

Justifying the Unjustifiable: a critical discursive analysis of the political rhetoric of asylum

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Abstract

There is a significant body of literature analysing the discursive construction of ‘othering’ that occurs in racialised discourse, including the representation of asylum seekers in media portrayals. ‘Othering’ refers to the positioning of certain groups of people as being ‘different’ from the collective group in power to disempower them. However, the institutional political rhetoric regarding this issue remains open for further exploration. The current study subsequently presents an analysis of the discourse of the Liberal-National Coalition in Australia from the year 2017 regarding asylum seekers. The focus is on statements from the then Prime Minister of Australia and Minister for Immigration. A methodological approach of critical discourse analysis was employed to assess how political statements were oriented to support the justification and legitimisation of Australia’s offshore detention policies and practices. Analysis of the data corpus focused on the pervasive ‘othering’ of asylum seekers. This was accomplished in two main ways: constructing restrictive border policies as indispensable to successful multiculturalism and social cohesion and the denial of government accountability through moral disengagement. Moral disengagement from the plight of asylum seekers was achieved by several discursive strategies including, blame-shifting, the deployment of ‘facts’ to counter humanitarian appeals, and the dehumanisation of asylum seekers as people to be traded between nation states. This study creates space for the questioning of Australia’s institutional decision-making regarding government and national accountability, as well as questions of our social and moral responsibility towards asylum seekers.

Declaration

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree of diploma in any University, and, to the best of my knowledge, this thesis contains no material previously published except where due reference is made. I give permission for the digital version of this thesis to be made available on the web, via the University of Adelaide's digital thesis repository, the Library Search and through web search engines, unless permission has been granted by the School to restrict access for a period of time.

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Chapter 1

1.1 Overview

Building on research about racialised discourse and ‘othering’, this study examines the institutional talk of the current Australian Liberal-National Coalition government regarding asylum seekers. A critical discursive psychological analysis was employed to analyse political discourse from the year 2017, including written transcripts of statements from the then Prime Minister of Australia and Minister for Immigration. The focus was on identifying how political statements were oriented to support the justification and legitimisation of Australia’s offshore detention policies and practices, thereby facilitating analysis of the discursive justification of oppressive and exclusionary practices and to defend them from accusations of violations of human rights.

1.2 The Other

Rising populations paired with increased social and political conflict, poverty and climate change have seen the number of people seeking refuge and asylum grow exponentially. Current estimates reveal the highest levels of displacement on record: as of 19 June 2018, 44,400 people were being forced to flee from their homes each day, 25.4 million refugees, 10 million stateless people and 102,800 refugees resettled (UN Refugee Agency, 2018). One consequence of the historic and current rise of displacement, resettlement, globalisation and immigration has been the production of a vast body of research regarding such issues, particularly on race and the discursive depiction of ‘others’ within Western liberal democracies (including Belgium, Spain, Greece, Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the United States [US], Austria and The Netherlands) (see Augoustinos, Tuffin & Every, 2005; Billig et al., 1988; Lynn & Lea, 2003; Rapley, 2001; Rapley, 2011; Reeves & Garramone, 1983; Rojo & van Dijk, 1997; Sapountzis, Figgou, Bozatzis, Gardikiotis & Pantazis, 2012; Santa Ana,

1999; Saxton, 2003; Wetherell & Potter, 1992; van Dijk, 1987, 2005, 2006). This research has built an understanding of the pervasiveness of the ‘othering’ that features in modern racialised discourse—subtle discursive strategies that enable speakers to adopt anti-racist standpoints while enunciating exclusionary and oppressive views (Verkuyten, 1998) and discourse that presents exclusion and oppression as rational and justified (Rapley, 2001). ‘Othering’ itself enacts as a device to construct other people as being intrinsically different from oneself or, more commonly, to the collective group in power as a means to disempower certain persons. Research on the public rhetoric surrounding asylum seekers, which examines the depiction of asylum seekers in the Western media as ‘illegals’, ‘criminals’ and ‘terrorists’ who pose a threat to the nation-state, forms a major part of the wider literature on the discursive practice of ‘othering’ (Hier & Greenberg, 2010; Pickering, 2001).

1.3 Nationalism

The construct of nationalism, which endeavours to create a uniform identity for the nation-state and, therefore, includes methods of standardised inclusion and exclusion as well as the enforcement of particular forms of social order, is intricately entwined with racialised discourse (Anderson, 1983; Gellner, 2008). In the language of asylum, nationalist discourses are routinely engaged via the positioning of asylum seekers as ‘others’ and consequent justification of practices of subjugation and segregation (see Billig, 2002; Pehrson, Brown & Zagefka, 2009; Rothi, Lyons & Chryssochoou, 2005; Vertuyten, 2004). Saxton (2003), Pickering (2001), and Lynn and Lea (2003) found that negative depictions of asylum seekers, such as ‘foreign’ and ‘illegal’, were common in media representations, and Every and Augoustinos (2008) concluded that nationalist contexts were being used to legitimise human rights violations by governments against asylum seekers. The engagement of nationalism in discourse is seen to encourage an ‘us versus them’ contrast through which particular social groups are compared and evaluated. Demonstrating the effectiveness of this representation in

public persuasion, Padawangi (2016) found strong levels of national identification in individuals with negative attitudes and beliefs about asylum seekers. Public values, such as the belief in upholding Australian justice, are also manipulated in this way (Pederson, Watt and Griffiths, 2008), thus enabling restrictive policies in the interest of national protection.

