



**THE HON RICHARD MARLES MP  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR DEFENCE  
MEMBER FOR CORIO**

**E&OE TRANSCRIPT  
RADIO INTERVIEW  
ABC STATEWIDE VICTORIA  
DRIVE  
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***SUBJECTS: Portraits of the Queen; NEG***

**HOST:** Here's the mail that I've got: Richard Marles, who is the Labor MP for Corio, will be holding a stall outside his office at 2 o'clock on Friday for people who want a portrait of the Queen. Richard Marles, good afternoon.

**RICHARD MARLES, SHADOW MINISTER FOR DEFENCE:** Good afternoon, Nicole. How are you?

**HOST:** I'm not bad. Are you expecting them to beat a path to your door demanding pictures of the Queen?

**MARLES:** I'm expecting no one.

**HOST:** [LAUGHS]

**MARLES:** Literally no-one. I've got to say since I've been an MP this is one of the silliest campaigns-

**HOST:** -Sure. I know. I know.

**MARLES:** I guess what I think is we do have material that we give out, flags, constitutions. We give lots of flags to schools and constitutions and the like, and even portraits of the Queen. There are RSLs, for example, who like to have a portrait of the Queen - and that's completely fair enough - but if people want to play the game of getting a portrait from me then this is the way we're going to

do it. If you come to my office at 2 o'clock you can be quizzed on the Constitution. If you get the answers right I'll give you a copy of a portrait of the Queen. If not I'll actually give you a Constitution so you can bone up on your Australian civics.

**HOST:** OK, what sort of questions will you be asking about the Constitution? There's not a lot of constitutional lawyers out there who will be queuing up at your office on Friday, I'm tipping, Richard Marles. They've got to be dead easy questions.

**MARLES:** They won't be too difficult. Of course, I can't reveal the questions on air because I don't want to give it away-

**HOST:** -For security reasons?

**MARLES:** -but I will be sending a letter to all of those who have – small hundreds, actually – who have asked for a copy-

**HOST:** -Really?

**MARLES:** -of the portrait of the Queen. They will be getting a letter from me today, early tomorrow, or an e-mail which explains the terms of trade here so they can bone up on the Constitution, come along to get their portrait of the Queen.

**HOST:** Will you be there?

**MARLES:** Of course.

**HOST:** You'll be the ringmaster who'll be handing out these questions.

**MARLES:** I absolutely will. I think one of the things that's being reported in all of this is that there is right in legislation for everyone to get a copy of this portrait. Actually, the truth is with all of these goods we operate within a budget - which we should - and how many given out is actually at the discretion of the MP, so this is the way in which I am going to exercise my discretion.

**HOST:** Sure. It's interesting, though, that we have a legal entitlement to come and request this from the Parliamentary Entitlements Act 1990.

**MARLES:** If you think about flags, which is actually the item that we give out the most, I think it is great that schools have flags. There are all sorts of organizations that want flags. Aged care facilities often want a flag, so we give

out them very happily. We don't give them out to individuals. We give them out to organizations who seek them. Same with constitutions: there are often requests for that. We will give them out to individuals because they are not as frequently asked for. And there are some groups that ask for a portrait of the Queen.

I should say I am an absolute staunch republican, but if there are organizations which like to have a portrait of the Queen in their lounge room then I completely respect that and that's fine.

The campaign that's going on at the moment is just silly.

**HOST:** It's silly but it's good-natured, Richard Marles.

**MARLES:** It is good natured, so I'm joining in the fun.

**HOST:** As it should be.

1300 303 468 if you would like to join the conversation. Do you want a picture of the Queen sent to you by Richard Marles, because he's decided that he's going to demand that you answer some constitutional questions first. You have to qualify in Corio. He's a tough taskmaster, but there you go. He'll be out the front of his office at 2 o'clock on Friday handing out tests, number one, on the Constitution and, number two, pictures of the Queen.

**MARLES:** Can I say there is a consolation prize if you get them wrong? You will get a copy of the Constitution, and that's very important, too.

