

Interview with Eddie McGuire – Triple M's Hot Breakfast, Melbourne

EDDIE McGUIRE:

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull good morning.

PRIME MINISTER:

Good morning, great to be with you.

EDDIE McGUIRE:

Malcolm can you tell us, why have you decided to go with this as a super-sized Home Affairs portfolio? I like the look for it personally. There's a few things we'd like to hear from you as to why you're doing it. It was promulgated by Tony Abbott previously and didn't get up. But this, what's the timing and why have you gone with it?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well this is long overdue, Eddie. What we need to do is ensure that our security agencies, which are the best in the world, can be even better. They have to work closely together and ensuring that you have ASIO, the Australian Federal Police, Border Force, working together in one portfolio ensures that they will work more closely together and they will do an even better job at keeping Australians safe.

The model that we're adopting is identical to that which has operated in the United Kingdom, in the Home Office there for many years, for decades. It has been very successful. You integrate those agencies whose job it is to work together and keep 24 million Australians safe at home. That's my focus.

I don't need a crisis to cause me to act. What I'm always doing is seeking every day to improve the way in which we keep Australians safe. That's my only focus.

EDDIE McGUIRE:

Prime Minister, what has, you know, maybe what has piqued your interest rather than, as you've said, you're not motivated for anything other than making the country safe, but has it been the continued growth of ISIS and terrorism around the world? Or you've just come back from seeing Donald Trump and everything that's going on with America and even the thoughts that the Russians could have, might have, maybe been involved in their election?

PRIME MINISTER:

Eddie, this plan to make this change we've been looking at, working on, for a long time. As you said, previous Prime Ministers have looked at it too. In

fact it was proposed quite a long time ago – in fact, at one point by Kevin Rudd. So it has a logic about it.

I mean if you were starting from scratch, you would not have your domestic security agencies spread between three portfolios.

EDDIE MCGUIRE:

Yeah makes sense doesn't it.

PRIME MINISTER:

You'd have them in one – clearly you'd have them in one ministry. So you know, institutions grow up over time for various reasons but this is an opportunity to have a logic and a consistency that will deliver greater cooperation.

Obviously, I have discussed structures of agencies like this with our close partners, security partners, particularly the UK where of course they do have the Home Office and have had that operating with a Home Secretary for many years, as I said.

LUKE DARCY:

Prime Minister, we haven't got a lot of your time this morning, but a lot of Australians are thinking about the 40-year-old Sydney woman Justine Damond who was shot by police in the US. Have you got any more information for us on that this morning?

PRIME MINISTER:

No, I don't have any more information. Our Consul-General in Chicago, Michael Wood is pressing for answers and the Minneapolis Mayor I know is demanding answers.

Justine, we understand, she went out at night to speak to officers in a car. She was in her pyjamas, she was clearly no threat to them and how it came about that a police officer shot her – it's inexplicable – but there will be an explanation.

So our love, our condolences, our sympathy go out to her family who have suffered this terrible loss.

But we are demanding answers from the American authorities and of course, that's what our Consul-General will be doing right now in the United States. But it seems an extraordinary, extraordinary tragedy and it's hard to imagine how it could have happened.

EDDIE MCGUIRE:

Prime Minister thank you for your time this morning, I know you're busy and you've got things to do. We've got Peter Dutton on tomorrow so will drill into the actual portfolio with him live in the studio.

PRIME MINISTER:

Thanks very much.

EDDIE McGUIRE:

But thanks for coming on to let us know about what the motivation is behind all this.

PRIME MINISTER:

Keeping Australians safe, that's my motivation every day, every day.

EDDIE McGUIRE:

Thanks very much.

[ENDS]

[Interview with Karl Stefanovic – Today Show, Channel 9](#)

KARL STEFANOVIC:

The Prime Minister joins us now from Canberra. PM, good morning to you.

PRIME MINISTER:

Good morning, Karl. Great to be with you.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

Thank you for your time. More on national security in a moment but first, if you may, the murder of Aussie Justine Ruszczyk, I think we are all in shock. Is the Australian Government seeking any answers at all?

PRIME MINISTER:

Yes. We certainly are. Our Consul-General is supporting the family and we are seeking answers to this. This is a shocking killing. It is inexplicable. Our hearts go out to her family.

