongst all these barges, Brendan Cox, with his two kids, with their in-flags.

Speaker 6

Then pipes this huge, great, big loudspeaker.

Speaker 12

You are no fisherman's friend. You were on the European Parliament Fishing Committee, and you attended one out of 43 meetings. You're a fraud, Nigel. You're a fraud, Nigel. You're a fraud. Go back down the river, 'cause you're up one without a canoe. We were broad-sided with rock 'n' roll, you know. I'm in with the in crowd I've got Woodstock, I've got Live Aid, I've got Glastonbury on my boat.

Speaker 7

And the harbour master keeps coming up to our boat and telling us to turn the music down. Bob Geldorf says, Well, there's only one thing to do at this point. And I was like, What's that? He said, Well, I'm going to ring the Prime Minister.

Speaker 12

He says, Bob, like, I'm really busy.

Speaker 2

I just sort of talked to him and said, I've got to get on with premises questions.

Speaker 12

And I said, Faraj is coming up the river to park outside Parliament with a load of fishermen. and disrupting PMQs. He says, who told you that? Something like that. And I said, what do you mean, who told me that? We're there now.

Speaker 2

I wasn't quite sure what I was meant to do. So I think it was a relatively brief conversation. I couldn't suddenly call the Coast Guard.

Speaker 1

The volume was absolutely extraordinary. And the level of personal invective and abuse that was used against me was huge.

Speaker 12

Sometimes things can be reduced to a gesture, you know? You can go like that, or you can go like that. I go with the latter.

Speaker 7

They were these wonderful fishing boats with, you know, adorned with these kind of salty dog types. And there we were, these metropolitan \*\*\*\*\*.

Speaker 12

And suddenly, the fishermen, they're surrounding me now and going... apoplectic. Really, I've never seen people so dangerously angry.

Speaker 1

And that's when it turned to Geldof against the fisherman, as opposed to Geldof against me.

Speaker 12

There was one guy screaming at me, really alongside our boat. And I just said, Well, come on board. all they're wrong and I will stand on this boat and I'll say you are wrong and you are wrong and you are wrong and you're wrong not one of you Lord look like you've come out south end on sea everything in that man's voice You know, everything, his anger, his rage about his future, the future of his family, everything was wrapped up in his loathing of me and all the people who were trying to stop Brexit.

Speaker 6

Referendum aren't about facts. It's all about emotion. And that landed.

Speaker 1

And that was the moment we won, I think, the biggest PR victory. of the whole campaign.

Speaker 7

The next day, Farage staged another event, determined immigration dominate the final days of the campaign.

Speaker 1

I see poster trucks there and there.

Speaker 6

The more outrageous you are, the more attention you get. The more attention you get, the more outrageous you become.

Speaker 12

Joining me is the UKIP leader, Nigel Farage. And let me put it to you, that is an extraordinarily incendiary poster to suggest Britain is somehow a breaking point.

Speaker 1

It was a very powerful image. It's an image, by the way, that if you used it today, you'd probably get very little criticism. Every one of these can get to Calais. We know how bad our government is at defending our borders, and within a few years, all of these people will have EU passports.

Speaker 3

While the media was going crazy about this poster, I got a phone call from somebody in MI5 who was saying that they thought that Jo Cox had been very, very severely injured by somebody who attacked her.

Speaker 12

The Labour MP Jo Cox is in a critical condition after being shot and stabbed in her constituency.

Speaker 2

What alerted local people were the sounds of screaming, mad, loud, manic screaming, followed immediately by people rushing out to her aid.

Speaker 12

With towels and tea blankets and such like to try and stem the flow of blood.

Speaker 11

She only spoke a couple of days ago about how excited the children had been to be involved in the flotilla on the Thames as part of the European referendum campaigns. Of course, nobody could have foreseen that this was going to happen.

Speaker 13

I knew Jo Cox well. She was one of the most tolerant, outward-going people, prepared to listen to everybody and wanting people to come together.

Speaker 11

The thing that surprises me time and time again as I travel around the constituency is that we are far more united and have far more in common than that which divides us.

Speaker 13

She represented something about tolerance and about understanding each other and about building bridges and about cutting across divides. And yet this campaign has descended into something that really does no justice to the kind of politics and the kind of society that we want to see.

Speaker 7

This is a man accused of murdering her. Eyewitnesses say he said, Britain first, and this is for Britain, as he attacked Jo Cox.

