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**E&EO TRANSCRIPT
TELEVISION INTERVIEW
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KIERAN GILBERT: With me now the Shadow Immigration Minister Richard Marles for Labor's perspective on all of this and Julie Bishop as you heard there this is an opportunity, a test case for how the region can peacefully respond to these disputes, are you optimistic that that will be the way that China responds to this?

RICHARD MARLES, SHADOW MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION: I think we need to be ensuring that the outcome of this decision is one where we don't see any escalation in activity that we do see the parties negotiating peacefully to try and work through the decision. Australia's national interest is based in rules based international order and decisions of the kind that we have seen in the last 24 hours are a part of that and obviously we would want China to abide with that decision, but it's really important that what flows from this now is not an escalation in activity as a result.

GILBERT: And in that regard is your message to all parties not just China in relation to any unilateral action that might be taken here?

MARLES: Well, I think it's really important we respond to this in a peaceful way and we do work through how we can negotiate this, but we do so on the basis of a rules based international system. I mean the South China Sea is fundamental to Australia's foreign policy its fundamental to our economy, something like 60% of our exports go through the South China Sea. I think from an Australian perspective it is important as indeed the Foreign Minister said in the clip you just played that Australia continues to exercise its freedom of navigation rights, its freedom of overflight and we think that it's important that Australia has the right to do that but continues to exercise those rights. It is important in our view that China abides by this decision with all the implications associated with that, but it's also very important obviously from the point of view of security in the region that the way in which everyone reacts to this decision is on the basis of peaceful negotiations.

GILBERT: Well the Philippines have been very diplomatic in their response in what was an unequivocal win for them at the tribunal; they have reiterated their commitment to efforts to pursuing the peaceful resolution and management of this dispute, a very diplomatic response from the Philipino's, not wanting to rub the Chinese's nose in it so to speak. Much more forceful response from our government from the Japanese and the US, do we need to be very careful here as well in terms of any freedom of navigation exercises that they not be undertaken immediately here in the wake of this as China is obviously very sensitive to its own international sense of prestige, Richard Marles?

MARLES: The starting point here is that we need a rules based international system, decisions of this kind form part of that, so China should abide by this decision, that is all clear. We need to exercise our freedom of navigation rights, it's been our view, Labor's view for some time that our Navy ought to be authorised to conduct freedom of navigation operations that's of course in terms of when they do that and the circumstances in which they do that are a matter for them and not politicians but they should be fully authorised to do that, because that is part of upholding the international system of law in the region, so this decision is meaningful and it's important that it's upheld and it's important we respond in that way. It's also important at this moment we talk about not having an escalation in activity that we talk about negotiating the ramifications of this decision through in a peaceful way, it's critically important we make those comments in the same breath. This decision matters, it is significant, it makes it clear that what China has been doing is not right and not lawful but it is important we respond to this in a peaceful negotiated way.

GILBERT: Let's look at where things are at in domestic politics right now and obviously Bill Shorten and Labor did better than expected but has the reality dawned soon on the Labor Party that you will remain now in opposition for the next 3 years, has the euphoria come off a bit?

MARLES: We are very pleased with this election result; we have made enormous gains in terms of the Parliament but more significantly, I think we have demonstrated to the Australian people that Labor is a serious force to be reckoned with. We are united but we have come up with a comprehensive proposition for Australia moving forward, we are a policy rich party which is prepared to put its thoughts before the Australian people and have them scrutinised in the context of an election, we did all of that and the response from the Australian people was fantastic. I think we went into this election in a good headspace, we knew we were a long way behind 21 seats was a lot of seats to make up, we knew the significance of history, we have only had one, one term government since Federation, so we were completely alive to the reality of all of that, we also thought we were doing well and that we were in the hunt and I think the election result bares that as well. We are really pleased with the outcome of the election, we are absolutely a force that's back in town and we will continue to hold the government to account for as long as this term proceeds and we are very excited about the future.

GILBERT: Well given you have got some additional fresh faces in there, some new talent within the party room, do you think that it makes sense for Bill Shorten to undertake a reshuffle to start this term and do you think there is merit to the

argument to the likes of Tanya Plibersek should move into an important domestic portfolio like that of health which was so important in a political sense in this election?

