Public Policy Analysis in the Field of National Security: A Study on the Securitization of Illegal Asylum Seekers During the John Howard Administration in Australia

Sena Septiana, Arfin Sudirman , Yusa Djuyandi

Universitas Padjadjaran, Kampus Bukit Dago Utara No.25 Bandung, Jawa Barat 40135-Indonesia

ARTICLE INFORMATION	ABSTRACT
	This article aims to understand the securitisation process of MV Tampa asylum seekers during the leadership of John Howard, who tended to perceive them as a threat. As one of the countries that ratified the International Convention regarding asylum seekers, this action became a problem because it was considered a form of Australia's inconsistency towards the Convention and drew many reactions from other related parties. This article aims to discover how MV Tampa asylum seekers are framed as a national threat to Australia using the concept of Securitisation and Illegal Asylum Seekers. In this article, the author uses a qualitative method with data collection techniques through document-based studies, internet-based studies, and interviews. The author finds that the policies taken by Australia are not always state-centric because of John Howard's motives in facing the 2001 federal election. In addition, asylum seekers tend to be framed as an existential threat to social security in Australia.

INTRODUCTION

Australia has a good track record in dealing with asylum seekers, so it is not surprising that the country of kangaroos holds the title of the most desirable destination country for asylum seekers (Cheeseman, 1993). The issue of asylum seekers and refugees is hotly discussed and a concern for the international community. The need for refugees to travel is an example of an individual problem, and then it becomes a problem for community groups, nationally and even internationally. Therefore, the number of asylum seekers every year always increases. Based on data obtained from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), it is known that on 30 June 2020, more than 7.6 million refugees and asylum seekers were living in Australia (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021).

Having the predicate as the most sought-after destination country for asylum seekers to enter Australian territory, the local government does not always receive asylum seekers' arrivals well, including when the MV Tampa incident was refused for specific reasons. This Norwegian cargo ship was supposed to sail to Singapore. However, an emergency call forced them to turn around to rescue the Palapa Ship, which almost sank right into the international waters of Indonesia and Australia north of Christmas Island. After the MV Tampa ship, which Arne Rinnan captained, managed to save the Palapa ship carrying 433 people, Captain Rinnan then rushed to bring all the passengers to Indonesia. But in the middle of the journey, the ship received protests from passengers who asked to land in Australia. Most passengers were from Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka. After getting close to Australian territory, local authorities banned the MV Tampa ship from entering because it was considered illegal.

Despite being refused entry, Captain Rinnan took the MV Tampa and its passengers away from the Australian entry area. He was also worried about the crew's welfare and the passengers' deteriorating health conditions, so they needed to be cared for and rescued (Willheim, 2003, hal. 161). Captain Rinnan tried to make an emergency call, but the Australian authorities considered that the situation did not require evacuation. The Norwegian side claimed that the MV Tampa landed in Australian territory because the refugees were sick and exhausted on the ship, while Australia refused to come. This is evidence that Australia violated international maritime law by not allowing ships to dock in nearby areas in an emergency.

After the MV Tampa incident, the Australian government became increasingly vigilant and tightened entry rules into Australian territory to avoid illegal asylum seekers trying to enter Australia. As a leader, Howard also acted decisively by issuing a warning that the Australian government would not grant entry permits to asylum seekers (McAdam & Chong, 2014). Another policy that emerged due to the MV Tampa incident was the Pacific Solution policy. This policy was adopted from the United States Caribbean Policy, which dealt with illegal immigrants there (Kneebone, 2006). From the policy taken, the Australian government involves elite maritime troops to patrol using high-speed ships to prevent foreign ships from entering Australian territory with asylum seekers on board.

Every action will undoubtedly cause a reaction, as well as Australia's action with the Pacific Solution policy, which has caused much criticism from the international community, one of which is from the United Nations Human Rights Commissioner, Mary Anderson. According to Anderson, the arrival of thelum seekers is an obligation for the Australian government to provide a helping hand. Supposedly, the Australian government should assist in an emergency such assist. As previously explained, Australia is one of the countries involved in signing the convention on asylum seekers. In addition, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) believes that all countries involved in signing the protocol should have consistency in helping to accept asylum seekers because it is an obligation. With Australia's action against the arrival of asylum

seekers from MV Tampa, UNHCR considers this action an inconsistency of the Australian government's commitment to the asylum seeker protocol (Maley, 2001, hal. 352).

Although John Howard received much criticism due to the policies taken for Australia, he believes that what has been done is the best course of action to deal with the unfavourable conditions regarding asylum seekers in Australia. In an interview, Howard showed his dislike towards asylum seekers with the sentence, "I don't want people like that in Australia, genuine refugees don't do that, they hang onto their children", in response to a large number of illegal asylum seekers in Australia. Australia (Marr & Wilkinson, 2003). From the statement made, it is clear that John Howard doesn't like the existence of asylum seekers in Australia. Howard considered that certain parties criticised the decision taken by Australia in dealing with the incident as parties that could not be like Australia in dealing with asylum seekers properly (Schloenhardt, 2001).