Speaker 3

That night, there was a conversation on the phone between myself, Gisler, Boris and Dominic Cummings.

Speaker 5

I do, I remember thinking, you know, my God, is this really, is it really us to have done, is it true that this campaign has released these appalling feelings in people?

Speaker 11

I literally had people coming up to me and telling me that I had killed Joe Cox. And that's why it's really, really hard.

Speaker 3

All three of us, Boris Giesler and me, were upset.

Speaker 5

We were convinced, by the way, that it was over for the campaign. We thought, well, you know, people will think this is horrible, nasty. We've had a phobia campaign that's bringing out the worst in people.

Speaker 3

We all agreed we would stop campaigning.

Speaker 1

Do you regret your breaking point poster? Well, it said the EU has failed us all, and it was designed for us to say to people, We do not want to stay part of a union that has failed on Tuesday. I'm used to criticism, but that Sunday was of a different level. It was of a different level. It's a bit unfair, unrelated, but that's by the by. The Remain camp are using these awful circumstances to try to say that the motives of 1 deranged, dangerous individual was similar of half the country, or perhaps more, who believe we should leave the EU. I said, look, I'm really sorry that, you know, this happened at this moment. Didn't apologize to the poster itself or any sense of what it was trying to convey, that Europe's making a catastrophic mistake. We shouldn't allow ourselves to be part of it. But I apologize, obviously, if anyone thought that this was what the Leave campaign was about, which it clearly wasn't.

Speaker 7

The Poles were swinging towards Remain. David Cameron wanted to resume campaigning with a display of national unity.

Speaker 2

I remember ringing Gordon with this idea that we should have, you know, the four living prime ministers, Tony Blair, Gordon Brown, John Major and myself, outside Downing Street on lecterns. Lectern each explaining why we, as serving and previous prime

ministers, thought it was in Britain's national interest. We would be stronger, safer, better off if we stayed.

Speaker 13

And I said, look, that will not work, because why people are voting against us, particularly Labour voters, is they see it as an establishment stitch-up. It's nothing to do with them. Europe is some far-off place, and it's not really benefiting their lives.

Speaker 2

I respected his arguments. He's a highly intelligent man. But I was a bit frustrated because I thought, look, It may not be the perfect idea, but there's something about the striking image and reality of people with radically different opinions about life saying we should stay in.

Speaker 13

And he said, We need a shock factor. And I said to him, Look, we've had the shock factor. Joe Cox was assassinated. Instead of what I would have called an establishment stitch-up, I wanted a different proposal, which was all the Labour leaders trying to get the Labour vote out. That was the vote that was most at risk. And they would all appear together and speak together about the importance of staying inside the European Union and leading Europe, not leaving it.

Speaker 7

The call was made to Jeremy Corbyn.

Speaker 8

I said, absolutely no. Listen, Blair, I started my leadership campaign by saying, if you've got a heart to vote for Jeremy Corbyn, you need a heart transplant. And he was unremitting in his attacks and abuse on me the whole time, and remained so. It was barely a decade after the invasion and occupation of Iraq. A significant section of the British public still regarded Tony Blair as a war criminal. Because the people that had voted for me had clearly voted for me as an alternative to Blair, the war, the free market, and all the other stuff that Blair is so keen on. So, no.

Speaker 9

Polling day itself was quite a strange day, because 23rd of June was the date that my oldest daughter was graduating from St Andrews. And it was a difficult day because, obviously, Boris was there, very visible, attracting quite a lot of notice and attention.

Speaker 5

The atmosphere, you've got to cut with a knife. I mean, my goodness. I mean, you could not find a more romaine environment. And, you know, they looked at me as though, like, you know, God, there's something the cat brought in.

Speaker 10

Things were dragging on a bit, and I remember saying to Marina, We've got to go. We were... miles and miles from London and miles and miles from the polling station.

Speaker 9

It would really not be great if Boris missed the polls having led to the Vote Leave campaign. I don't think he would have heard the end of that.

Speaker 10

We eventually landed at City Airport in London with about an hour to go or so. Boris said, let's go on the DLR. We rushed across to vote with sort of 15 minutes to spare. Loads of photographers follow us back to the house. We got through the front door, and virtually the first thing that appears on the BBC special coverage is news that Boris Johnson has told a man on the underground that they're not gonna win the referendum. And I remember looking at him and just saying, How many times have I told you, don't speak to people on the tube?