I mean, how can a woman out in the street in her pyjamas seeking assistance from the police be shot like that?

It is a shocking killing.

Yes, we are demanding answers on behalf of her family and our hearts go out

to her family and all of her friends and loved ones. It is a truly tragic, tragic killing there in Minneapolis.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

I guess what can you do?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, we are demanding answers, something clearly went tragically wrong, Karl.

I noticed the mayor of the city is demanding answers. I mean, they are her police after all and of course our Consul-General in Chicago who covers that part of the United States, Michael Wood is doing the same.

We are providing all the support we can but this is, it seems inexplicable, but note, there will be some answers given in due course.

At this point, it is a tragic loss, this young Australian woman and again, our hearts go out to her family with sorrow and with condolence and with love.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

Well said.

Okay, let's move on to the super security ministry. Now, I want to ask a relatively simple question. Will the merger make Australia safer?

PRIME MINISTER:

Yes, it will.

Every day, every day, I am focused on ensuring that we keep Australians safe and that we ensure our security and police and intelligence agencies, which are the best in the world, work even better and ensure that – we don't need, we must not just wait for a crisis or a disaster to make changes. Set and forget has no place in national security. Complacency has no place in national security. Yes, we've got great agencies. Yes, we've disrupted many terrorist plots and we'll disrupt more. But we must be constantly seeking to ensure that we work even better together and, of course, the key, Karl, in this very hyper-connected world of social media and the internet is connectedness and ensuring that those agencies, which are central to keeping Australians safe from terrorism, work most closely together.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

Okay, Peter Dutton is a star or a tsar as one publication put it this morning. Is his appointment just a way of pacifying him?

PRIME MINISTER:

I know people put a political gloss on these things, Karl, and it is in some

ways disappointing that they do.

The only issue here is the safety of all Australians.

You know, having these agencies together is common sense. It is logical.

At the moment, you have the counter-terrorism agencies, Australian domestic security agencies, in effect split between three departments.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

Yep.

PRIME MINISTER:

Between Attorney-General's, Immigration and Border Protection and, indeed, my own department.

If you were starting from scratch, of course you would have them under one minister, just like in the UK with the Home Secretary.

So what we are doing, what I am doing here is making a decision that I think is long overdue, but it is logical, it is rational. And we're not doing it because we're being forced to do it by some failure of intelligence or failure of security, we're doing it in exactly the same way as all the other security laws I've upgraded. Just like what we have done in ensuring Defence better cooperates with state police. Just like we have done ensuring that terrorists can't get out of jail after their sentence is over if they're still a threat to the community. Just like I've ensured that Australian troops in the Middle East can target and kill terrorists, whether they have got a gun in their hand or not.

So every day I am saying, 'how can I optimise and improve the work we do to keep Australians safe?'

KARL STEFANOVIC:

Alright. It is genius though – I mean, he has got a big job on his hands. You're going to keep him as quiet as a church mouse.

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, he's got a very big job on his hands now, I can assure you. He is doing it very well and combining these agencies together makes common sense – it is absolute common sense.

This is how it has been done in the UK forever.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

You know what I mean, though don't you?

PRIME MINISTER:

Karl, I know the political point you are trying to make, but can I tell you, the safety of 24 million Australians is much more important than political commentary. I am not complaining. You make as many political comments as you like.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

Righto.

PRIME MINISTER:

My only focus is on keeping you and 24 million other Australians safe. That is my job.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

Okay, fair enough. How on earth are you going to get this through the Senate? I mean, it would be much easier getting a change to Section 44 of the Constitution through.

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, Section 44 of the Constitution would require the Australian people to vote for it.

It is pretty amazing, isn't it, that you have had two out of nine Greens Senators didn't realise they were citizens of another country. It shows incredible sloppiness on their part.

You know, when you nominate for Parliament, there is actually a question – you have got to address that Section 44 question and you've got to tick the box and confirm that you are not a citizen of another country. It is extraordinary negligence on their part.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

Okay, Nick Xenophon wants to know if you are going to grant or pair, the terminology, the Greens two votes while they try and fill the vacancy. So my question PM this morning is are you going to give the Greens a pair? Because they clearly need it.