MARLES: Firstly I'm not going to get into the question of who does what, that's ultimately a matter for Bill and the question of who is on the front bench is a matter for the Labor caucus and we have got our processes we are going to work through in relation to that. I think Bill has made it clear that there is no hurry in that respect, we will do that over the coming weeks and you know we are in again a good situation, we have got a good problem if you like and that is that there are a lot of talented people who are pressing their case, as they should, to serve in a higher way and we will see how that all plays out over the next few weeks. But I think what's really important is we have a culture now within our caucus of thoughtful policy development, where people are prepared to put up ideas and have them scrutinised and that's what being on the front bench involves and there is no shortage of people who have got good ideas and a willingness to do that and that's a great problem for us to have.

GILBERT: Now, in terms of the policy discussion right now is it incumbent upon Labor and Mr Shorten who spoke about the need for a more constructive and cooperative approach on Sunday, that he is true to his word in that regard on superannuation changes for example, where this debate ongoing within the Liberal party where some of the concerns actually reflect what Labor concerns where during the campaign in relation to retrospectivity of the superannuation changes, in terms of the context of the S and P warning about our credit rating is it incumbent on Labor to be constructive here and not just to try and make political points.

MARLES: Well Kieran we have always tried to be constructive and we have, in a sense, a mandate from those who voted Labor to make sure we continue to press Labor's case and we will do that, but we have always done that in a constructive way. You know I talked earlier about our culture of thoughtful policy development that really does stand in stark contrast to what we have seen on the part of the Government and super is a great example of that, we understood there was work that needed to be done in the superannuation area and we put a policy up in the first half of last year, we led, the government attempted to follow us and in the process got it all wrong and put in place what looked like retrospective changes and it's not surprising at all to me that you would see discontent from the Government ranks on the policy that was put up, certainly when I was campaigning there was all manner of people who were very anxious about what the Government was proposing in relation to super, principally because it had retrospective effect. I think people got the idea there was room for change in super but not on the basis of retrospectivity, we have said there should be an independent review to actually look at whether retrospective changes are the consequence of these policies and obviously we would have a look at the outcome of that if the Government were to walk down that path but the Government have got this wrong, they are not very good at governing and when it comes to thoughtful policy development they don't do it.

GILBERT: Yeah, well they are, they have come into this new term talking about the need for a better discourse and more constructive politics and I know you are being

critical again this morning but is it time, does your electorate for example around Geelong express this to you that they are over the combativeness, if it's just divisiveness for divisiveness sake.

MARLES: Of course, you shouldn't have divisiveness for divisiveness sake but that's not what we have ever done, you need constructive debate you need constructive criticism, you need thoughtful policy development and that's what we have been about for the last three years. I think the Australian people responded to the way in which we have gone about all of that. But what we have seen on the part of the government is the opposite when it comes to kind of coming up with policy ideas essentially they have followed us rather than lead as a Government should and when they have followed us they have got it all wrong and super is a perfect example of that, but more often than not they have been drifting in the breeze, it's really hard to know what Malcolm Turnbull and the Liberals are all about, so in terms of having constructive government and leadership of this country you need people who are going to engage in thoughtful policy development and not engage in politics and the Government are the people who need to start doing that.

GILBERT: Just on a much lighter note I know you are a golf tragic like myself and the British Open starts tomorrow, you'll be pleased by these pictures of Rory McIlroy taking six shots to get out of one trap on the eighth hole on Royal Troon, encouraging for all us weekend hackers.

MARLES: It is encouraging for all of us when we know we are frustrated with that white ball and getting it into the hole which we don't manage to do to know that a person who does it for a living and with all the sublime skill that Rory McIlroy has that he finds it hard as well. But I like you am very excited about the coming week and of course Jason Day and Adam Scott we think about them a lot but think about Marc Leishman he comes from down our way from South West Victoria and coastal course and the wind gets up Marc Leishman is a real shot.

GILBERT: So AM Agenda turns to a bit of sport too, Richard Marles thanks for that and with you on the boy from Warrnambool, fingers crossed, quick break, back in just a moment, stay with us.

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