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E&OE TRANSCRIPT
TELEVISION INTERVIEW
TODAY SHOW
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SUBJECTS: National Cabinet being cancelled, Gladys Berejiklian, need for a federal ICAC, Victoria, New Zealand travel bubble, China and cotton exports, AFL Preliminary Finals- Brisbane Lions vs. Geelong Cats.

KARL STEFANOVIC, HOST: For more we're joined by Home Affairs Peter Dutton and Deputy Opposition Leader, Richard Marles. Good morning, guys. Peter, to you first of all, why on earth can't National Cabinet go ahead? Don't they have telecommunications in Cairns?

PETER DUTTON, MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS: I am not sure, Karl but if you're going to be stuck anywhere, you may as well be stuck in Cairns, I suppose. So hopefully the PM will be down here later today. There will be a lot of people pretty happy to be stuck on the tarmac in Cairns at the moment.

RICHARD MARLES, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY: That was honest.

STEFANOVIC: The thing is, you were supposed to be talking about all these

people stuck overseas, coming home and what will happen to all of those people who are overseas at the moment and want to come home?

DUTTON: We want to try and get people back as quickly as possible. And obviously it's hard because you've got the combination of the two weeks in hotel quarantine and at the same time a cap on those numbers. We want to bring people back as quickly as possible. We have worked very closely with the Northern Territory on the Howard Springs facility, which is a mining facility, essentially. So, there's the ability to bring bigger numbers back there. When you combine all of that, we will bring as many people home as we can. Warnings have been issued since March this year, please don't go overseas unless you need to.

STEFANOVIC: Okay, Peter, does the Liberal Party have a corruption problem in New South Wales because it sure looks like it?

DUTTON: No, I don't think you could find anybody more honourable or decent than Gladys Berejiklian. So, she's obviously had her personal life laid bare for everybody to see, which would be embarrassing and difficult for her and you feel very much for her. But is she is a person of great integrity? Absolutely she is. And she has done a great job in managing COVID for New South Wales. So I think it's a time frankly for New South Wales to get behind her.

STEFANOVIC: That is one thing, but there's an awful lot of corruption that happened underneath her nose and the nose of the Liberal Party.

DUTTON: Karl, I think as we have seen in Queensland, ministers who have had cosy relationships, secret deals done with unions, etcetera, those have been referred to in our case in Queensland, the Crime and Misconduct Commission and ICAC in NSW, that is what they're there for, particularly at a local government level even in Queensland where a mayor has gone to jail recently. So that is their job and, if there's corruption, in this day and age how people think they can get away with being corrupt is beyond

my comprehension and they deserve having the book thrown at them.

STEFANOVIC: Okay. Richard, Labor has had all sorts of dramas in New South Wales as well. When will politicians learn?

MARLES: Well, I think as Peter said, it's very important that we have measures in place which deal with questions of corruption of public officials. That is why we've been arguing for an anti-Corruption Commission at a federal level for a long time now. The Federal Government have talked about doing it but haven't done anything about it. But it is really important that these bodies are in place to make sure not only those in public office are above any sense of conflict but are seen to be that. So these bodies have a really important role to play as the one in New South Wales is having right now.

STEFANOVIC: Okay, now to Victoria, there is a High Court challenge on this afternoon but is Victoria ready to open up, given the Shepparton problem, Richard?

MARLES: Look, we all hope so. I think everyone in Victoria is looking to Sunday with a sense of hope and optimism about what might be announced by the Premier. At the end of the day, these are decisions which have to be made with the best medical advice in line and that's how the government has gone about making its decisions up until this point. We have got the numbers down. And the last couple of days, the numbers have been really encouraging. It's been a very long, hard road here in Victoria. But, you know, I think everyone is just aching for some good news on Sunday and we hope that that is the beginning of a path back to some sense of normality.

STEFANOVIC: Okay. Peter, we are hearing some information coming out of China this morning; there might be an issue with our cotton farmers and cotton production and exporting. Have you heard anything along those lines to add to the list of issues with our produce heading towards China? Have you got an update for us?

DUTTON: I haven't heard that news this morning, Karl, but obviously the government is working closely, through Simon Birmingham with- to make sure we can get the exports into those markets.

STEFANOVIC: Okay. 350 Kiwis arrive a little bit later on today from New Zealand. I mean this with the greatest of respect but have we got the Dettol ready?

LAUGHS

MARLES: We all welcome them! You do too, Karl.

STEFANOVIC: No, I'm just jealous as hell. Pete?

DUTTON: My - both - I'm going to get into trouble here; but both of my in-laws are born in New Zealand. Kirilly will quickly point out that she was born in Perth. But, look, we welcome them. And I think it's a great thing actually. We have 244 people I think coming today. It would be good if it's two-way but at the moment it's not. No surprise people want to get out of New Zealand and come to Australia.

STEFANOVIC: I think Richard Marles wants to say something about that. He quite liked it.

MARLES: No, I think it's great to have Kiwis here. We like to have our friends from across the 'dutch', who come and see us here. Baby steps. And I hope we get to go back the other direction as well.

STEFANOVIC: Do you know what, I tell you what is wonderful - seeing you two guys outside of your team's games areas. We have got the Gabba there behind you and we have Richard down at Geelong. It's a big game, a big footy game this weekend. Fellas, let's go to you, Pete. Have you got a little sledge for

Geelong at all?

DUTTON: I haven't got any sledge but the Lions are on fire. So hopefully they get up, hopefully Richmond goes down. And we will see - it will be a good game and big weekend. That is the great thing about the Gabba is there is plenty of traffic-

STEFANOVIC: You can't hear.

DUTTON: I only get every second word you're saying, Karl. No, I can't hear anything.

STEFANOVIC: I know. You have done really well. Richard, before we go, you have got a ball there. If you've got a ball, we want to see you line up and kick, for goal. Now, this comes down to the final couple of seconds... Oh wow! Bury the headline! Bury the headline, look at those legs! Magnificent!

MARLES: Okay. I am here at the cultural heart of our nation; GMHBA.

STEFANOVIC: Yes.

MARLES: You want me to have a go?

STEFANOVIC: Yeah, go on. This is for the Grand Final win, folks. Richard Marles. If he gets this, he will be Opposition Leader.

LAUGHS

STEFANOVIC: He's got it through for a behind.

MARLES: There you go.

STEFANOVIC: One behind. Good on you, Richard, you're a great sport.

MARLES: No one was in any danger, I can tell you.

STEFANOVIC: Good on you, you too, Pete. We will see you very soon mate.
Well done with all the traffic noise.

ALLISON LANGDON, HOST: Another five points for the shorts.

ENDS

Authorised by Paul Erickson, ALP, Canberra.