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**E&OE TRANSCRIPT  
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***SUBJECTS: Peter Dutton; climate change in the Pacific; TPP***

**HOST:** With me now, the Shadow Defence Minister, Richard Marles. We've heard both sides in terms of the Peter Dutton matter, but one of the points that he made yesterday which I guess will prick the ears of a lot of observers is the fact that Mr Shortern's senior adviser in terms of international affairs is a former chief of staff to Roman Quaedvlieg and Peter Dutton suggesting that, you know, this is a conspiracy against him.

**RICHARD MARLES, SHADOW MINISTER FOR DEFENCE:** I think Peter Dutton is trying to connect a whole lot of dots which don't exist and create a smoke screen against his own situation. At the end of the day all we're doing is asking a whole lot of questions based on information which is on the public record and we're seeking answers to those questions. We'd be negligent if we did anything else.

Right now we haven't got answers from Peter Dutton, and so he can say what he wants to about Labor staffers, he can say what he wants to about Roman Quaedvlieg, but I think what the Australian people want to hear is an explanation from him about the way he's conducted himself in respect of all this information which is on the public record.

**HOST:** I think he's gone a fair way to explaining it, in the sense that, you know, he said he doesn't have personal connections to the individuals concerned. When you're talking about someone from 20 years prior, not even in his phone in terms of a number in his phone, I think most people, in terms of the pub test, would suggest that that is hardly a personal friendship.

**MARLES:** I think there is more than one question being asked of Peter Dutton right now, and I think what you see in terms of the way he has lashed out in respect of Roman Quaedvlieg, in terms of the assertions he's making around Labor staffers, all of which are a giant smokescreen, it says to me that he is finding it difficult to answer questions which should legitimately be answered. All we're doing is putting to him material which is on the public record and we would be negligent if we did anything

other than that.

**HOST:** As Defence spokesman for Labor, do you welcome Scott Morrison's reassurance, reassurance as much as anything, to our Pacific neighbours that Australia will remain within the framework of the Paris negotiation and Paris deal in the context of some very clear changes he's made in separating energy from environment and so on? He's not going to legislate those targets but within that framework he says Australia will continue to pursue its targets.

**MARLES:** Look, referencing the Pacific is a good thing but let's be clear: this Government has turned up to the party five years late, so they want us to cheer them for that, and it's taken three prime ministers to get there. It's not just a matter of paying lip service. The entry ticket to doing what needs to be done in respect of the Pacific when it comes to climate change is actually having a credible domestic policy, which right now this Government hasn't put in place. I can assure you that the Pacific obviously take this issue very seriously and they do look at what our domestic settings are and what we're doing as a nation ourselves. From there-

**HOST:** -But they would welcome the fact that Mr Morrison has reiterated the Government's support for the Paris framework which was initially indicated by Mr Abbott.

**MARLES:** Firstly, it is a very little and it has come very late. I think people need to understand the way in which this issue is felt in the Pacific. You know, when the high tide comes and water is entering your kitchen - and I have been in the kitchen where the water has come in at high tide - and you hear an Australian prime minister, a former one, albeit, describe climate change as crap, that is absolutely offensive and it is deeply concerning to the peoples of the Pacific about what Australia is on about.

You know, Scott Morrison has got to do a little more than what he's just done in the last 24 hours. There's also a role in actually supporting and championing the Pacific in telling its story, such as what I've described, in respect of climate change. We've got great Pacific leaders people like Anote Tong, the former president of Kiribati, who played a critical role in Copenhagen, the former foreign minister of the Marshalls, Tony deBrum, who played a critical role at Paris itself. We need to be lionizing these figures. I don't hear any of that from the Government right now, so there is a lot more they need to do.

**HOST:** Something that Labor has agreed to, traditionally it's been a point of difference within the Labor parties on free trade and free trade deals, some critics of the TPP, for example, within the union movement and internally, but Labor has agreed to back the revised TPP without the United States. Why is that?

**MARLES:** Well this is an important decision and it is a difficult decision because this isn't perfect. A lot of groups, unions but other groups within our community, have deep concerns, for example around labour market testing and those provisions within the TPP. I understand why they would have concerns about that. I think if we were negotiating it it would be different, but at the end of the day it is really important, firstly, that we are promoting trade because of its importance to our economy, but secondly that we are engaging in Asia in this way.

When you talk to the countries of South East Asia, Korea and Japan, there is deep concern about the American withdrawal from the TPP under President Trump. It's really important-

**HOST:** -So it's about trying to sustain the rules of the road with Japan and other like-minded countries?

**MARLES:** And, indeed, helping to write those rules and making sure that those rules are written in a way which provide good labour standards within our region, which unions in Vietnam, for example, are very keen to see happen; making sure that environmental standards are part of the rules of those road rules of the road as well.

**HOST:** Would you be hoping that in a post-Trump era that the United States would sign back on?

**MARLES:** I think it's really important that the United States does become an outward-looking country which does seek to trade, and yes, being part of the TPP I think is very important and all of us were deeply concerned that the US went down the road of withdrawing from the TPP. They need to be economically engaged in East Asia, in Southeast Asia, and the fact that they are not I think is creating something of a vacuum.

**HOST:** Do you think that Mr Trump, also, because he sees security and trade basically the same balance sheet, sees it as a zero sum game? He doesn't differentiate, it seems, between trade relations and alliances. It's a very different approach to what we've seen from presidents in years gone by.

**MARLES:** Well, trade has a strategic security dimension. There's no question of that. It's actually why I think it's really important that America is engaged. I remember the former US commander in the Pacific, Harry Harris, Admiral Harris, who, as a naval commander, was a keen advocate for American participation in the TPP because of the strategic consequences associated with that.

It's very important, therefore, that Australia is playing its role. We want the rules of the road in our region to be rules that are dignified and fair. The TPP is actually good in that respect. It's as good as any trade agreement around and ultimately that's why it's very important that our nation is part of it.

**HOST:** Shadow Defence Minister Richard Marles, as always, appreciate your time. Thank you.

***Authorised by Noah Carroll ALP Canberra***