(Laughter)

PRIME MINISTER:

Okay, Karl, thank you.

My understanding is that the Senate practice has always been to grant a pair in these circumstances and that's what will be done and those vacancies will be filled pretty quickly. The seats won't be vacant for long.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

The first time I have seen you ever turn a slight shade of red.

(Laughter)

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, there you go. There you go. I can't see you. See – I'm disadvantaged.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

No, I'm definitely red, underneath the makeup.

PRIME MINISTER:

Are you still wearing that same suit you wore for a year? That was one of the great commentaries on fashion ever. And Karl, I've got to say it again to you, and the unfairness towards women on television, you know people are always commenting on what they wear and you wore the same suit for a year and nobody noticed. That was a very powerful point.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

Alright, PM, thank you for your time. Just quickly before we go, have you managed to speak to Tony Abbott since you got back from overseas?

PRIME MINISTER:

No, I haven't. I haven't spoken to him since he's been back from overseas. No. I mean, I catch up with him irregularly and look forward to doing so in the future.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

Good to have your time today, thank you very much. Appreciate it as always.

PRIME MINISTER:

Great to be with you, Karl. Thanks

[ENDS]

[This report makes it clear that the crisis in our prisons is getting worse by the day – Burgon](#)

Richard Burgon, Labour's Shadow Justice

Secretary, commenting on HM Chief Inspector of Prisons' Annual Report for

2016-17, said:

“This report makes it clear that the crisis in our prisons is getting worse by the day.

“Our prisons are becoming ever more dangerous for prisoners and staff alike. Assaults on staff are up by over a third and it is a stain on the nation that not a single young offenders institute inspected was deemed safe.

“The Conservative Government’s failure to get a grip of this crisis, including dropping prison reform from the Queen’s Speech, is making it more difficult to turn prisoner’s lives around and to reduce risk to the public.

“Drastic Conservative cuts to prison budgets and staff numbers are driving this prisons crisis. Labour would tackle it by recruiting thousands of new prisons officers and increasing staff retention by improving terms and conditions.”

ESMA recommends improvements in financial information enforcement

The peer review was carried out on the basis of a questionnaire to all NCAs, as well as on-site visits to seven jurisdictions: Germany, Italy, Malta, Norway, Portugal, Romania, and the UK.

The report identifies that further improvements are needed in relation to:

- how issuers are selected to examine their financial information;
- the depth of inquiries into financial statements going beyond correcting disclosure; and
- the financial and human resources allocated by NCAs to the enforcement of financial information.

In particular, five of the jurisdictions – Malta, Portugal, Romania, Sweden and UK – do not fully comply with Guideline 5, which requires that NCAs use selection models in which all issuers are eligible to be selected for scrutiny.

Steven Maijoor, ESMA Chair, said:

“The peer review’s findings show that in some jurisdictions there is a risk

that insufficient resources are allocated to enforcement, and that some issuers are not eligible to be selected for scrutiny. Additionally, in some jurisdictions there is a tendency to focus on disclosure issues instead of in-depth inquiries into valuation issues. ESMA will work with the national competent authorities to implement the recommendations of the peer review, in order to promote more convergent supervisory practices throughout Europe.”

Recommendations

The Report makes a number of recommendations where NCAs and/or ESMA should consider further action:

- Enforcement of financial information should not be an ancillary function. NCAs should ensure that sufficiently skilled and dedicated staff are available for this purpose;
- A list of common risk factors should be created, to be used by all NCAs in the selection of issuers for examination;
- All NCAs should use a common approach for the selection model, providing for the use of rotation and random selection in addition to selection based on identified risks;
- NCAs should ensure that the selection models allow the coverage of the whole population of issuers in a Member State within at least 10-15 years;
- The default type of examination should be unlimited in scope. This examination should cover all relevant areas of the accounting framework, i.e. recognition, measurement, presentation and disclosures, and all relevant documents published by an issuer, e.g. the management report, consolidated and separate financial statements; and
- NCAs are encouraged to ask issuers questions even where there is no suspicion of misstatement.

Next steps

ESMA will now consider these recommendations and work with the NCAs in the corporate reporting area to see if they can be addressed by amendments to the Guidelines or by other work in this area.

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