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**E&OE TRANSCRIPT  
TELEVISION INTERVIEW  
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***SUBJECTS: Bullecourt; citizenship; quadrilateral security dialogue***

**HOST:** Shadow Defence Minister Richard Marles with me now. First of all on this controversy around the battlefield at Bullecourt, your thoughts on this? The Minister says he will be making interventions with his French counterpart and hopes for cooperation on the management of that sacred land in France.

**RICHARD MARLES, SHADOW MINISTER FOR DEFENCE:** Well, that's good to hear, Kieran. What Australia can do at this moment is to provide those sort of representations. This is obviously sacred ground. There may well be unknown soldiers who lie within that ground and I can imagine a sense of anxiety and concern that many descendants and others within our community would feel about the notion of this ground being disturbed in any way, so it is important that those representations are made.

I would also make the point that France has normally handled these sorts of issues with great sensitivity and care in the past, so there's a process to be gone through here in France and we should let that play out

**HOST:** Now to the citizenship issue: Susan Lamb and Justine Keay, Labor MPs, members for Braddon and Longman in Queensland, they look like they were in trouble under the high court's literal interpretation of section 44.1 of the Constitution.

**MARLES:** Well, we're confident about both their circumstances. I mean, Justine Keay took all the steps that she was required to take prior to nominating, before the election, to revoke her citizenship and that's borne out by the fact that the steps that she took prior to nominating ultimately resulted in the revocation of her citizenship coming through.

That's a very different situation to what we've seen on the Government side, which is people basically sitting on their hands and checking a year after their election as to

whether or not they've got an issue here, and that's not the case when you're looking at the Labor MPs involved.

**HOST:** But it does look like the High Court's literal interpretation of the Constitution, again, I put it to you that it doesn't look like it leaves much leeway for this 'reasonable steps' defence, as Labor is hoping. If you're if you're a dual citizen at the time of the of the election, well, it seems pretty clear that the High Court will rule them ineligible.

**MARLES:** Well, again, we're confident about this. I mean, they took all the steps they could possibly take prior to nominating-

**HOST:** -But did they leave it too late? That's the point.

**MARLES:** Well they didn't, because they took all the steps that they needed to take prior to nominating, and as it turns out those steps-

**HOST:** Well, it's too late, because it wasn't approved by the UK Foreign Office or Home Office by the time of the election, so they left it pretty late in the piece. I mean the High Court, as I say, doesn't leave much wiggle room in its ruling.

**MARLES:** There's a huge difference here, Kieran, between being aware there's an issue prior to nominating to the election to the House of Representatives or the parliament, taking all the steps that you need to take prior to nominating, and events then playing out as a result, compared to what we've seen on the Government side where I've really been checking their status a full year after their actual election. I mean, that is a different set of circumstances, and as I say we're confident about this situation.

**HOST:** What about the approach proposed by Mr Turnbull? Will Labor get on board with that today?

**MARLES:** Well, the leadership here is being shown by Bill Shorten and Labor. We've been calling for some kind of process now for a while. The Prime Minister has come to this kicking and screaming.

I know that the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition will be meeting later today to talk this through, and hopefully they can agree on a process forward. What is absolutely critical though, Kieran, is that whatever process is arrived at finds that if somebody knows that they have a problem, and you know we've got that right now with John Alexander, that we're not waiting 21 days or there's some other period before referring that to the High Court. If people know they have a problem then that needs to be referred straight away, and so whatever process ultimately is arrived at, it has to embody that.

**HOST:** Let's turn to this other discussion I had with Dan Tehan in relation to the quadrilateral dialogue security arrangement that's being advocated again within the Government. What's Labor's view about that quadrilateral security arrangement with India, Japan, and the US? It was first looked at and pursued in the Howard Government years, but then dropped by Kevin Rudd. What's what's your take on it?

**MARLES:** Well, we've got an open mind about this. We do want to understand what the Government's thinking is here in a little more detail, and indeed Penny Wong and I will be briefed tomorrow about exactly what the Government has in mind and how they see it playing out.

I do think one of the strategic opportunities of the moment is to be working closely with friends and allies who share the same kinds of strategic circumstances that we do. I also think, though, that if you're putting together something such as this how it is perceived by others clearly matters, and we need to understand what the Government's assessment about that is, how they see that playing out.

We're looking forward to that briefing tomorrow. As I say, we've got an open mind as we walk into that. Having received that we'll talk this through and come to a position.

**HOST:** And do you think it would be in breach, though, as Geoff Raby argued, that would be potentially in breach of Australia's tradition of arguing for regional integration through summits like APEC, which the Hawke Government was pivotal in establishing?

**MARLES:** Well, APEC matters. The East Asian Summit, the former Labor Government was very instrumental in, particular in terms of getting the US engaged in that.

These are really important regional architectures and so we need to understand how the Government imagines any kind of quadrilateral operating in the context of that, and I think that is one of the big issues here that we want to get a clear picture about in terms of the Government's thinking, because that regional architecture is really important and it has served us well and Australia has been a leader in putting it together.

**HOST:** Richard Marles, Shadow Defence Minister, appreciate your time.