1.4 The Language of Asylum

Public discourse, chiefly through the media, has been highly politicised and has tended to view asylum seekers within a framework of policy rather than human rights (see Krzyzanowski, Triandafyllidou & Wodak, 2009; Picking, 2001). Through these means, a process of dehumanisation has occurred (Esses, Medianu & Lawson, 2013; Esses, Veenvliet & Hodson, 2008; Haslam & Pedersen, 2007; Rowe & O'Brien, 2016). Aided by the emphasis of difference (Cameron, Rutland, Brown & Douch, 2006), an image or construction of the 'other' (Schqetzer, Perjoulidis, Krome, Ludlow & Ryan, 2005) has emerged that justifies political practices of exclusion. Thus, the credibility and legitimacy of asylum seekers is brought into question (Smith-Kahn, 2017) via discursive strategies that represent them unfavourably.

Contrasting views have been analysed discursively, including the portrayal of asylum seekers as either 'bogus' or 'genuine' (Lynn & Lea, 2003). Through such representations, oppositional narratives of asylum seekers are created. Those identified as 'deserving' and 'undeserving' of compassion are pitted against one another (Peterie, 2017). On one side, the humanitarian viewpoint upholds the rights of individuals to safety as human beings. Conversely, a focus on the illegality of individuals and national sovereignty, which typically sees asylum seekers represented as 'illegals' (Markus, 2014) and 'deviant' (KhosraviNik, 2010), positions them as undeserving of refugee status—as threats to national security. This results in a re-positioning of the term 'asylum seeker' from legitimate seeker of refuge to 'illegal immigrant', a term designed to discursively promote exclusion (Every, 2006; Goodman & Speer, 2007).

This discursive construction of shifting identities occurs in both the portrayal of asylum seekers and the speakers responsible for such portrayals. Contrasting depictions are used to argue against asylum seekers' rights and legitimacy in ways that maintain the morality of the speaker and position them as reasonable and fair. Reporting on a study conducted in the United Kingdom, Goodman (2017) found that asylum seekers were constructed in contradictory ways to achieve particular interactional goals. For instance, asylum seekers were depicted as coming from 'loving families' and, contrariwise, as 'animalistic and lacking in love'. While the first repertoire normalised asylum seekers and reduced the 'us versus them' dichotomy, the second repertoire dehumanised such families and undermined their legitimacy. Consequently, the speaker was able to denounce the 'other' (asylum seekers) while maintaining moral self-preservation. Such practices enable a process of 'othering' that is conducive to both the creation of an anti-racist identity while upholding exclusionary views.

1.5 Morality

The exploration of processes of moral self-preservation concerning racialised discourse is crucial, as openly racist sentiments have become increasingly socially undesirable. It has been argued that as a consequence subtle forms of racism have become more deeply entrenched (Augoustinos & Every, 2007). In debates and discussions surrounding asylum seekers, speakers often engage in a process of moral disengagement. Moral disengagement refers to the process whereby individuals or groups distance themselves from ethical standards which are then treated as not applicable in particular situational contexts. Bandura (1999) identified separate processes through which moral disengagement occurs, including distortion of consequences, diffusion or displacement of responsibility, favourable comparison, moral justification, and dehumanisation and attribution of blame. One may separate themselves and their morality from a particular context by choosing to ignore, dispute or disbelieve the dissipated results of their actions. They may ascribe responsibility for these actions onto larger

bodies of people (i.e., the government or an alternative group) or consider the immorality of their actions necessary in the face of a more significant threat or evil. They may also justify their actions in the belief that they serve particular moral or social purposes, or dehumanise the victim(s) of such actions, or blame them.

In the case of asylum seeker discourse, Greenhalgh, Watt and Shutte (2015) recognised this process as being prevalent in Australia. Ignoring the negative aspects of mandatory detention and placing blame on other parties were identified as dominant themes; the representation of imprisonment as a favourable option (in comparison to the treatment of countries of origin) and the harshness of policies as morally necessary (to stop people from risking their lives on dangerous boats) were also highlighted. According to Greenhalgh et al., the view that asylum seekers had brought such treatment upon themselves because they lacked social values was commonplace. Speakers managed to maintain moral self-preservation while reporting such views by disengaging themselves from conventional ideas of morality, thus appearing as moral, all the while appealing to the employment of exclusionary and oppressive practices.

1.6 The Gaps: Public Discourse and Silence

Foucault (2003) theorised about how social norms, institutionalised ways of being, identities and ways of life are both represented by, and constructed through, methods of talk and text (discourse). He considered discourse as responsible for creating our social world and societal institutions, and emphasised the need for critical evaluations of such discussions, which hold vast power in our world. To comprehend the subtle forms of racism that are now widespread and often violent, the analysis of racialised discourse is crucial. Questions about how people seeking asylum can be constructed as racialised threats to the nation, and in turn, mobilise political movements to oppose them must be asked. Historically, racism has justified

policies that divide groups of people into the powerful and the oppressed (Foucault, 2008), and this practice continues, albeit in more politically subtle ways.

Although discourse is used by individuals to shape institutions and create policies that generate and maintain social structures (Foucault, 2003), the voices of those directly affected are often absent from the discussion (Nightingale, Quayle & Muldoon, 2017). To be rendered voiceless in a world in which identity is created through the stories that humans tell is to be stripped of one's humanity; in such a context, to silence is to dehumanise (Solnit, 2009). Thus, the voices that are heard and unheard define and reflect who is in power, as is evident in the discourse of asylum. In the case of the public discourse of asylum seekers and policy, the opinions of politicians—those in charge, which includes those supporting and those opposing asylum seekers—are heard loud and clear. The media has created and extended a public discourse echoing statements from such leaders. Questions regarding the legitimacy of asylum seekers, their rights, the threat they may or may not pose to the nation-state, what to do with them and where to send them, are answered most commonly through policy changes and institutional decisions. In the midst of this, all thought of 'them'—the individuals fleeing their homes in search of refuge—are typically omitted. It is crucial, then, to analyse the extant discourse and to ask questions about whose views we are hearing and what they seek to accomplish through their spoken and written words.

