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Shadow Minister for Sport

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TRANSCRIPT

2CC Breakfast with Stephen Cenatiempo

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Subjects: New shadow ministry, Australia's Winter Olympic success, Local success stories achieving blockbuster success with Wuthering heights, ISIS Brides, Liberal values and restoring trust with good policies underpinned by a strong economy.

E&OE.....

STEPHEN CENATIEMPO:

This week, we've been talking about Angus Taylor's new shadow ministry. And it's always interesting when they put these things together. Some people will be elevated, some people will be dumped from ministry, some people will keep their portfolios, others will be given new roles. Angie Bell, who was previously in the environment portfolio, is now the Shadow Minister for Arts, Shadow Minister for Sport and Shadow Minister for Youth and joins us now. Angie, good morning.

ANGIE BELL:

Good morning, Stephen. It's great to be with you.

STEPHEN CENATIEMPO:

One of my criticisms of a lot of ministries is that we tend to give portfolios that have no connection with each other to the one person. Yours at least have some synergy.

ANGIE BELL:

Absolutely. They have a huge synergy. I think it's about opportunity and aspiration, really, which, of course, our new leadership team, Angus and Jane, want to restore for Australians. Because sports and the arts, particularly for young people, is what I call the great leveller because it gives young people the opportunity to compete and to get good at something. So, it

doesn't matter what your background is or your postcode, you have this opportunity through sport or the Arts and I think that's really important.

STEPHEN CENATIEMPO:

And I only learnt this last week that you actually have a bit of familiarity with this portfolio because you were a professional saxophonist for 30 years.

ANGIE BELL:

Well, Stephen, it's probably no surprise to you that playing the saxophone as a young person gave me every single opportunity I've ever had in my life. And that's why I'm so passionate about it. And I say to young people all the time, get good at something and you'll get noticed and doors will open for you. The saxophone is what did it for me when I was very young. I wanted to play the Pink Panther theme and it took me three weeks to get to that point. And then beyond that, it was professional all the way.

STEPHEN CENATIEMPO:

Well, I've been trying to teach myself how to play the guitar for about 15 years and it's just not catching. But look, I might be inspired by you now to do that. What's it been like transitioning from one set of responsibilities to another? Obviously fairly steep learning curve.

ANGIE BELL:

Well, certainly, as you have pointed out, I have a background in the Arts, and so I've already been out in the community here on the Gold Coast, very, very heavily involved in sports and the arts anyway. And so, this is an extra responsibility across the nation. But I'm thrilled to be in the portfolio. It's been great being out in the community, getting feedback about our new leadership team as well, so that we can unite and restore our standard of living and protect our way of life and get on with the work that we need to do as a strong opposition. And certainly, my community has been telling me we've come out with a strong start.

STEPHEN CENATIEMPO:

You've come in at a pretty opportune time. Australia is doing very well in Hollywood at the moment. Of course, Margot Robbie and Jacob Elordi in Wuthering Heights, which is at the box office at the moment. and then of course the Winter Olympics, our best ever performance.

ANGIE BELL:

That's absolutely right. and we should be very very proud of Australians at the Olympics. Josie Baff, what a fantastic result in the snowboard cross and Scotty James so close to the gold but not quite there and of course Jakara Anthony who becomes the only Aussie to win two Winter Olympic golds. Can I say on the other topic, Stephen Wuthering Heights, Margot Robbie, what a great Gold Coaster. And of course , yeah, got to put that in there, from Somerset College. And of course, Jacob Elordi, who's from Queensland, Nudgee College boy. Look, their success reflects the strength of our arts education, our creative communities,

and the opportunities that I was talking about that Australia delivers for young Australians, particularly.

STEPHEN CENATIEMPO:

What sort of focus are you going to have on keeping people like Margot Robbie and Jacob Elordi in Australia though because look, I watch a lot of old TV. When I say old TV shows that were in the 90s and early 2000s and you spot these actors that you've never heard of and then you do a bit of a Google search and you'll find oh that person's Australian. So, clearly we need to be keeping this talent in Australia, don't we?

ANGIE BELL:

Absolutely. And I think it's a testament those young people that go off to Hollywood and they find their success, but we do want them to be here in Australia, and of course the Gold Coast is a fantastic hub for film. We've got Bazmark here now with Baz Luhrmann on the Gold Coast and a new creative precinct that the council's putting in place and of course, Movie World. It is a great hub here on the Gold Coast with Village Roadshow. Let's not forget that we are now competitive on the world scene because the Morrison Government put in place \$400 million for the Location Offset Fund which has brought the likes of Baz Luhrmann doing Elvis here and now Joan of Arc as well here on the Gold Coast and in Australia. And we have a great movie industry and I'll be working very closely with Screen Australia and others.