Speaker 2

Good evening and welcome at the end of this momentous day when each one of us has had the chance to say what kind of country we want to live in. So the evening of the referendum campaign sort of started quite confidently because these opinion poll organisations were saying... that they thought that we had won. The polling stations close after weeks, months, years of argument, and we'll have the answer to the question that's haunted British politics for so long.

Speaker 12

Do we want to be in or out of the EU?

Speaker 1

When 10 o'clock came, it's like... all the adrenaline's gone. And I said mistakenly, what, maybe the other side will win.

Speaker 12

Take this with a pinch of salt, but we have had, we've spoken to Nigel Farage. It's been an extraordinary referendum campaign. This is Nigel Farage. Turnout looks to be exceptionally high, and looks like Remain will edge it.

Speaker 1

I sort of began to sink a little bit, because there's nothing more I can do. I've tried so hard.

Speaker 11

The total number of votes cast in favour of Remain was 51,930. The total number of votes cast in favour of leave was 82,000.

Speaker 5

I thought, wow, that's a huge, huge, that's much bigger than they were forecasting. So I was watching the snake on, I was watching the Betfair numbers and seeing suddenly it kinked for leave.

Speaker 2

The total number of votes cast in favour of leave was 67,251.

Speaker 12

Good boy, Brussels.

Speaker 2

I remember my daughter, Nancy, was sort of sitting next to me around this table. We were watching the TV, and she sort of said, Dad, we're losing this, and I could feel it.

Speaker 4

I remember going up to my own apartment, which was in 10 Downing Street, sort of lying on the sofa, my family were asleep. It was like 3 in the morning, just going, Everything is in ruins. So it wasn't just my own personal ambitions that were being, going up in smoke. It was also, I felt deeply patriotic that my country was making a really terrible wrong turn.

Speaker 12

The British people have spoken and the answer is, we're out.

Speaker 1

I've campaigned for something that everybody told me was a waste of time. I was wasting my time. And a dream that I had and pursued relentlessly had actually come to pass. June the 23rd go down in our history as our Independence Day.

Speaker 7

In the end, leave had won by 4 percent, 52 to 48.

Speaker 2

I just felt I'd have no credibility. I felt that the country needed a new prime minister. Samantha agreed about that. I remember her saying, gosh, I just don't think I can face going out there. I love this country, and I feel honoured to have served it. And I will do everything I can in future to help this great country succeed. Thank you very much.

Speaker 10

And I remember Boris just saying, Jesus Christ, poor Sam, what the hell, what the hell? And he was obsessed by her sort of reaction.

Speaker 5

Well, what I felt was... Right. We're going to have to do something. It's going to have to involve me. I better, we better go down and give a press conference and try and, try and settle things around steady the \*\*\*\*.

Speaker 10

It was that moment when we walked out the door that I knew that probably course of the country, certainly Boris's part in it, had changed forever.

Speaker 5

You know, suddenly, you know, having been used to, you know, people being, people heckle, people shout jocular insults, you Tory \*\*\*\*\* and so on, but they were really angry. They were really upset.

Speaker 10

We managed to get in the car with the help of quite a few police officers, and the car left the front and sped off down the road. And at the end of their rd, there is a traffic light, and it was green. And just before he reached it, went orange, and he braked, and he went red, and he stopped. And instantly we were surrounded by protesters and really, really angry people.

Speaker 5

It was then that I really felt the strength of people's feeling about this. I underestimated how deeply it spoke to people.

Speaker 10

For the first time I'd ever seen him looking like properly fearful, not necessarily just for his own safety, but for a sense of kind of what has this unleashed?

Speaker 12

Taking control, Boris.

Speaker 6

Obviously, we were delighted that we'd won, but conscious that we were embarking on what would be a difficult path. I don't think any of us realized quite how difficult it would be.

Speaker 5

Suddenly, the people are looking at you, thinking, you know, you're in charge of defense, you're in charge of tax, you're in charge of absolutely everything. For those who may be anxious, whether at home or abroad, This does not mean that the United Kingdom will be in any way less united, nor indeed does it mean that it will be any less European. We didn't have, you know, we didn't have a plan for what to do next, because we didn't think it was our job to have a plan.

Speaker 12

Out of control. From viral wealth to pop superstardom, how did the richest make their money? Listen to Good Bad Billionaire on Sounds. And when a teenager with a brain tumour starts a children's charity, suspicions arise. Watch the mother of all cons on iPlayer.