Critical discourse analysis has emerged as a form of psychological study aimed at analysing how social inequalities and power relations are produced, represented and legitimised through talk and text. Exploration of these concepts allows questions to be asked of political ideologies and space to be created for minority discourses so that alternative representations and constructions of the world may exist. Despite the extensive analysis of racialised discourse and 'othering' discussed above, little attention has been paid to the rhetoric of politicians, the action-orientation of their discourse or the discursive resources and strategies

they use to position asylum seekers as unworthy. Naturalistic data and qualitative approaches are necessary to encompass the magnitude of this issue and to explore it in a contextualised manner that allows for in-depth analysis of power relations and shifting identities.

1.7 Asylum Seekers and Australian Policy

In response to the growth in the number of people seeking asylum in Australia, both major political parties, the Australian Labor Party and the Liberal-National Coalition, have instituted harsh policies. These policies have aimed at blocking asylum seekers' access to refuge in Australia and enforcing penalties for those who attempt to arrive 'illegally' (Refugee Council of Australia, 2018). Borders have become symbolic representations of the separation of people, products and money into that which the nation-state desires and that which it does not (Van Houtum & Van Naerssen, 2001). Border policing allows for variation between the acceptance of people based upon their desirability to the nation-state, defined by their status as legal or illegal immigrants. According to Settlement Services International (2017), from 2015 to 2016, the official immigration intake in Australia was 17,555 persons, which comprised 6,730 refugees, 5,032 humanitarian entrants, 2,003 people granted onshore protection papers, 1,277 women deemed to be at risk, and 3,790 people issued visas under the decision to deliver additional support to those displaced by the conflicts in Syria and Iraq. These numbers represent a tiny portion of the population most needing refuge globally (UN Refugee Agency, 2018).

In 2001, the Howard government introduced a policy called the 'Pacific Solution' that restarted the interception at sea and offshore processing of asylum seekers. Declaring that 'we will decide who comes to this country and the manner in which they come', Howard established processing camps on Papua New Guinea, Christmas Island and Nauru (Davidson, 2016). His government sought to dissuade asylum seekers from coming to Australia through legislating for mandatory detention in offshore centres for an indefinite period of time (Durham, Brolan,

Lui & Wittaker, 2016). Although, in 2008, the Labor government dismantled this policy, a resurgence in the number of asylum seekers and several highly publicised tragedies at sea saw the reintroduction of offshore processing on Nauru and Manus Island in 2012 and in Papua New Guinea in 2013.

Later, the Coalition introduced amendments that effectively denied people seeking asylum ‘illegally’ the right to ever gain refuge in Australia (Fox, 2010; Pugh, 2004), which they sought to legitimise via the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (Nethery & Gordyn, 2014) and militarise via ‘Operation Sovereign Borders’ (Laughland, 2013). However, reports detailing violence and physical and mental illness within Australia’s offshore processing centres emerged, such as ‘The Forgotten Children’, an inquiry by the Australian Human Rights Commission, which found that more than 300 children had committed or threatened self-harm within a 15-month period. These reports and the concomitant public outcry led to the introduction of the Australian Border Force Act (Federal Register of Legislation, No. 40, 2015). Subsequently, employees within offshore centres were banned from publicly reporting on conditions. With breaches attracting sentences of up to two years in federal prison, this effectively worked to silence employees critical of the conditions in offshore centres.

The Coalition government claimed that the policies they had introduced, including ‘Operation Sovereign Borders’, had effectively ‘stopped the boats’ (Davidson, 2016). However, questions remained as to the ethics of these decisions and what to do with the remaining asylum seekers, as well as concerns over their treatment under Australian policy (Fleay, Cokley, Dodd, Brisman & Schwartz, 2016). Australia is widely regarded as having one of the most restrictive immigration detention systems in the world. In 2017, there were numerous political and public challenges to this system, including pressure from the United Nations (UN) to close centres, relocate individuals and alter restrictive policies. The reality of

asylum seekers seeking protection in Australia and the history of legal policies regarding this has produced considerable fluctuation in public discourse, ranging from humanitarian concern for displaced persons to questions of their ‘right’ to seek safety in new lands.

1.8 The Present Study

Various conceptualisations of what defines an asylum seeker exist within Australia (Lueck, Due & Augoustinos, 2015). Much of this rhetoric has been action-oriented towards disconnecting asylum seekers—the ‘other’—from the collective body that is the Australian population (Andreas, 2003) by depicting asylum seekers as threats to Australia’s national borders sovereignty (Pickering, 2001). The challenges that were made to Australia’s asylum seeker policies in 2017 are ripe for discursive analysis. As a result of increasing public concern, the government was forced to justify various political decisions (including the Border Force Act, the Migration Act, Operation Sovereign Borders, third country processing regimes and mandatory detention) as well as its treatment of asylum seekers during this period. By analysing the government’s institutional discourse from 2017, this study focuses on the following:

1. how political talk about asylum seekers was structured and how it functioned to legitimise the government’s restrictive policies
2. how the government attended to its moral accountability in the treatment of asylum seekers and defended itself from accusations that their policies were inhumane
3. how speakers constructed their versions of reality as being factual, fair, and necessary

In light of the silencing of asylum seekers’ voices, analysing the discourse that has been allowed to dominate public discussion is crucial.