The MV Tampa incident and the policies made by the Australian Government are a form of the government's realisation in achieving Australia's national interest to protect the security and sovereignty of the country. This action is also based on efforts to control Australia's maritime borders, especially from threats such as terrorism, narcotics smuggling, transnational crimes, and the arrival of illegal asylum seekers (Marr & Wilkinson, 2003). The securitisation policy of asylum seekers, in this case, the Prime Minister of Australia, John Howard, has a vital role in securitising the asylum seekers so that it becomes a security issue. Asylum seekers are connoted as parties who threaten Australia's territorial sovereignty. It is undeniable that this issue is both pro and contra considering that Australia is a member of several international conventions and protocols regarding protecting the rights of refugees and asylum seekers. These conventions and protocols include the 1951 Refugee Convention and Protocol relating to the status of refugees, the 1966 International Covenant on civil and political rights, the 1989 Convention on the rights of the child, and the 1984 Convention against torture and inhuman and degrading treatment. If you look at the explanation above, it is quite a contrast and surprising that a country with a strong record of protecting civil and political rights chooses to place the issue of asylum seekers as a security emergency by carrying out securitisation rather than considering the humanitarian side of the asylum seeker.

The development of security studies can be seen from the change in scope, which initially only focused on the military aspect, which placed the state as the only object of reference. The security spectrum is increasingly diverse and broad, including the concept of securitisation that arises due to a shifting paradigm in the concept of security from traditional to non-traditional. Especially when entering post-structuralism which has much influence on various fields of knowledge, including a significant influence in security studies. Huysmans (1997: 186) argues that securitisation has become a broader, more powerful and significant article on the security field. The peak occurred when entering the end of the Cold War, and realism began to lose its prominence due to its failure to explain this development. This has implications for the Copenhagen School, which disengages itself from a security perspective based on the objectivity and subjectivity of threat perceptions. In this case, thinkers believe that security as a speech act can influence decision-making regarding security issues (Buzan, Waever, & Wilde, 1998, hal. 26).

This paradigm shift in security was pioneered by a think tank from the Copenhagen School consisting of Barry Buzan, Ole Waever, and Jaap de Wilde, who has succeeded in sparking several thoughts on security, including the concept of Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT), European Security, and Societal Security (community security) and Securitisation (securitisation which is the most contributing thought is also typical of the Copenhagen School group). The security school of the Copenhagen School thinkers tends to be more focused on the safety of society. This is triggered by Waever's view, which shows a lack of clarity in the meaning of the global security approach related to individual security.

Securitisation is how an actor's speech acts can be accepted by the audience (usually the public) as recipients, and the issues discussed can be decided as an existential threat to the security and sovereignty of a country. Balzacq states that securitisation practices are artic policy tools, images, stereotypes and others that are contextuallan actor contextually mobmobilisedences to understand the intent and purpose. According to him, securitisation is also referred to as a combination of political threat design and threat management for an issue/phenomenon (Balzacq, 2011, hal. 3). The issues raised relate to non-military issues as security issues. Such action is taken when the issue is perceived as a threat. According to Buzan, there are three scopes in securitisation: (1) non-politicized or issues that are handled by the government but do not concern the public interest; (2) politicised is an issue in the public sphere so that government involvement is required; and (3) securitised namely an issue that is considered a threat so that emergency action is needed. Buzan et al. 1998) mention that securitisation is an effort to make non-military issues a threat. Generally, there are three aspects: discourse or speech act, objects that need to be protected or referent objects, and sources of threats or existential threats (Buzan, Waever, & Wilde, 1998, hal. 24).

In this article, according to what has been described in the background, the researcher will raise the formulation of the problem "How was the securitisation of MV Tampa asylum seekers carried out by the Australian government during the leadership of John Howard? This article is made to find out how the MV Tampa asylum seeker is framed as a national threat to Australia and how the Australian political elite securitisation is applying Australian foreign policy in maintaining regional security from the threat of illegal asylum seekers. In addition, the author hopes that this le can provide theoretical or practical benefits for readers and subsequent articles. Theoretically, this article is expected to be a basis for readers and researchers, especially in examining the securitisation of asylum seekers with the MV Tampa case study and as a contribution to knowledge in the study of IR, especially about added security, I hope this article can add insight to readers and can be a reference in continuing other similar articles, for parties who involving with asylum seekers, refugees or related organisations are expected to organisations in carrying out actions to asylum seekers.

METHOD

In this article, the approach used is qualitative Christopher K. Lamont (2015) in his book "Research Methods in International Relations". Through the MV Tampa Case Study,

researchers used descriptive qualitative methods to understand and deepen the Securitisation of Illegal Asylum Seekers under John Howard's Leadership. Research conducted by researchers only describes and analyses phenomena. In addition, the use of this method is expected to be able to answer and explain in detail the formulation of the problem raised.

