

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

E&OE TRANSCRIPT

TV INTERVIEW

SKY NEWS LIVE

AM AGENDA

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SUBJECTS: Migration; email breach; Australia's embassy in Israel

HOST: This is *AM Agenda*. Welcome now to Richard Marles, the Shadow Defence Minister. What is your position, what's the Labor Opposition's stance, on this UN Migration Act? The Government refusing to endorse it: do you think that's the right course of action?

RICHARD MARLES, SHADOW MINISTER FOR DEFENCE: Look, our predisposition on this matter has always been to work with the global community. We have the largest number of displaced people in the world today. It is a global problem and the way in which we interact with this system feeds into a global issue, so it makes sense that we would be working with the global community on this stuff. We want to have a look at it, obviously have proper parliamentary oversight of what's being proposed.

As I understand the compact we're talking about a set of guidelines rather than a thing which would bind the nation, but our principle has to be that we work

with the global community and it's really a big difference between what we're about and what the Government has been about. From day one they have basically turned their back on the plight of the world's displaced and sought to make Australia isolated. We have a very different view and that is that we should be stepping out from participating in the global effort to help the world's displaced.

HOST: So would Labor sign on to this if in government and does that mean Labor would be signing on to closing down any offshore detention centres?

MARLES: We want to have a look at all the details of this. Offshore processing is a really important part of making sure that we end what was a very dangerous journey between Java and Christmas Island, so we've got no plans to do that. Offshore processing will remain a part of the policy mix if Labor were ever to form a government, but our disposition has always been to work with the global community and that's why we've put in place policies which would see an increase in our humanitarian program, which would see an increase in the amount of money that we provide to the UNHCR.

HOST: Mr Dutton told us earlier this morning that the Government will introduce those laws on encrypted messaging services, counterterror laws, next week. Will Labor back them?

MARLES: We're working with the Government in committee in the Senate to try and get a proposition that we can support. Kieran, our record on national security legislation during our time in Opposition has been pretty good in terms of working with the Government to come up with solutions on this. We see this as issues which should be bipartisan, where we're work working constructively with the Government to get the best legislation we can.

That doesn't mean it's a blank cheque, and in fact in working with the Government on a whole range of pieces of legislation in this space over the last five years, we've improved it. It's a difficult balance, as these things always are,

between privacy concerns on the one hand but providing our agencies with what they need on the other. We will take those issues and work with the Government and try and come up with a proposition that we can support.

HOST: Given the two terror incidents in your home state in just the last week, is there a need to expedite this? Is there a need to maybe even junk that parliamentary committee process works.

MARLES: I think the parliamentary committee process has been a really important process to bring the parties together to get legislation that can have bipartisan support and keep our country safe, so I certainly don't think we should be junking that process. We've been able to work pretty efficiently and quickly when the times have required it, and if that's what's required now I'm sure we can do the same.

The important point here is we need to be working cooperatively with the Government, which we are, and they need to be working cooperatively with us, which to be fair, they are, despite what Minister Dutton has been saying, and then get a proposition which we can all support through the parliament

HOST: On this China e-mail breach by China Telecom reported in the Fairfax press today, has Labor been briefed on that?

MARLES: I've not been briefed. I'm not sure whether any other members of the shadow cabinet have been, but certainly I haven't been, so it's difficult to comment on the specific incident. I've seen what's in the media. I think the important point to make here is this is the world that we now live in. These sorts of events are going to occur, but we are well served by some of the best agencies in the world and I have confidence in their ability to put Australia in the best position it can be in matters such as this.

HOST: Does it concern you that a deal struck between Premier Li Keqiang and our former Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull seems to have been largely

ignored?

MARLES: It's important that agreements that are reached between leaders are maintained.

HOST: But when you look at what China has done, and there's a number of official deals that are done, is that all just smoke and mirrors and China does what it wants anyway?

MARLES: Well, again, it's important that agreements are adhered to. I think it's also very important that along the way our agencies are doing everything they can to make sure that our national interest is protected.

HOST: If the Government was to move the embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem in Israel, would Labor move it back if you win the next election?

MARLES: This whole issue has been a disgrace, really, on the part of the Government. It has been amateur hour from day one, doing foreign policy on the run in order to win a few votes in a by-election in Sydney. It has made our country a laughing stock and worse than that it's done us damage.

It's a simple principle here: Jerusalem forms part of negotiations, or what we would hope to be negotiations, between Israel and the Palestinian Authority and we should not be acting unilaterally in relation to that, which is why-

HOST: -So, you'd move it back?

MARLES: -which is why-

HOST: -If they spend \$200 million to move it, would you move it back?

MARLES: I'm hoping this is a moot point, because I'm hoping that the Government drops this ridiculous plan that it has in place which was only put

there in respect of a by-election. We should not be acting unilaterally ahead of negotiations between Israel and Palestine because at the end of the day they are the people who live there. We don't. That's why it is a mistake to be suggesting a move of the embassy from Tel Aviv. It's why we were critical of the US move and that's why it is a complete folly that the Government should be walking down this path right now. It's a folly in the context of what is appropriate policy for us in respect of Israel and Palestine, but it's a folly in terms of the impact that this is happening in terms of our relationship with our near neighbours.

This was all done so that they could win a handful of votes in a by-election. Now, we saw the damage that was done by this Government and the way it behaved in the Bennelong by-election this time last year, and it's taken a year to retrieve that, our relations with China. We're watching them do it again. They are a low-rent, try-hard government led by a try-hard Prime Minister who has been presiding over amateur hour when it comes to foreign policy, and it is a disgrace.

HOST: Richard Marles, glad you made it. Thanks for your time.

MARLES: Thank you.

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Authorised by Noah Carroll, ALP, Canberra.