Chapter 2: Methodology

1.9 Analytic Approach

A discursive approach, theoretically grounded in a social constructionist epistemology and informed by critical discourse analysis, was employed for this study. In this approach, language is not treated as passive or transparent—it is not merely a reflection of what it describes; instead, it is understood as a tool of construction (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002). Discourse analysis is critical of traditional methods of psychological science; dissatisfied with prior cognitive and perceptual models, discourse analysis challenges the dominant paradigms of social and cognitive psychology. For example, rather than perceive cognitive psychological constructs as inelastic phenomena that occur automatically within a person's mind, they are regarded as social accomplishments, albeit carried out subtly through language (Edwards & Potter, 1992). Discourse is perceived as being constitutive, functional, assembled with discursive resources and practices, and holding power to create shifting identities for speakers (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). A discursive approach is underscored by the view that language actively constructs versions of our world.

Researchers in this field emphasise the variability of people's discourse based on the functional purpose of their talk. Consequently, the action-orientation of discourse is central to this approach and researchers investigate how talk and text are expressed in specific ways and instances to achieve interactional goals. These goals can include social actions, such as justifications, blaming or persuasion, as well as the construction of social identities, the factuality of accounts and events, and also the rhetorical organisation of discourse to destabilise alternative accounts (Edwards, 1997; Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Through all of this, speakers' identities are constructed and reconstructed based on verbal or textual expression—for example, via the active choice to mobilise specific identities in particular settings through

discourse (Potter & Hepburn, 2003; Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Discourse analysis is an empirical approach that incorporates clear procedures for data collection, transcription and analysis, and that allows for a methodologically recognisable and consistent form of research (Wetherell, 1999).

There is a range of discourse analytic methodologies and several distinct traditions (see Fowler, 1991; Wetherell, 1998; Wodak, 1996). The approach employed for this study was primarily informed by critical discourse analysis (van Dijk, 2001; Wetherell, 1999). Critical discourse analysis embodies the representation of political and social problems in talk/text/media to assess how complex power relations and social inequalities are (re)produced and legitimised (Wetherell, 1999) through discourse while considering the interactional context of each speaker (i.e., political, social and historical). Drawing heavily on Foucault's theories of discourse, critical discourse analysis is particularly appropriate for this study given its focus on institutional talk—namely, the political discourse of government policy on the treatment of asylum seekers in Australia.

1.10 Data Collection

A central issue of contention within discursive psychology has been differentiating between contrived (or artificial) and naturally occurring talk (see Goodman, 2017). Naturally occurring talk is generally considered to be talk that arises in non-laboratory settings; therefore, it is not influenced by the researcher. In this context, methodological questions have been raised about whether prepared public statements delivered by institutional spokespeople are naturally occurring or contrived. According to Goodman (2017), institutional data fits into both categories as it involves real people communicating in real social situations who are generating action-oriented discourse; therefore, it is considered appropriate to study. With this in mind, documents were selected from the official public websites of the former Minister for Immigration, Peter Dutton, and former Prime Minister of Australia, Malcolm Turnbull.

The documents selected for analysis were generated between January and December 2017. Numerous public statements were released during this time about asylum seekers, processing centres, relocation and legal challenges. Each page on the ministry sites was searched to pinpoint transcripts. Each transcript was opened individually and scanned for the keywords ‘asylum’, ‘boat’, ‘borders’, ‘Manus’ and ‘Nauru’. These words were selected as they appeared most commonly in the political and public discussion of these issues; therefore, they ensured the inclusion of all relevant transcripts. By limiting media releases to these official government sites, the authenticity and relevancy of the materials were guaranteed. A total of 60 findings from the two sites formed the corpus of data. This is regarded as an appropriate amount of data for the scope of the project and is consistent with other research of this nature (see Speer & Potter, 2000; Wetherell & Potter, 1992). Due to difficulty in obtaining quality recordings of the original conversations, and text being an appropriate form to explore itself when utilising critical discourse analysis (Antaki, 2008), a Jeffersonian Lite analysis (Potter & Hepburn, 2005) was unnecessary. For this study and its analytic focus, a standard textual analysis was sufficient for examination.

In addition to this data, a leaked transcript of a private telephone conversation between then Prime Minister Turnbull and President Donald Trump of The United States of America (from this point onwards referred to as the USA), which was made widely available by the *Washington Post*, was included. As this conversation was discussed repeatedly throughout the corpus of data, its inclusion in the analysis was deemed necessary. Unfortunately, only the published transcript of this conversation was available; therefore, all data analysed in this study were textual transcripts of spoken conversations and statements.

1.11 Data Analysis

The 60 transcripts selected for this study were narrowed down to 93 pages of extracts. These extracts, which encompassed the most relevant points of discussion from the original conversations/statements, comprised the 7 extracts analysed below [Refer to Appendix 1]. Following the procedure outlined by Potter and Wetherell (1998), multiple readings of the data were conducted with no research questions in mind. Attention was focused on the action-orientation of the data through analysis of the discursive devices employed, interpretative repertoires, the rhetorical organisation of the discourse, ideological problems and dilemmas, and the identities speakers invoked in their talk (Goodman, 2017). The subsequent coding of patterns formulated a more in-depth analysis. In keeping with the methodological format laid out by Hutchby and Wooffitt (2008), the transcripts were unaltered (i.e., unedited). The transcripts were then presented in a simplified line-by-line format as is appropriate for the purposes of performing critical discourse analysis (Seymour-Smith, 2015).