As previously mentioned, the complex approach to studying International Relations reveals a plurality of methods used to examine phenomena in International Relations. According to Lamont, data collection techniques in a qualitative approach can be done in several ways, including document-based research, interviews, focus group discussions, internet-based research, and other non-textual-based data such as maps, artwork, and other visual form (Lamont, 2015, hal. 79-85). Based on Lamont's methods of collecting data, the researchers used document-based research and the internet, non-textual-based data and semi-structured interviews to search for information and data consisting of a framework of previously prepared questions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Immigration Patterns and Early Arrival of Boat People in Australia

In its historical record, Australia has several times experienced the phenomenon of waves of asylum seekers, especially asylum seekers who came to enter Australian territory by boat. These asylum seekers are usually referred to as boat people or boat people. The first time Australia experienced a wave of asylum seekers occurred in the 1970s, with most asylum seekers coming from Vietnam. Malcolm Fraser, prime minister at that time, responded to the phenomenon of the boat people wave by helping and offering to divert the asylum seekers to several shelters such as in Thailand, Indonesia, and Malaysia. Since then, the transfer of asylum seekers to shelters in third countries has begun (Helmiyana, 2020, hal. 115).

Since the term boat people was introduced in the Australian dictionary. Especially during the 1970s, when there was upheaval in the northern and southern countries of Vietnam, which hugely impacted the flow of refugees to Australia. Based on data from the Parliament of Australia in 2013, more than 100,000 refugees from Vietnam were placed in several UNHCR camps in various Asian countries. A total of 2,059 refugees of them entered Australian territory. This period was the first wave of Australian arrivals of boat people; at that time, boat people received full sympathy from the Australian community (Parliament of Australia, 2013).

Moving on to the 1980s was a new step and the first milestone in changing Australian policy on immigration matters. This was marked by the abolition of several migrant schemes such as travel, restrictions on family reunions, and migrants on humanitarian grounds, which previously had a high proportion; since then, restrictions have been imposed. This change in immigration matters to maximize migrants, especially migrant workers, and only qualified ones can live in Australia. In addition, this restriction is also an effort to suppress the rate of asylum seekers in Australia, whose arrivals have been increasingly massive since then.

The massive rate of asylum seekers in Australia began with the emergence of the second wave of asylum seekers, which began with the arrival of 27 asylum seekers from Indo-China in November 1989 and continued for the next few years until 1998 with an average arrival of 300 people each year (The Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 2013). The insistent flow of asylum seekers to Australia has overwhelmed the Australian government, and they must think more carefully about shelter and guarantees during shelter.

Table 1 Number of Boat People Arrivals 1990 – August 2001 (Betts, 2003, hal. 34)

Year	Arrival	Year	Arrival
1990	216	1996	661
1991	225	1997	340
1992	220	1998	200
1993	86	1999	3740
1994	977	2000	2961
1995	242	2001 (Jan- Aug)	3694

When the emergence of this second wave, the Australian political elite began to label them (asylum seekers) with the term illegal immigrants rather than refugees or asylum seekers. This is because the Australian government has a different view of asylum seekers. With more and more asylum seekers entering Australian territory, it will impact the security stability and sovereignty of Australia's territory. Based on the table data obtained from Betts (2003), it is known that the main reason the Australian government feels threatened for the stability, security and sovereignty of its territory is that the number of asylum seekers arrivals is gradually increasing every year. On this basis, in 1992, when Paul Keating served as prime minister of Australia, a policy related to mandatory detention was introduced for those (asylum seekers) who did not have valid visas. The detention policy for people not accompanied by a valid visa includes boat people because they pose the same threat to the security and sovereignty of the Australian state (Watson, 2009).

Another wave of boatman arrivals occurred in 1999. From the table data above, 1999 was one of the years with a high number of asylum seekers arrivals in a certain period. That year, the number of asylum seekers who came to Australia touched 3740 people. Most asylum seekers are from Afghanistan, Iraq, and Sri Lanka. This group of asylum seekers sailed from Indonesian waters with the help of people smugglers using fishing vessels that were not suitable for use. Most of the boat people travel to the destination country using the help of people smugglers by giving some money in return. People smuggling in the asylum system is not a new thing; however, nowadays, it is becoming an increasingly real threat because it is complex and planned (Sawitri & Sedana, 2019, hal. 50). The smuggling of people has been defined in the United Nations Protocol and the steps to deal with it are in various ways, starting from land, sea, and air. "The procurement, to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefits, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident" (General Assembly, 2000).

