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**E&OE TRANSCRIPT  
DOORSTOP INTERVIEW  
HOBART  
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***SUBJECTS: Australian distilling; 2019 federal election; Labor in Tasmania; Tasmanian Liberal Conference; visit to local businesses; Banks not passing on interest rate cuts; Big Stick legislation; Aged Care Royal Commission; Marinus Link.***

**BRIAN MITCHELL, MEMBER FOR LYONS:** Good morning. We're here in southern Lyons today. And I'm here with the Deputy Leader of the Labor Party, Richard Marles who's come to talk to local people about the issues affecting my electorate. We're here today, this morning at Nonesuch Distillery in the south east. Distilling is one of the growth industries in Tasmania with more than 20 distilleries across my electorate. More than 40 across Tasmania and I'm proud to say that I am the new co-chair of the Australian Friends of the- Parliamentary Friends of Australian Spirits which is a group of Parliamentarians who support the growth of the Australian distilling. It's a great regional industry, that's why we're here tonight talking to Rex Burton about the what he's doing in this industry here in Tasmania. But Richard, over to you.

**RICHARD MARLES, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY:** Well thank you Brian. It's great to be here with Brian Mitchell who does such a fantastic job in our Caucus representing the people of Lyons which of course is a large part of the geography of Tasmania and it's really good to be here at Nonesuch Distillery. I think today probably marks my entry into the Parliamentary Friends of Spirits, and certainly I haven't tasted any of the product this morning. But look forward to doing it later in the day. But this speaks to an industry which has really grown in the last few years in Tasmania and also speaks to the clean, green brand which is Tasmania. And it is a part of Tasmania's future and it really is an important part of Tasmania's brand within the country, but also globally. And being here today is part of understanding what are the issues which are affecting people in Lyons and across Tasmania, so that we have a much better understanding of that- a better understanding of it in the aftermath of course, of our election defeat in May but looking forward to 2022 to about how Labor can position itself in a way which makes us as

competitive as possible. So this is part of the listening tour that both Anthony Albanese and myself and other members of the Labor frontbencher been engaging in, to make sure that we put ourselves in the very best position going into the next election. Any questions?

**JOURNALIST:** Are you confident that Bill Shorten's leadership ambitions are over?

**MARLES:** Bill's made his position very clear in relation to that. He has ruled that out. But Bill has an important contribution to make and he's doing that in his role as the Shadow Minister for NDIS, obviously an area of policy that he is extremely familiar with having been part of the establishment of the NDIS during the Gillard, Rudd years. Bill's got a very important role to play within our caucus and we very much are grateful for that.

**JOURNALIST:** It took a while, but is it good to see him taking responsibility for the election loss?

**MARLES:** Well Bill and all of us have been thinking very deeply about what occurred on May 18. It was a difficult moment for the Labor Party, that's to state the obvious. And it's not a matter of looking at blaming, it's actually collective responsibility for all of us, and actually Bill's been engaging in that process as much as anybody. And I think the way in which he's done that the last few days has been pretty impressive- he's not shirking any of the responsibility here. But this is a matter of collective responsibility for all of us and we're undertaking the review process right now, it's important that we go through that- and to do it in a way where we absolutely make sure that we understand what the lessons are from May 18 and how important they are and how they guide us going forward.

**JOURNALIST:** How important is that acknowledgement moving forward for the Labor Party?

**MARLES:** It's critically important. We understand that the proposition that we put before the Australian people back in May was rejected. It would be nice to sugar coat that but you can't, and so we need to be very honest and upfront about that and to understand what went wrong and to make sure that we learn every lesson that we possibly can and take that with us going forward. You often don't learn that much when you win, you learn a lot when you lose and it's really important that we engage in the full learning process. Which is why we're taking our time to do this and to get it right and when the review comes through we get those recommendations will also take our time to digest them, but it's a critically important process for us to position us in the right way going forward to the next election.

**JOURNALIST:** And part of the comment that Bill talked about over the weekend was saying that he did obviously misread Queensland and Victoria, but you know, unfortunately Labor did lose two seats, so half of Tasmania. Why didn't Bill talk about you know, why not Tassie?

**MARLES:** Bill, in making the comments that he did, he was using them as examples. But the reality is it's across the whole nation and we need to be thinking about this, which is in large part why I'm here today, and we'll be frequent visitors to Tasmania going forward. And of course, Brian is a really important source of advice to us about how our policies impact here. I think one of the things which is clear coming out of the election is, we need to be making sure we are speaking to the widest range of Australians that we possibly can. That if you are somebody who is putting on overalls every morning, you are going to work, you are getting dirty, you come home, that we are the party with whom you identify. Now for a lot of people that remains the case but there's also a lot of people in that category who are not identifying with us, and it's really important that we are talking to them and not just them but to the broadest range of Australians that we can, so that we place ourselves in a position where we are contesting the middle ground, where we are seeking to embrace growth in our economy and aspiration, which is really social mobility, which is something that Labor has always been about. And we are absolutely positioning ourselves as a party of government.