Chapter 3: Analysis and Discussion

The corpus of data demonstrated a high level of nationalist rhetoric in conjunction with the framing of asylum seekers within a context of criminality. Both the then Prime Minister of Australia Malcolm Turnbull and Minister for Immigration Peter Dutton directly and repeatedly extended the idea of an ‘us versus them’ narrative (see Schqueitzer et al., 2005) that solidified the ‘othering’ of asylum seekers. Although nationalism and unlawfulness of asylum seekers were familiar tropes and repertoires in the data, because these have been examined in previous literature (see Augoustinos, Due & Lueck, 2015; and Pederson et al., 2008) these did not form the main focus of analytic interest in the current study. Simultaneous to these the following recurring patterns were identified in the corpus – discursive patterns which have hitherto received limited analytic attention: the indispensability of restrictive border policies to successful multiculturalism and social cohesion and the denial of government accountability through moral disengagement. These discursive patterns are detailed below.

1.12 Militarised Multiculturalism

In Extract 1, Turnbull is questioned on policies and treatment of asylum seekers in Australia by Miranda Devine as a result of being judged negatively by the United Nations regarding such issues.

Extract 1: Malcolm T. 2017. ‘Interview with Miranda Devine, The Daily Telegraph, *Malcolm Turnbull*, 21 April 2017.

- 1 Turnbull: I just say this to you, when I went to the UN last year in Leaders’ Week. I gave
- 2 a speech describing how we were the most successful multicultural society but the
- 3 foundation of that was that the Australian people understood that we controlled our
- 4 borders, that we decided who came to Australia, as in John Howard’s words, and the

5 circumstance in which they come, how long they stay, we decide which refugees come,
6 we decide which skilled migrants come. The Australian people have to have confidence
7 that their government is running the migration system in their national interest and in
8 nobody else's interest. Now what's happened in Europe is that they lost control of their
9 borders and that shattered confidence. One European leader after another has said to me,
10 that this you know irregular migration surge of refugees crossing borders and so forth is
11 an existential threat. And so if you want to preserve harmony, if you want to preserve
12 your multicultural society, if you want to preserve the political stability of your nation,
13 you've got to be able to demonstrate that it is the government which the Australian people
14 elect and it alone which determines who comes to Australia. So strong borders are the
15 foundation, the absolute foundation of our success as a multicultural society and so
16 people on the left who you know criticize that, who want to have porous borders, who
17 want to do what Labor did. I mean don't, you must not forget; we cannot forget that
18 Labor upended John Howard's border protection policies-

19 Devine: Do you think that they'd do it again?

20 Turnbull: I have no doubt they would because their heart is not in it.

Turnbull establishes an account that positions the government's policy decisions as being the very underpinning (15) of social cohesion within Australia: an account that is repeatedly drawn upon by Turnbull to justify Australia's exclusionary practices. His claim that we are "the most successful multicultural society" (2) is attributed to the Australian people's confidence that "we controlled our borders" (3-4), repeating previous PM Howard's infamous declaration that "we decided who came to Australia . . . and the circumstances in which they come" (4-5). Although being foremost an open declaration of unswerving praise for the entirety of the strict legislative processes involved in Australia's border control and immigration policies, this statement also evidentially exemplifies the justification of such methods of inclusion and exclusion to the nation-state (see Pickering, 2001). Reiterated through his reply

are similar statements comparatively drawing a relation between porous borders (9-10) and associated threats (11). The choice of ‘porous’ (16) to describe such borders portrays an element of weakness and defencelessness, aiding not only to the effectiveness of the contrast of strength created (14) but also setting the foundation for the absolute necessity that are his actions as ‘the foundation of our success’ (15). ‘Strong borders’ (14) are contrastively linked to ‘harmony’ (11) and highlighted, non-surprisingly by this point, as ideal.

Lack of control of the nation’s borders (8-9) by the government is presented as being in alignment with ‘shattered confidence’ (9) over the required ability to combat an unclarified ‘existential threat’ (11) that is presumably a menace posed by migration to the nation-state in question. Through this, those immigrating and crossing borders inevitably disintegrate into the ramification of the weakness of a nation’s leadership and are positioned, therefore, to the ensuing threatened collapse of Australia and its prized multiculturalism. Militarised barring of ‘refugees crossing borders and so forth’ (10) is presented as favourable to ensure the maintenance of Australia’s successful and harmonious way of life. This account constructs absolute control (3) by the government as essential in permitting a culturally diverse and inclusive way of life to continue to exist within the definitive boundaries of the nation’s perimeter. To add to this argument, Turnbull draws a relation between what ‘one European leader after another has said to me’ (9) and ‘what Labor did... that Labor upended John Howard’s border protection policies’ (18-18). These statements present acknowledgement of the dire consequences resulting from policies alternate to his (although specific consequences receive no elaboration) and support his want of control to allow for freedom and multiculturalism to persevere.

In answer to Devine’s question if he feels Labor would upend such policies again (19), Turnbull states ‘I have no doubt they would because their heart is not in it’. Such a declaration

not only unfavourably represents the opposing party, and thus other decisions and views, but also consciously, albeit subtly, declares the ‘heart’ (20) involved in his. The use of ‘heart’ here depicts strict border policies as courageous, involving both strength and compassion as it erases the risk of a threat. It also successfully poses a discrete challenge to alternative representations of his policies as being inhumane and unjust without openly debating such views, presumably to not draw further attention to them. However, it is arguable that the use of ‘heart’ depicts the absolute certainty to which he inevitably and passionately believes control equates to Australia’s sense of inner freedom and way of life.