The peak of the asylum seeker problem occurred in August 2001 when the MV Tampa, a Norwegian cargo ship, carried 433 immigrants from Afghanistan, Iraq, and Sri Lanka to Australia. As the most significant destination country for asylum seekers in the Asia Pacific region. Australia is often preoccupied with the arrival of many asylum seekers. Apart from being an obligation for countries that ratified the protocol regarding asylum seekers in 1951 and the 1967 protocol. This is also related to Australia's status, one of the countries with the best handling

of asylum seekers and is an enforcer of protective country and human rights. Spinks (2013) states that only a few asylum seekers know about immigration policies in their destination countries. There are push and pull factors in immigration, of course, consideration for asylum seekers to travel to Australia through legal or illegal channels.

The following are some *push* and *pull factors* of Australia's high rate of asylum seekers.
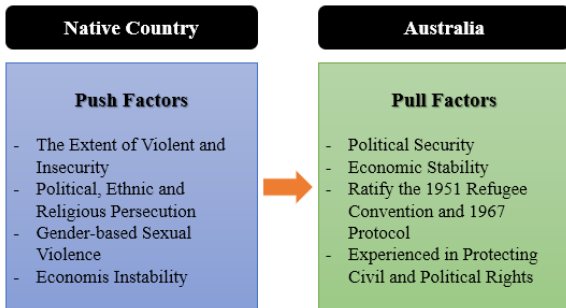

Figure 1 Push and pull factors for asylum seekers to Australia (Sawitri & Sedana, 2019, hal. 3)

As previously stated, Australia was initially very open to asylum seekers; since the Paul Keating administration and continued during the John Howard administration, Australia began to limit itself to asylum seekers. The increasing number of boat people since 1999 is considered a threat to Australia's national security. To address this, the Australian government began to take a firm stance in protecting national sovereignty by increasing control over borders and immigration flows.

Politicising the Issue of Asylum Seekers

Such a sweet historical record has made Australia the best country to handle asylum seekers globally. Since 1976, the concept of multiculturalism in Australia has been introduced. This is marked by the arrival of asylum seekers to Australia, which previously was only reserved for refugees from Europe, now starting to allow entry for refugees from non-Europeans. This phenomenon shows the transformation of strategic cultural policies in Australia, where the purpose of accepting asylum seekers is to pay attention to human values and override Australia's national interests in the region. Quoted from the Australian Immigration Department in Krieken (2012), it is stated that the acceptance of asylum seekers is an application of the multiculturalism policy in Australia as part of identity and the process of strengthening democracy (Krieken, 2012).

However, as Australia opened up to accepting asylum seekers from non-Europeans, this increased the number of asylum seekers arriving in Australia, which made the government start to worry and try to limit itself by making the issue of asylum seekers a political issue. This action was carried out not without reason, the massive rate of asylum seekers, especially since the emergence of the second wave of asylum seekers using boats from Indo-China in 1989, with an average arrival of 300 people each year. Based on data obtained from Katharine Betts (2003:34) shows that, starting from 1996 to 2000 or Howard's first period in charge of Australia. The number of asylum seekers arriving by boat to Australia touched 7,902 people, with the highest number in 1999 amounting to 3740 people.

The peak of the asylum seekers problem occurred in August 2001 when the MV Tampa, which carried 433 immigrants, sailed to Australian territory. At the same time, the number of asylum

seekers who came by boat has reached 3694 people. In this case, Howard as prime minister of Australia at that time, began to feel that he needed to take action to deal with the problem. Issues regarding asylum seekers begin. It's not that political issues in Australia have turned into politicised issues. Howard strongly opposes the concept of multiculturalism in Australia in dealing with asylum seekers; according to him, immigrants should adapt to the culture of Australian society (Murray, 2010).

Based on the author's analysis, when looking at the phenomenon of asylum seekers in MV Tampa, John Howard uses the issue of illegal asylum seekers as a strategy to increase his popularity as a leader. This was deliberately done in an attempt to face the 2001 federal election. McKay et al. (2013) observed that the issue of asylum seekers received significantly more attention in the 2001 elections and thus was Howard's strategy to take advantage of the situation. The non-traditional threats faced by Australia are not only a referential object but also have a decisive role in the outcome of the 2001 Australian federal election.

Referring to a survey conducted by the Herald Sun in Newspoll (2016), it was found that the opposition team represented by Kim Beazley managed to lead by a percentage advantage of 13% of the coalition of national liberal Australian conservative parties represented by Howard (Newspoll, 2016). Departing from this conclusion, the author can conclude that the Australian public's preference is more likely to side with the opposition leader Kim Beazley, who promoted health and education during his campaign. However, when the events of 9/11 in the United States emerged, and the unwanted arrival of MV Tampa asylum seekers further complicated the handling of immigration in Australia, at the same time, Howard took advantage of the opportunity. From these two phenomena, Howard took steps in his campaign by bringing up issues regarding asylum seekers and immigration and protecting Australia's borders.

Howard's move by rejecting the entry of MV Tampa became a widespread policy and was fully supported by the Australian public. This can be seen from a survey by the Herald Sun on 29-30 August 2001. From a total of 25,026 respondents during the two-day survey period, 23,937 respondents agreed that Australia must have a firm stand by not accepting illegal immigrants. Based on this, it can be concluded that the issue of asylum seekers has begun to be politicised by Australia, which can be seen from the majority of Australians believing in the National/Liberal Party, which rejects the arrival of asylum seekers to Australian territory.