**JOURNALIST:** Is this just convenient timing speaking of the government of actually- you know you're here today, is that timed well with how the Prime Minister was here over the weekend?

**MARLES:** I've been planning to come here for some time and there'll be times where those visits match up and time where they don't. So it's random to answer that question but we will be here a lot. And you and your earlier point is right; we need to be making sure that the messages that we're coming forward with, the way we're speaking but more than that the policies that we put forward go into the next election are policies which resonate with the people of Tasmania. And we will work very hard to make sure we do that.

**JOURNALIST:** What else is on the agenda during your trip here? Where are you heading?

**MARLES:** Well we're meeting local Mayors and we will be talking a lot about the issues that are facing the people of Lyons specifically, with Brian today. But also making sure we have a clear understanding of what sorts of issues are concerning people in Tasmania.

**JOURNALIST:** So Bass and Braddon are the two that you did lose. Obviously you are focusing down the southern area today. Is that somewhere that you may going to be focusing on more and more?

**MARLES:** Yeah absolutely. Since the election we have been visiting electorates where we didn't win. And we'll be doing that going forward and we need to be winning both Bass and Braddon at the next election if we hope to form government. So that's absolutely critical. With Brian today and Lyon's is of course a very important electorate. But we will absolutely be going to Bass and

Braddon frequently over the coming period.

**JOURNALIST:** The Prime Minister himself has been in Bass and Braddon a lot since the election campaign finished. How can you compete with that?

**MARLES:** Well we will be out and about. And it's actually about making sure that we build and in some ways restore our relationship with the people of Tasmania and that is just the people of Bass and the people of Braddon. The Prime Minister can play his own game, but we're focused on what we will be doing. And that is about properly understanding the needs of those communities and making sure that we- as I said- are speaking to the widest range of Australians that we can, including in Northern Tasmania, have placing ourselves in a position where we're contesting that middle ground and presenting as a party of government.

**JOURNALIST:** Labor is considering a higher levy for the big four banks. Why is that needed?

**MARLES:** We have seen in recent days a rate cut from the Reserve Bank. It's critically important that that rate cut is passed on in full by the Big Banks. Over the past few years we've seen a significant amount of money ultimately retained by the big banks by not passing on the Reserve Bank cuts in full. But it's absolutely essential that Australians are getting the full benefit of the Reserve Bank cut. And the government's got to do more than barracking or whinging from the sidelines, they have actually got to come up with some policy going forward which sees that when the Reserve Bank does a cut of official interest rates, that the beneficiaries of that are Australian consumers.

**JOURNALIST:** What do you think about the Australian Energy Council's concerns about the Big Stick legislation?

**MARLES:** Well the Big Stick legislation is tinkering on the edges, this is the fact here. We're now up to something like the 16th energy policy of this government. They have been completely unable to land a coherent energy policy for our nation. And as a result, we've not seen investor certainty, and as a result we've not seen investment. That's at the heart of why we've seen rising electricity prices. So I don't think the Big Stick legislation is going to do anything to calm household electricity costs, which is what Australians so badly need. And what that ultimately requires is for the government party room to reach a consensus on energy policy which is significant in terms of encouraging investment, and not tinkering on the edges which is all the Big Stick legislation does.

**JOURNALIST:** The aged care hearings with the Royal Commission will also resume today. What do you hope it achieves?

**MARLES:** Well again we need to see action from the Government as quickly as possible in relation to the aged care sector. The aged care sector is broken,

that's what's become clear from the hearings to date. And I think every Australian who is in aged care, every Australian who has a loved one who is in aged care are completely horrified by the stories that have emanated from this Royal Commission. And it highlights the absolute need for reform in this area. And it's absolutely critical that the Government act on this as quickly as it can.

**JOURNALIST:** Just one on the Marinus Link; Tassie networks has announced the capacity of the proposed second Bass Strait interconnector could be increased, assessing options for the Marinus Link to provide up to 1,500 megawatts. The increase could cost taxpayers millions of dollars. Given that, should it be increased?

**MARLES:** Well look, ultimately this is a matter for the state government. And I note what was said over the weekend and the Liberal Party Conference in relation to this. Tasmanian Labor have made it clear that they support the generation of renewable energy and the export of it but ultimately, I would echo what they have been saying which is that it's not enough to be talking about it but the state government actually needs to work out how this is going to occur.

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