In a speech entitled ‘In Defence of a Free Society’, delivered to journalists and ministers at the Disraeli Prize Speech presentation in London, Turnbull again argues that border control is central to social cohesion and multiculturalism. Indeed, he offers the Australian experience as a ‘cautionary tale’ to other nation states as to what may be at stake if such restrictive immigration policies are not adopted.

Extract 2: Malcolm, T. 2017. Disraeli Prize Speech: In Defence of a Free Society, Transcripts from the Prime Ministers of Australia, 10 June 2017

1 Turnbull: As Europe grapples today with unsustainable inflows of migrants and asylum
 2 seekers, the Australian experience offers both a cautionary tale and the seeds of a potential
 3 solution. The lesson is very clear: weak borders fragment social cohesion, drain public
 4 revenue, raise community concerns about national security, and ultimately undermine the
 5 consensus required to sustain high levels of immigration and indeed multiculturalism itself.
 6 Ultimately, division. In contrast, strong borders and retention of our sovereignty allow
 7 government to maintain public trust in community safety, respect for diversity and support for
 8 our immigration and humanitarian programs. Unity. Security. Opportunity. Freedom.
 9 [3 lines omitted]
 10 This could not have happened if had not restored order at the border, maintaining strict

11 security vetting and earn the Australian people's trust that it is the Government that controls
12 who enters Australia and for which purposes, not the criminal people smugglers. I say to the
13 critics of our border protection policies: Are these not precisely the outcomes that every just
14 and decent society should seek? I believe they are, and I hope you do too. And it's this
15 foundation that will allow us to effectively deal with the most pressing security challenge of
16 our time – Islamist extremism terrorism. While small in number, its adherents are resolute in
17 murderous purpose. They have already eroded a measure of public trust in our pluralism and
18 cast doubt on the ability of our governments to protect their own people.

The inflow of migrants and asylum seekers to Europe is defined as being 'unsustainable' (1), and Australia is presented as a both a 'cautionary tale' and providing a solution. In Turnbull's eyes, 'the lesson is very clear' (3), and this is that 'weak borders' (3) lead ultimately to 'division' (6) while 'strong borders' (6) are conducive to 'Unity. Security. Opportunity. Freedom' (8). Methods of 'sovereignty' (6), including 'restored order' (10), 'strict security vetting' (10-11) and governmental 'control' (11), are represented in unification with 'freedom' (8) despite the contradictory nature of this appeal. In this way, 'control' (11) equates to both 'freedom' (8) and 'multiculturalism' (5), and, as in the title of his speech, 'defence' is associated with a 'free society.'

It is significant that the representation of military border control appears in numerous statements as being advantageous to both freedom and the flourishing of multiculturalism within Australia and it was a common theme throughout the data corpus [Refer to Appendix 2]. This enables strict and exclusionary policies to be constructed as non-racist while also cloaking arguably authoritarian policies under a mask of decency. By positioning weak borders with a multitude of threats – i.e. that they 'fragment social cohesion, drain public revenue', 'raise... concerns about national security' (3-4) – a consensus of the need for social order (see Gellner, 2008) and control becomes evident, through which the government is seen to act as

protector of the Australian people and their values against outside forces. Nationalism is entwined in its employment as a discursive strategy to legitimise the need for strict policies in protecting against the ‘other’ (asylum seekers) and thus justifying militarised responses (see Saxton, 2003).

Extract 2 also draws a direct relationship between the need for strict border policies in order to allow the government to ‘effectively deal with the most pressing security challenge of our time – Islamist extremism terrorism’ (15-16). Social diversity or multiculturalism is somewhat erased through this statement as terrorism is connected discursively to immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers, thereby meaning such people outside of the (white) nation-state (Pehrson et al., 2009). Again, a process of ‘othering’ occurs in which asylum seekers’ humanitarian needs become expunged in lieu of the threat they may pose. Although Turnbull concedes that this is ‘small in number’ (16) he then declares that ‘its adherents are resolute in murderous purpose’ (16-17), reminding the public of this chilling threat. He continues to explain that such actions have ‘already eroded a measure of public trust in our pluralism’ (17), pluralism here referencing the heterogeneity of Australia, that being Australia’s multiculturalism.

Turnbull builds a narrative that links terrorism with asylum seekers and immigration, and consequently fears of a growing multiethnic nation as not being beneficial to safety. Turnbull accordingly grounds those crossing borders (including asylum seekers) firmly as posing a threat to Australia’s currently harmonious and multicultural way of life, and to various Australian values more generally. This repeatedly occurs in the corpus [Refer to Appendix 3], despite the contradiction that is barring others from entering and thereby promoting strict exclusion and inclusion methods in the name of a supposedly inclusive and culturally diverse nation. Primarily he is suggesting, though, that it is the asylum seekers and immigrants who

are to blame for this looming threat to multiculturalism, not the conservative government. Undeniably positioning those who cross borders as a threat to multiculturalism is a strategy that enables Turnbull to adopt an anti-racist standpoint while promoting the exclusion of others, justifying the government's political objectives (see Pederson et al., 2008). Further, it encourages strict policies (10) and militarised responses to combat this issue, all deployed in the name of 'freedom' (8). This strategy not only seeks to justify actions as being a moral necessity but also to erase the inhumane consequences of such actions.

1.13 Moral Disengagement

Speaking for the Liberal-National Coalition government, both Dutton and Turnbull, seek to justify their restrictive asylum seeker policies while simultaneously removing their accountability and responsibility for their policies. That is, in the face of pressure to close offshore processing centres via Supreme Court rulings and the UN (Doherty, 2017), they have defended their actions and decisions principally by denying social and moral responsibility for these policies. This has been achieved through a process of moral disengagement in which they discursively disassociate themselves from any questions of moral accountability. A combination of strategies was identified in the corpus, illustrating how this process of disengagement was achieved; including shifting the blame, destabilising alternate accounts via emotion, and dehumanisation.