In carrying out this action, Howard, on every occasion of the State of the Union address, constantly reminded the entire community that the events of 9/11 were a form of a tragic event that could change lives. According to him, the security of a country and the values of integrity that unite Australia are at stake. Howard, who happened to be in America at the time of the incident, said that an incident like this could happen later in Australia, which requires wise military management and diplomacy to protect the security and sovereignty of the region in the face of various challenges.

Kinds of threats that threaten the safety of its citizens. As quoted from Sky News, the following is John Howard's response to the 9/11 tragedy:

"This was a completely unprovoked, audacious, outrageously successful terrorist attack. This was a greater

violation of the American homeland than Pearl Harbour. The terrorists had destroyed the World Trade Centre. They'd taken out the Pentagon, and if those brave people on that other aircraft that crashed in Pennsylvania had not been so brave, they probably would have taken out either the White House or the Capital building, so it was outrageous. It was audacious. It was successful, and it was completely unprovoked. That doesn't change the paradigm of the world in which we live. Nothing good." said John Howard.

Howard's response indicated that the Australian government was concerned about any phenomena. As a form of anticipation, Australia began to take the initiative to formulate policies to prevent various possible conflicts and similar incidents in Australia. "Of course, I feared, and a lot of us did, that we were going to have a chain reaction. Washington, then New York, then London, then Paris, then Tokyo, perhaps Sydney, then Melbourne? Who knows?". "You've got to remember that nobody was prepared for this, and naturally, fear and imagination run riot. And I Made it very clear Australians should shoulder with the Americans in the fight against terrorism," Howard said.

The change in perspective of new security threats in Australia brought John Howard even harder in seeking securitisation by raising the concept of we versus them to the public. This can be seen in Howard's statement to the Australian public, where the word "we" is repeated. "We will decide who comes to this country and the circumstances in which they come"; "We will defend our border, and we'll decide who comes to this country; and "We will be compassionate, we will save lives, we will care for people but we will decide and nobody else who comes to this country". The description of the word "them" there is an existential threat or something that can threaten an object (in this case asylum seekers who are considered a threat) and "we" is a referent object which in this case requires efforts to rescue the Australian people (as objects) in various aspects.

Speech Act Attempts Against Asylum Seekers MV Tampa

I don't like illegal immigrants coming here (Australia), is an expression from John Howard regarding his views on asylum seekers coming to Australia. In exercising his influence, Howard argued that his actions embodied Australia's vision and mission in preventing and maintaining environmental security in the national interest. Howard's actions show his distaste for illegal asylum seekers, even framing them as threats. This is one of Howard's speech acts against illegal asylum seekers MV Tampa because, according to him, they (illegal asylum seekers) are a threat, so precautions must be taken.

Figure 1Howard When Interviewed about Asylum Seeker (The Guardian Australia, 2021)

The picture above is proof of his dislike for asylum seekers, which was conveyed openly on the occasion of the state speech. Howard, the leader of the far-right conservative Liberal Party, has a populist and nationalist approach to his political agenda. His handling of asylum seekers arriving by boat in Australia reflects this. He presented his actions to the public to protect Australia's sovereignty and security from possible terrorists. A month later, in September 2001, terrorists attacked New York and Washington, DC. Howard could play this to his political advantage in federal elections two months later, in November 2001, where he highlighted "national security" and "illegal immigration" as critical issues. The narrative campaign that Howard often uses is that he will decide who has the right to come to Australia and under what circumstances they come (Milliken, 2022).

In such circumstances, in this case, John Howard acts as a securitising actor, which is the driving force in making speech acts efforts in dealing with situations that are considered a threat. According to Weaver (1995: 55), the existing security conditions result from discourse/speech acts carried out by *securitising actors*. The Prime Minister of Australia at that time, John Howard, with his power, Howard had more authority to determine what steps should be taken by Australia. In addition to maintaining security and territorial sovereignty, Australia's social security sector is undoubtedly a priority and the reason for the securitisation efforts of these illegal asylum seekers.

Apart from Howard, the mass media are *functional actors* who also help and have an essential role in the securitisation of asylum seekers. Long before the MV Tampa incident, the issue of asylum seekers, especially those who use ships, attracted much attention in the Australian media. Starting 10 days before the MV Tampa phenomenon occurred, the results of research conducted by Watson (2009) concluded that newspapers with big names in Australia often carried stories about boat people. For example, *The Sydney Morning Herald portal* has published 15 news stories about boat people; Herald Sun features 17 stories, and the Daily Telegraph features 10 news stories. According to him, if the conclusions are drawn from the three news portals, the same thing used in delivering news content is that they both present the crisis side of immigrants by using hyperbolic terms such as "flooding" and "invading" (Watson, 2009). Media has become a fast tool in disseminating discourse, so it is not surprising that it is through the media that people's views are formed on an issue.