STEPHEN CENATIEMPO:

There's been a lot of talk this week about the so-called ISIS brides and I know it's not in your portfolio, but everybody's talking about it. Look, the opposition is talking tough on this and that's great, but we're going to run headlong into legal parameters that say these people are Australian citizens and we really have no choice but to repatriate them.

ANGIE BELL:

Well, I think Australians know and expect that the first task of any government is to keep Australians safe and protect our way of life. And we saw breaches of those things at the Bondi massacre. This government really needs to come clean with the Australian people as what they're up to with these ISIS linked individuals coming back to Australia. Are they processing their passports? What security assessments have been done? You know, what is the government undertaking? Has the government used or is considering to use its temporary exclusion orders? What's it doing? And these individuals who choose to associate with those terrorist organisations need to be scrutinised very, very closely because their activities are not aligned with Australians' values. And, you know, the rule of law, of our democracy, freedom of religion, they are Australian values.

STEPHEN CENATIEMPO:

Well, there's no two ways about that, and I think Angus Taylor went to great pains to say that was going to be a focus for his new team, Australian Values. When it comes to policy development, though, that was your biggest weakness in the lead up to the last election and

probably over the last nine months. How quickly do you need to start to develop some policy platforms rather than just sort of value statements? Because, you know, I mean, we're still two years out from the next election, but that's not a long time in political terms.

ANGIE BELL:

Well, I think there's a lot of rhetoric out there that, you know, now's the time to get to work. But actually, we have been working. And in the last term, there was a lot of work done on policy as well under Peter Dutton. There were some roadblocks when it came to the actual election and rolling those policies out. There's no doubt about that. huge body of work behind the scenes that's being done. But you're right, we do need to roll out our policies as quickly as we can. But remember, there's still two years to the next election.

And so, we're not in a hurry, but we've got to make sure that we get the settings right to restore our standard of living. So that's about economic policy, lower, fairer taxes. And I'm sure Tim Wilson will do a great job prosecuting that case. We've got a strong economic team and of course, protecting our way of life. That's so important to all Australians. We must feel safe in our own country.

STEPHEN CENATIEMPO:

Angie, you make an interesting point about the policy work that was done previously. And I know, talking to some of the previous shadow ministers about the work that done. And as you say, the rollout of those policies was the problem. Do you tip back into that? Because the last nine months has been about this so-called navel-gazing review that never, ever came to fruition. Do you just accept that you had some good policies and just roll them out rather than reinvent the wheel again?

ANGIE BELL:

Look, I don't think we're reinventing the wheel as such. I think there's been some great work done by shadow ministers in the last term and they now need to be reviewed. And we need to make sure that we settle on good policy that does the job for Australians, because that's what we're sent to Canberra to do, to be a strong opposition that holds the government to account and that has been a difficult job the last nine months or so when there's been so much noise and the Liberal Party room talking about itself. Let's stop doing that. Let's now unite behind our new leadership team and let's roll out some good policies.

STEPHEN CENATIEMPO:

A lot of the commentary are talking about the, I guess, the wedge that the Coalition finds itself in. You've got one nation on one side, you've got the Teals on the other. And, you know, there are many in your team that think that the party needs to be Teal-lite, others that think you need to be One Nation-lite. Of course, they're both wrong. You need to get back to, you know, those old-fashioned centrist conservative policies that the Howard government had. How do you address that, given that there are obviously still those divisions in the party, despite Angus Taylor's overwhelming vote win in the party room?

ANGIE BELL:

Well, we have got work to do. There's no doubt about that, Stephen, and Australians know that. But we must unite and we must be very clear about what we stand for. Not just slogans, not just lines, but real Australian values and Liberal Party values. We are not One Nation. We are not Teals. We are the Liberal Party, the great Liberal Party, the most successful political party in Australian history. This is about restoring the way of life for Australians, our economic discipline. You know, standard of living has gone backwards for Australians and they feel poorer because they simply are.

We have to make sure that Australians have aspiration. That's been my life's journey, reward for effort. The more you practice your saxophone, the more gigs you can do, the more money you can earn, the more you can save and get ahead. We've got to back small business in this country. We have to have aspiration for young Australians, for artists and for sports people. We have to have young people owning homes. We have to have personal responsibility for actions and lower and fairer and simpler taxes. All those things that the Liberal Party stands for, being a strong nation in a world that seems quite mad sometimes. It's a chaotic world out there and we need to restore what Australians believe in, which has been lost under this terrible Labor government.

STEPHEN CENATIEMPO:

So, in other words, you need to remember what all politicians seem to have forgotten, and that is – it's the economy, stupid.

ANGIE BELL:

Yeah, well, that's exactly right, it is. When people feel poorer, that's because they are under this government. So, we need to make sure that we have good policies that put more money back in Australians' pockets.

STEPHEN CENATIEMPO:

Angie, great to talk to you. I'm sure we'll catch up again soon.

ANGIE BELL:

Great to talk to you too, Stephen.

ENDS.