1.13.1 Blame Shifting.

In Extract 3 Peter Dutton engages with strategies of blame to displace personal accountability for the condition of asylum seekers placed on Nauru and Manus Island.

Extract 3: Dutton, P. 2017. Interview with Peter Beattie and Peter McGuaran, *Transcripts: The Hon Peter Dutton MP*, 24 April 2017

1 Dutton: Well the first point's the most important one Peter and that is that this Government
 2 didn't put people on Manus or Nauru. I mean we have inherited a mess and you're right it's
 3 our job to clean it up and were doing that.

Dutton explicitly blames the Australian Labor Party for the entire situation regarding asylum seekers, thereby limiting his moral responsibility and accountability. He portrays himself as not being held responsible for issues pertaining to asylum seekers and positions himself as fixing a 'mess' (2) created and abandoned by those who came before him. He states that 'this Government didn't put people on Manus or Nauru' (1-2), removing the Liberal-National Coalition's answerability to the matter, and extends upon this by exclaiming that they have simply 'inherited a mess' (2). This statement does not seek to deny the chaos on the islands unfolding; rather, the purpose is to shift responsibility away from the current government to the previous one. Through the addition of the simple statement that 'it's our job to clean it up and we're doing that' (2-3), Dutton successfully shifts the blame onto the former government and paints the current government in a favourable light comparatively.

In Extract 4, Dutton extends upon this discourse of blame while conducting a doorstep interview at Parliament House.

Extract 4: Dutton, P. 2017. Doorstop Interview, Parliament House, *Transcripts: The Hon Peter*

Dutton MP, 10 August 2017

1 Dutton: Obviously as I've stated to you on many occasions, I don't want people on Manus
 2 Island. I've set a close date of the 31st of October. I didn't put people on Manus Island. My
 3 responsibility is to clean up the mess that was left to us by Labor because they had put people
 4 on Manus Island. The important thing is that we aren't adding to the numbers on Manus
 5 Island. We have brokered an arrangement, as you are well aware with the United States, to
 6 take people from Manus and Nauru and we are doing that at the same time that we have

7 stopped boats. That means that we are not adding to the numbers with new boat arrivals –
8 bearing in mind at the peak of Labor's loss of control of our borders they were pulling a
9 thousand people a week off boats and 1,200 people drowned at sea – we have not had one
10 drowning under Operation Sovereign Borders and you know the hypocrisy expressed by
11 Adam Bandt yesterday...he didn't ask one question of Labor in the House when 1,200 people,
12 including men, women and children drowned at sea.

Again Extract 4 demonstrates the near word-for-word repetition of statements disassociating himself and his government from the repercussions of anything relating to asylum seekers, their treatment and their wellbeing: 'Obviously as I've stated to you on many occasions, I don't want people on Manus Island' (1-2), claiming that he 'didn't put people on Manus Island' (2). Again, to solidify this removal of his answerability to the matter, he positions Labor within a framework of blame by stating that it is simply his 'responsibility to clean up the mess that was left to us by Labor because they had put people on Manus Island' (3-4). Indeed, although Dutton acknowledges the problematic nature of the situation, referring to it as a 'mess': such acknowledgement was articulated only within the context of displacing responsibility away from himself and the government. Through this method of blame-shifting Dutton effectively morally disengages (see Bandura, 1999), from what has been described by the United Nations as 'an abusive offshore detention system that cannot be salvaged' (Doherty, 2017). As someone who is 'cleaning up the mess' created by a previous government, Dutton thus positions himself in a favourable light: he is not answerable for the situation - the previous Labor government is (8).

1.13.2 Emotion versus Fact.

This discursive practice of moral disengagement by the government on the fate and wellbeing of asylum seekers on offshore facilities was also evident in other ways. In particular,

Dutton and Turnbull routinely invoked ‘facts’ about the situation to counter appeals from critics that the government’s treatment of asylum seekers on Manus and Nauru was inhumane and morally questionable. In Extract 5, Peter Dutton is interviewed by a combination of hosts (Waleed Aly, Carrie Bickmore and Steve Price) on the Channel 10 television program *The Project*.

Extract 5: Dutton, P. 2017. Interview with The Project, Channel 10, *Transcripts: The Hon Peter Dutton MP, 27 November 2017*

1 Aly: None of that is relevant to this current controversy. This isn't about those people coming
2 to Australia. This is about the fact that you had a Supreme Court ruling in PNG that said this
3 whole thing was illegal, gave you a closure date. You therefore had to have facilities ready by
4 that closure date and you don't. Now there are these people who are starving.

5 Dutton: Waleed, I've just read out the facts to you mate. I understand the emotion that's
6 involved...

7 Aly: ...I'm not being emotional about it...

8 Dutton: ...I've given you the facts...

9 Bickmore: ...but what about Tim Costello who has actually been there; because you haven't
10 been there. He's been there and he's saying that you're not telling the Australian public the
11 truth. So is he lying or are you lying?

12 [15 lines omitted]

13 Price: ...you can understand the public, because the public hear two completely different
14 stories; one from you and one from the refugee activists.

15 Aly: Well it's not just...this is an important point; it's not just activists, Tim Costello is not an
16 activist, he leads a humanitarian organisation, he ran a humanitarian mission, he's not active
17 on Twitter, re-tweeting refugees that are...that's not his bag. He just goes over there and says
18 this is what I saw, and it's backed up by the UN and what he saw, and what he says he saw is
19 that there's just insufficient capacity.