Threat Perception of MV Tampa Asylum Seekers as Existential Threat

In simple terms, threat perception is a country's political view of an issue or phenomenon that occurs. According to John E. Mroz, perception is understanding and self-awareness of an event, situation or process. Usually, this understanding will affect the attitude towards something. They can then form an assumption from the perceptions they think is threatening (perception of threat). According to him, the perception of threat is that any action taken by the enemy is always a threat to him. When viewed from a political point of view, perception can be made by decision-makers who have a particular view of a specific ideology. As with the MV Tampa asylum seeker issue, which in this case was used as an issue later by John Howard as a policymaker, it was politicised as a threat.

The phenomenon of asylum seekers leaving their home countries without carrying official documents is often referred to as illegal immigrants. Not only Australia, of course, which at that time was led by John Howard, showed his concern and dislike for asylum seekers, but countries in the world also had concerns about this problem. It's not just their arrival that is a problem; they are often infiltrated by smuggling illegal drugs or even human trafficking. If not addressed, this causes a domino effect; these transnational criminals camouflage as if they are asylum seekers to enter a country legally.

Therefore, John Howard, then the leader of Australia, tried to act rationally by prioritising the country's national interests. The main thing that underlies Howard's framing of asylum seekers as something that can threaten Australia's national security is because of their illegal arrival status (not accompanied by official documents) and criminal. They deliberately violated Australian territorial sovereignty by forcing them to enter Australian territory. From this, the Australian government identified that there was a link between the arrival of these illegal asylum seekers and criminal activity (Barker, 2013). The evidence of this identification is the existence of a criminal organisation called the *Chinese Organize Gang*, the most significant criminal organisation in Australia (Tailby, 2000).

Based on the securitisation theory taken from the *Copenhagen School*, according to Buzan et al., to make an issue into an existential threat in internal conditions, linguistic and grammatical use in speech acts must be by the social actions it implies. Directly the existential threat must be clearly defined; also, if the existential threat is not challenged, it will have an impact on various aspects, and there are potential solutions that must be offered to address the existential threat (Buzan, Waever, & Wilde, 1998, hal. 32). When Howard made this issue a concern for Australia's national security and his speech act efforts, the Australian community also supported and agreed with it and believed that asylum seekers were a threat to them.

Referent Object in MV Tampa's Securitisation of Asylum Seekers

When the perception arises by placing MV Tampa asylum seekers as a threat, John Howard certainly has special considerations before finally raising and framing the issue as a threat. The following are some of the concerns that are considered against MV Tampa asylum seekers framed as threats:

a. State Security and Sovereignty

 Concerns about MV Tampa asylum seekers being framed as illegal for entering Australian territory without official documents made the government increasingly sceptical of asylum seekers. Howard as a leader, of course, seeks to secure and safeguard Australia's territorial sovereignty from anything that has the potential to threaten their security and sovereignty. The following are some things that can threaten the security and sovereignty of Australia's territory along with the arrival of asylum seekers MV Tampa.

Crime and People Smuggling

At the time of Howard's leadership, Australia viewed the arrival of MV Tampa asylum seekers as an illegal act synonymous with criminality. The MV Tampa asylum seekers are considered illegal because, according to the Australian authorities, they deliberately came to Australian territory

without supporting immigration documents after identification. This then became the Australian government's scepticism in accepting asylum seekers, especially some of their activities that seemed to indicate criminality.

For example, one of Australia's well-known organisations, the *Chinese Organized Gang*, is Australia's most powerful crime group. They are usually engaged in drug smuggling, people smuggling, and human trafficking. They use maritime routes as transportation routes in their operations because they avoid detection without a complicated process. Those in this group are usually people with low education and lack skills as asylum seekers. With these considerations, the Australian government framed the MV Tampa asylum seeker as threatening Australia's national security.

In addition, speaking of people smuggling, this incident has happened several times in Australia, one of them in New South Wales and Queensland in 1999. These smugglers deliberately use small boats to try to reach the Australian coast directly. This route is a strategic route for people smuggling because once they reach the east coast of Australia, they can easily blend in and disappear into the Australian communities of Brisbane, Cairns and Sydney.

Another reason that makes this maritime route to Australia a strategic route for people smuggling is its cost-effectiveness. Smugglers will have a significant advantage when they successfully smuggle through this sea route. In addition, Australia's fairly open border is also one of the factors that facilitate this smuggling effort (Tailby, 2000, hal. 4). In response to this problem, the Australian government during Howard's leadership tried to implement a securitisation policy to protect the security and sovereignty of Australia's territory, including for its people.

Quoted from the *Parliament of Australia page*, despite the political and media attention to the arrival of asylum seekers, the Australian government believes that people smugglers are involved in helping people travel to Australia by boat or plane. Not all unauthorised arrivals to Australia involve people smuggling, but most of them do so in the case of arrivals by boat (Barker, 2013).

