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**E&OE TRANSCRIPT  
TV INTERVIEW  
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***SUBJECTS: Julie Bishop comments on NZ Labour; ANZUS; North Korea***

**HOST:** Shadow Defence Minister Richard Marles joins us in the studio now. Richard, let's start with this pre-election campaign environment in New Zealand and the statement there by Julie Bishop suggesting that the entire Australia-New Zealand relationship might be jeopardized somehow by Bill Shorten's conduct. Has Australian Labor been involved in any way with fermenting actions and inquiries by New Zealand labour counterparts?

**RICHARD MARLES, SHADOW MINISTER FOR DEFENCE:** Well, this is a ridiculous claim and let's be clear that is the view of the New Zealand Interior Minister, a member of a Conservative government who made it clear that the information around Barnaby Joyce was provided by the Interior Ministry in New Zealand as a result of inquiries by the Australian media, I but as I listen to what Julie Bishop has just said I'm utterly shocked.

I mean, a foundation of our relationship with New Zealand is that it is above party politics, no matter who is in power in New Zealand, no matter who is in power Australia, our relationship is strong, and what Julie Bishop has just done now is made it a partisan question.

When we're in government I worked very closely with Murray McCully and indeed John Key, both members of the Conservative government. I regard Murray as a friend. Politics has never had anything to do with the way in which New Zealand and Australia have related to each other.

Our Foreign Minister has just got up and said she would not trust a future New Zealand Labour government. They are absolutely unhinged, our government, in terms of their response to the Barnaby Joyce issue. I am shocked that I would hear that from an Australian foreign minister.

**HOST:** If you had any leverage within the Labor Party community, I suppose you could ask Jacinda Arden, the Leader there, to try and make a call, for instance, to Julie Bishop to try and calm this a bit. Is that an action that you might participate in?

**MARLES:** Look, it is a matter for governments to relate to governments. That's how the relationship between Australia and New Zealand should be conducted, and we've just heard our Foreign Minister say that if there is a future New Zealand Labour government she would find it difficult to trust them.

Now, that is an astonishing thing to say. There is no two countries in the world that are closer than Australia and New Zealand. A foundation of this relationship is that it has to be above partisan politics, and in the desperation in which they are dealing with the Barnaby Joyce affair you've now seen Julie Bishop go out and trash the foundations of that relationship by saying it is partisan.

I'm appalled that we would hear this from an Australian Foreign Minister today.

**HOST:** Nevertheless, where there is smoke there can sometimes be fire and Jacinda Arden, again, to quote her, has taken issue with her own MP, Mr Hipkins there. She had no knowledge of this inquiry that he was making and she has made it clear to him that the asking of this question was not appropriate. So we still have a live question don't we: who or how was Chris Hipkins put up to this in New Zealand?

**MARLES:** Well, look, I have no idea. All I know is what I've read. You know, even taking it as it is I don't see any conspiracy in what Mr Hipkins comments bring about.

**HOST:** But he's sniffing around, putting questions on notice before publicly available information comes out.

**MARLES:** Again, I have no idea - all I've read is the comments that are of his that have been reported in the media, but you know I think a lot is being taken from them, and to get to a point now where the Australian Foreign Minister is publicly saying she would not trust a future New Zealand Labour government, I think is absolutely appalling. It is critical that our relationship with New Zealand be above party politics, and it's absolutely essential that our government acts in that way.

I've got no doubt that what has happened with Barnaby Joyce has been a shock to the Government, but when I listen to what Julie Bishop has said earlier today I can tell you in their reaction to this they have stopped governing.

**HOST:** Some people, I think, in New Zealand are saying on pretty rough polls that a Labour government there is 50/50, certainly back in the race in a way that they weren't. Does that add to the seriousness, in your view, that the possibility which didn't exist previously as we understood it in New Zealand politics, that Labour are a real show there?

**MARLES:** The politics of New Zealand is a matter for New Zealand, and the only thing I can say to you is it does it doesn't and it never would matter under a future Australian Labor government who is governing New Zealand. We would always be the closest of friends. We would always work hand-in-glove. We would always work

from a position of total trust as we did in the past, and I reiterate when we were in government there was a national government in New Zealand. I would regard Murray McCully as a close friend. I worked very closely with him when he was the Foreign Minister of New Zealand.

There is an absolute position of trust between our two nations, as there should be, and political parties should have absolutely nothing to do with it.

**HOST:** Which just takes me back to a follow up to an earlier question, I suppose: having caused this damage, or you're saying that she has, do you think it's beholden on Julie Bishop to perhaps make contact pre-emptively to the Opposition Leader and try and restore this relationship?

**MARLES:** I think Julie Bishop's comments today are utterly astounding in the context of the bilateral relationship between Australia and New Zealand. Certainly, it flies in the face of how I've understood that relationship to be carried out and I certainly think she has some explaining to do.

**HOST:** OK, just changing topics back into the Defence portfolio, Kim Jong-un somewhat predictably is sabre rattling again towards America. I don't necessarily want your response to that, but on the broader invocation of ANZUS treaty and the Prime Minister's remarks on Friday - you're fairly relaxed about that statement, the way the Prime Minister couched it?

**MARLES:** Well, let me be clear: Labor fully supports the ANZUS Treaty, and it's fundamental to our national security that we carry out all the obligations that we have under that Treaty.

I think this is a very dangerous moment that we find ourselves in as a global community with North Korea. The North Korean aggression is a seriously destabilising phenomena in the world today, and they're attempting to achieve a nuclear capability based on an intercontinental ballistic missile is obviously deeply disturbing. I think it is a time for sober voices, clear eyes, and level heads and that's across the entire international community.

**HOST:** So that applies to Donald Trump?

**MARLES:** It applies to everyone, and I do take heart from the decision that's been made by China overnight to increase their sanctions in respect of North Korea, limiting the import from North Korea of raw materials which of course then denies North Korea hard currency. I think that's important. The position that all P5 and indeed all the members of the UN Security Council took at the UN Security Council I think also gives us heart, but it is in that that we have hope of resolving this process and that's where the focus needs to be.

**HOST:** And I know you need to get to Question Time shortly, but if the threat went ahead and we had one to three or four North Korean missile splashing down 30 or 40 kilometres off the coast of Guam, what would be a reasonable and proportionate response by-

**MARLES:** -Look, I don't think it helps in all of this to start addressing hypotheticals of that kind. We're at a point where we need to be de-escalating tensions between North Korea and the global community. We need to be finding resolution to this, and I think walking down the path of looking at and addressing hypotheticals potentially does the opposite. We need clear heads and sober words right now. This is a situation which needs de-escalation.

**HOST:** Fair enough. We'll probably be talking about this for some time, but Richard Marles, for your thoughts today: thanks.

**MARLES:** Thanks, Greg.

***ENDS***