



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

**E&OE TRANSCRIPT
RADIO INTERVIEW
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SUBJECTS: *Victorian election result*

HOST: Richard Marles is a Federal Labor MP who holds the safe seat of Corio, based around Geelong. Mr Marles is the Federal Shadow Defence Minister. Richard Marles, what was your reaction?

RICHARD MARLES, SHADOW MINISTER FOR DEFENCE: I was stunned, to be honest, Sabra. I was hoping that there'd be a positive result for Labor. Certainly the polls were suggesting that, but to be honest I didn't think the polls were reflecting what would be a much closer result. As it turned out the result was way in excess of the polls and this takes Victorian Labor really back to the high watermark that was established by Steve Bracks back in 2002. It is an incredible moment, a historic night for Victorian Labor and a huge triumph for Daniel Andrews.

HOST: Labor looks like it might win, Caulfield, Brighton, Hawthorn, although some liberals are still hopeful that they might hang onto Hawthorn. Those seats, what does that say to you?

MARLES: That's the remarkable band of seats. We'll see what happens in Hawthorne, but the idea that Hawthorn is even in play, this is the sort of heart of what I would describe as small-l liberal Melbourne. This is a seat which is wholly contained within the federal seat of Kooyong, Josh's Frydenberg's seat, Robert Menzies' seat, so the idea that that is looking at going Labor is extraordinary.

I think the take out from here, first and foremost, it is a triumph for Daniel Andrews and he has led a very sensible government which has had practical policies and they've just gone out and done it. He's done a very measured tone which I think speaks to people in a pretty significant way given how much populism we see in politics today.

On the other side of the equation I think it is really clear that the Liberals have lost the ability to speak Victorian. I mean the Federal Liberals are toxic in Victoria. We knew that, which is why they featured so heavily in our ads, but the Victorian Liberals knew that, which is why they were so livid with their federal counterparts after coup week and what that would mean for the state.

I just think that the policies that you see coming forward from Scott Morrison, from people like Peter Dutton, Tony Abbott, do not play in Victoria.

HOST: There were some internal shenanigans down here as well. Michael Kroger spent a fair amount of time in court over, you know, some people say an issue that he should have been devoting more time to actually winning the state election. You've got that. How much do you blame, then, the change of leaders federally, Malcolm Turnbull being turfed in August?

MARLES: It's obviously a factor and I don't want to take away from Daniel Andrews' achievement, because it is an incredible achievement, but the scale of this victory means there are a number of factors in play and certainly a factor was what was going on in Canberra with the Federal Liberals. We knew how toxic they were in Victoria, which is why, as I said, they featured so heavily in our ad campaigns.

I'm not sure that there was a lot of thought behind the Liberals during coup week, but if there was any sense that in the aftermath of the Super Saturday by elections they had lost the ability to speak Conservative, I'm not sure they've gained that ability. The price they've paid is to open up a huge flank in Victoria, and if you look at the east of Melbourne where we were seeing 10 percent swings last night, they cover federal seats like Deakin, La Trobe, Chisholm, Dunkley, Aston, Casey. There's a whole raft of seats there, not to mention Corangamite down in Geelong, where the Liberal vote has completely collapsed. There clearly was a federal dimension to this.

HOST: Your colleague Tony Burke tweeted last night there is no such thing as dog whistling anymore. If you push people to the margins, even using coded language, everyone knows what you were doing and, his tweet continued, Australians will always prove they are better than a race to the bottom. Do you agree or disagree with that sentiment?

MARLES: I completely agree with that. That brand of politics is toxic in Victoria and it's a brand that the Federal Government have been leaning in to and was at work during coup week a couple of months ago.

HOST: Richard Marles, thank you very much for joining us this morning.

MARLES: Thanks, Sabra.

HOST: Mr Marles is the Federal Shadow Defence Minister.

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Authorised by Noah Carroll ALP Canberra