Illegal Asylum Seekers and Islamophobic

Islamophobia is a form of bigotry and hatred targeted at Muslims and generally towards people considered "Arabs". Dr When interviewed Yusa Djuyandi said that this attitude made countries in the European region, especially Australia, reject the arrival of asylum seekers because of the assumption that those who come from Asian countries, which are automatically Muslim, are usually thick with the stigma of terrorism. This has become a frightening spectre for western countries, especially a series of acts of terror that have occurred in the world and are identical to Muslims, thereby increasing the attitude of Islamophobia for anti-Islamic countries. The development of Islamophobia in Australia has existed since the television media has so freely represented the identity of Muslims. In this case, the role of the media is vital, especially in building and shaping people's views on an issue.

Initially, shortly before the events of 9/11 in the United States, Muslims in Australia were branded as a culturally problematic and socially marginalised immigrant community. However, the impact of the 9/11 events changed Muslims, who were originally an ethnic and religious minority in a

multicultural society, then categorised as a transnational risk which is a potential source of being wrapped in religion with extremist violence. Thus, the best way to deal with this problem is to limit and regulate policies regarding asylum seekers (Humphrey, 2014, hal. 93-98).

b. Social life
Economic and Social Life

MV Tampa asylum seekers, in this case, are *illegal migrants* with the potential to carry various threats. As in the economic sphere, this can create competition between migrants and Indigenous Australians. Especially for those who come illegally, it will cause economic threats and competition for Australians. Who are the people here? Based on his view that the priority is white people who will find it challenging to find work or business opportunities, the two Australian governments also need to pay attention to local (Aboriginal) people. According to Dr Yusa, these two community groups are a significant concern for the Australian government.

Meanwhile, in social life, the increasing number of asylum seekers who come has the opportunity to create a significant social threat. For example, the occurrence of social conflicts or the social impact of the arrival of these illegal asylum seekers. From these two aspects, according to Dr Yusa, was the consideration of why the Australian government at the time of John Howard's leadership made a new policy by trying to close the entrance to asylum seekers, especially those who came by boat (Djuyandi, 2022).

In addition, the Australian government will not forever accommodate asylum seekers in detention centres by increasing the number of asylum seekers placed in detention centres. This is because the Australian government has to pay quite a lot of money to meet their needs while being held there. Also, rental fees to partner countries (Papua New Guinea and Nauru) that host asylum seekers' detention centres in Australia.

Pacific Solution as Successful Act in Howard's Securitisation

Responding to the ongoing problems regarding asylum seekers, from several considerations as described previously, the Ministry of Immigration led by Philip Ruddock Australia introduced a securitisation policy through *Pacific Solution* to reduce the number of asylum seekers trying to enter Australian territory. Through this policy, several other strategies are also implemented to suppress and block the progress of illegal asylum seekers. These steps include eliminating migration zones in Australian territory, using military equipment for deterrence, and cooperating with third-world countries (Nauru and Papua New Guinea) in establishing detention centres.

Previously, when referring to the 1992 Australian Act, initially, the detention of those who entered Australian territory and also did not have a visa was not mandatory. However, a significant change occurred after 1999 when the Australian government further tightened the rules by increasing penalties. This is based on the MV Tampa incident, which made conditions for asylum seekers in Australia even more chaotic, so a policy for detention centres emerged in detention centres. This is one of the efforts of the Australian government to protect border security and the sovereignty of its country by eliminating the migration zone in Australian territory.

At that time, the main concern in maritime surveillance in Australia shifted to illegal asylum seekers using ships. In maintaining the maritime sovereignty area, the government uses their maritime military power to carry out patrols with high-speed ships. This effort is called the *Relex Operation*, which aims to repel smugglers carrying asylum seekers trying to enter Australia. Based on data from the *Pacific Media Center*, from September to December 2001, 13 ships carrying illegal asylum seekers were successfully driven away by the Australian navy (Pacific Media Centre, 2015).

The actions taken by Howard brought Howard, who dramatically managed to gain the attention of the Australian public. Since the incident of the MV Tampa phenomenon, Australia's domestic emphasis on national security has shifted to issues related to non-traditional threats such as terrorism, border protection and asylum seekers. The high public support for Howard after he made the issue of asylum seekers a campaign tool further convinced the community fully supports whatever the government took policies for the common good.

According to the author's analysis, a series of attempts by John Howard was politically successful because they helped him win the Australian federal election in 2001. This, viewed more broadly, could be disastrous because it has damaged Australia's international reputation on human rights and brought an element of poison into Australia's policy in dealing with asylum seekers, in this case, MV Tampa. Securitisation, of course, creates safe conditions. Many perspectives can be taken into consideration. For example, if you are a government, of course, this securitisation must be done as an effort to create a sense of security for the majority of Australian people. Of course, when this action is carried out primarily to protect the community and is accepted by the community, it can be said that this effort is successful (Djuyandi, 2022).