**HOST:** That is eye-glazingly exciting, Richard Marles.

**MARLES:** Indeed.

**HOST:** The Prime Minister got the NEG through his partyroom this afternoon. Richard Marles. He might not get it past the states. Josh Frydenberg, the Environment Minister, has said in a fairly sort of confronting way that it is time for Victoria to sign up, suggesting that we are the obstacle, we in Victoria are the obstacle, to lower power prices and reliable energy supplies. Here's a little bit of the Environment and Energy Minister speaking about an hour ago:

**JOSH FRYDENBURG [CLIP]:** The Australian Energy Market Operator has said that in Victoria last year there was a 43 percent chance of load shedding, which is a euphemism for blackouts. Victoria has the second-highest electricity prices in the country. It's time Daniel Andrews stopped walking both sides of the street

and put the interests of Victorians first and the businesses of Victorians first, and he would do that by signing up to the National Energy Guarantee before he goes into caretaker mode.

**HOST:** Is he right, Richard Marles?

**MARLES:** Well, I don't think he's right in the sense that the ambitions which the Government has expressed, a 26 percent reduction in emissions by 2030, putting that in the form of a National Energy Guarantee is going to make any difference to energy prices. I mean, at the end of the day, Nicole, the issue here is that it's actually investment in renewables in this day and age which gives rise to a reduction in energy prices and more electricity on the grid. In the end, we are going down a path, as a world, really, of renewables. This is what the lack of ambition on the part of the Government is actually holding Australia back, and it's the lack of investment which comes from that which is why we've seen energy prices go up, so I don't think this does anything to resolve the question of energy prices.

I think when you look at why the Government's ambition is so low and why their love of coal is so great, it's because when this government speaks from the heart it's Tony Abbott who does the speaking.

**HOST:** Will you be supporting it when the legislation is introduced?

**MARLES:** Well, let's have a look at the legislation for the mechanism when it actually comes before the Parliament, but what we can certainly say that the ambition that the Government has articulated around moving towards a lower carbon future is pathetic, and it is actually what's giving rise, ultimately, to an increase in power prices.

I mean, under the 26 percent ambition you won't see any renewable energy come online throughout the 2020s. Now, in the modern world that is a recipe for not investing in the electricity grid and that is a recipe for higher electricity prices.

**HOST:** So, Labor won't be supporting the legislation when it's introduced into the House?

**MARLES:** We will have a look at the legislation when it's actually presented to the House, but the point I'm making, and there's a couple of things here, there is the mechanism around how this is actually done and then is the ambition which is contained within that mechanism, and what I am saying is in respect of the ambition it is pathetic and unless something is done about that you're not

going to see a change to power prices at all.

**HOST:** Doesn't sound like you'll be storming to support this legislation.

**MARLES:** Well, as I said, we will have a look at the legislation when it's actually presented to the parliament and when we ultimately see it, but what we do know right now is what the Government is saying in terms of its ambition in relation to emissions, or what they're not saying, I suppose, in relation to renewable energy, and the point I'm making is that when you put all that together that is a recipe for failure to invest in renewable energy and therefore a failure to invest in the energy grid and therefore higher electricity prices. That's what it all equals now.

**HOST:** A texter says Daniel Andrews should tell Josh Frydenburg to go jump. Is that your view?

**MARLES:** Well, ultimately the view I have expressed about where the Commonwealth's at is the one that I hold. I guess I'd go-

**HOST:** -But what about the strong-arming of Victoria into signing up? You're a Victorian MP. How do you feel about that?

**MARLES:** Well what I think is that quite apart from the mechanism, and we need to actually see how that is expressed, that the ambition is pathetic and the fact that the Victorian Government has expressed its view about that ambition is completely appropriate, and in that respect I agree with what the Victorian Government is saying. I mean, a 26 percent reduction in emissions by 2030 is barely nothing. It's expected that by 2021 we will have a 24 percent reduction in emissions. We're talking about only 2 percent over the course of 2020. It is a pathetic ambition and it equals no investment in renewable energy, which at that point in time is going to mean no investment in the electricity grid. I mean this kind of sentimental attachment to coal completely misunderstands where technology and where the globe has gone, and it is actually that which is going to see a higher cost of power and a complete waste of public money as you watch this Government do everything it can to throw public money after coal.

**HOST:** Thank you for your time. Richard Marles is the Federal Labor MP for Corio and the Shadow Minister for Defence.

**ENDS**

Authorised by Noah Carroll, ALP, Canberra.