An *existential threat* will cause a *speech act*. Logically, based on the facts, when many illegal asylum seekers try to enter Australian territory and are accommodated in detention centres for an extended period, they can't stay in shelters forever. Of course, they will try to blend in. with the surrounding community. In addition, the Australian government will certainly not always accommodate them there because it will burden them financially. While the government is trying to make concessions for the detained asylum seekers to earn their living, they are simultaneously competing with the local Australian community. When this happens, it will undoubtedly trigger a ripple of problems because it raises questions from the public about the legality of the asylum seekers being left like that. When this hate speech appears, it will cause a domino effect, such as the emergence of violence, negative narratives and stigmas about Asian countries, especially the Middle East (Muslims), which are always considered to cause *chaos* and problems like likflawedad assumptions such as terrorists and others.

So from this Tampa MV phenomenon and its policies, the author can view that Australia, as a sovereign country, has the right to secure regional borders by making various regulations and policies to dispel asylum seekers whom they perceive as a threat. Whatever it is, it should also be remembered that they are one of the countries that have ratified the 1951 Convention, which should better guarantee the rights of refugees. Indirectly, Australia should have known and respected this obligation as a consequence of the signatory country. The need to balance between state sovereignty and fulfilment of obligations under the convention. Even though the state has full sovereignty over

its own country, at this time, the meaning of being free does not mean freeing the state to act as it pleases. It should be wiser to pay attention to which actions can and cannot be taken by considering and respecting one another and maintaining world peace.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the securitisation efforts against illegal asylum seekers in MV Tampa can be said to be successful. This is accompanied by several considerations and by the indicators of the success of securitisation, including; John Howard as prime minister of Australia at the time, who was the leading actor in conducting securitisation and succeeded in framing asylum seekers as existential threats that threatened Australia's national security; Howard managed to influence the Australian community to convince the speech act that he did and also he has an apparent reason for doing securitisation.

In addition, if you look back at the things that are the Australian government's concerns about the arrival of asylum seekers, the existence of a *pacific solution policy can* limit the arrival of asylum seekers. Because when asylum seekers are successfully restricted from entering Australian territory, indirect concerns about people smuggling, public order, and economic and social will be minimised. Another product is the passage of *The Migration Amendment (Excision from Migration Zone) Act* 2001, limiting asylum seekers' visa claims so that this hampers the mobility of asylum seekers to get to their destination. This series of policies successfully limited asylum seekers and marked a transformation in Australia's policy development from refugee protection to border protection of asylum seekers (McAdam & Purcell, 2008). The author finds it attractive that a series of policies issued by the Australian government in dealing with asylum seekers is still considered *state-centric*. Even the phenomenon of MV Tampa was used as a tool by Howard to gain public support in the 2001 election and succeeded in making Howard win the election that year. Quoted from *Newspoll, a survey agency published by The Australian, it is managed by an international market research and data analysis group. This* is under the prediction that the coalition party led by Howard will win the election by getting 53% of the vote (Newspoll, 2016).

CONCLUSION

Although initially, this securitization effort reaped pros and cons considering that Australia is a country that ratified the 1951 refugee convention, beyond that, the Australian government's securitization measures for asylum seekers can be said to be successful. John Howard, prime minister of Australia at the time who was the leading actor in conducting securitization, succeeded in framing asylum seekers as existential threats which indeed threatened security for Australia; Howard managed to influence the Australian community to convince the speech act that he did and, he had an apparent reason for doing securitization. In addition, the author finds an interesting fact that a series of policies issued by the Australian government in dealing with asylum seekers is still *state-centric*. As previously stated, Howard's phenomenon of MV Tampa was used as a jigsaw to gain public support in the 2001 elections.

The issue of asylum seekers and refugees is hotly discussed and a concern for the international community. The need for refugees to move from one place to another is an example of an individual problem which later develops into a problem for community groups, nationally and even internationally. With the title of the most sought-after destination country for asylum

seekers to enter Australian territory, refugees and asylum seekers are not always well received by the Australian government, as in the MV Tampa incident, which was refused arrival for specific reasons. Through John Howard, Australia, in this case, has exclusive rights in deciding who can enter their country and under what conditions they can be admitted. It aims to enhance Australia's border security and sovereignty.

John Howard used the issue of illegal asylum seekers as a strategy to increase his popularity as a leader, especially in the face of the 2001 federal election. The motive that Howard carried out was populism; in this case, John Howard, as a political elite used the programs, he designed as a forum for attracting public attention. This can be seen from the policies implemented in which John Howard, as a leader, had more *power* in controlling his country. In this case, the government's role effectively deals with illegal asylum seekers by rearranging the relevant laws. Howard utilized this excellent opportunity to increase his electability. This is evidenced by the results of the Australian federal election, in which Howard managed to come out as the winner with 53% of the vote at that time.

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