20 Dutton: Waleed, the UN wants people on Manus to come to Australia, right? That's their
21 stated position. Now, there are lots of...

22 Aly: ...so the UN is making up facts in order to...

23 Dutton: ...there are lots of good people that have a lot of emotion in this space. There's a
24 letter out today from academics, from doctors, lots of people who want people to come from
25 Manus to Australia. I have to make a decision – I didn't put people on Manus – I want to get
26 them off, but I want to do it in a way that doesn't restart boats and the intelligence that's
27 available to me from Indonesia, from Sri Lanka, from Vietnam, all of those areas where we
28 have a footprint, we look at what people are saying; they are saying right now that if these
29 people come from Manus to Australia, then the boats will restart.

This extract highlights the use of certain strategic devices repeatedly deployed by Dutton to undermine criticisms of the government's failure to respond to the Papua New Guinea Supreme Court Ruling that the indefinite detention of asylum seekers on Manus was illegal. Dutton dismisses Aly's question by invoking what he claims to be 'facts' and not 'emotion'. He states 'I've just read out the facts to you mate. I understand the emotion that's involved.' (4-5) A contrast is constructed here between facts and emotion, suggesting that Aly's concerns about the asylum seekers are motivated by emotion and not reason. In this way, Dutton again morally disengages himself from the issue at hand and contrast is set up between critics whose views are formulated through emotion and those of the government whose decisions are based on reason and rationality. Edwards (1997) has argued that this reason versus emotion contrast is a powerful rhetorical resource to undermine criticism and to attack one's opponents as thinking with their 'heart and not their head'. Indeed, Aly's rejection of this accusation, 'I'm not being emotional about it' (7) demonstrates the slight that he takes to this suggestion. To which Dutton replies again 'I've given you the facts' (8). Dutton is insinuating, again, that Aly's position is emotional rather than factual. Continued throughout the entirety of the interaction is this dismissal of other's views by Dutton's suggestion of their emotional

involvement in the matter. This discursive pattern is prevalent repeatedly throughout the data corpus [Refer to Appendix 4].

Bickmore challenged Dutton directly by accusing him of lying (9-11) and yet Dutton still refused to accept alternative views. Price interjected the conversation by saying that ‘the public hear two completely different stories; one from you and one from the refugee activists’ (13-14) and through doing so draws attention to competing accounts of the situation. From here, Aly grounds alternative views in reality via recounting numerous persons of credibility who have expressed opinions opposing Dutton’s - ‘Tim Costello’ who ‘leads a humanitarian organisation’ (15-16) as well as the ‘UN’ (18). Through deploying the opinions of persons and organisations of importance and public credibility (Hepburn, 2003) Aly seeks to ground his views with objectivity. However, Dutton extended upon Aly’s strategy by exclaiming that there are ‘lots of good people who have emotion in this space’ (23) including ‘academics’ and ‘doctors’ (24), revoking the notion that such professionals are above contorting objective decision-making processes through their emotions.

In seeking to establish the factual and objective nature of his account, Dutton makes references to ambiguous sources of information about the situation on Manus. These sources are both systematically vague (‘we look at what people are saying’ 28-29), or protects them from further scrutiny due to potential security concerns (‘the intelligence that’s available to me’ (26-27). Thus ‘the facts’ (8) that he responds with are conveyed as not being a matter of his own stake and interest (Edwards & Potter, 1992) but instead a simple reflection of the reality that is out there. The government and its representatives managed potential accusations of being uncaring and inhumane in their treatment of asylum seekers by arguing that such concerns were ‘emotional’ (and thus irrational) and not based on objectivity (that is, reason).

Extract 6 further exemplifies this discursive strategy of facts versus emotions continuing in the data corpus. In this instance, journalists question Dutton during a press conference in Brisbane on the topic of asylum seekers and pressure to close centres.

Extract 6: Dutton, P. 2017. Press Conference, Brisbane, *Transcripts: The Hon Peter Dutton MP*, 24 November 2017

1 Journalist: Mr Dutton have you heard of any reports of injuries from the authorities or the
2 people they were removing this morning?

3 Dutton: My understanding of the injuries, and this may have been an injury from yesterday,
4 but talking about three people as I understand. All three are if a minor nature, one is
5 dehydration which, actually again I think was an issue from yesterday. There was an issue
6 with a person who was running from the centre, tripped, and I think has minor grazings I am
7 advised, and I'm advised there is one other person has an ankle issue which I think relates to
8 an insect bite or something. That's the information I have, that I've been advised of. There are
9 lots of claims here, all I would say to you is, look at the facts as opposed to the emotion. All
10 of the claims that have been made over months and months by advocates here have all been
11 designed not to convey fact to the Australian people or to the media, they have been designed
12 to try and run a propaganda war to try and twist the Government's arm to bring people here.

In this extract, a journalist questions Dutton directly regarding instances of injuries, as reported by authorities, of asylum seekers in the offshore processing centres during a process of moving individuals (1). While Dutton addresses the injuries in question, he also dismisses them as being of a 'minor nature' (3-4), and seeks to defend his statements as being impartial and compares this to suggestions that differ to showcase why others are inaccurate. His claim that this is the information he has been 'advised of' (8) employs a vague reference to an objective counsel of information, though lacking any explanatory detail. He continues by saying that while 'there are lots of claims here' (8-9) he implores the public to 'look at the facts

as opposed to the emotion' (9). This discursive practice of dismissing credibility and factuality through the suggestion of emotional involvement occurs once more. Here, Dutton takes this a step further by explicitly stating that those conveying differing opinions have created statements that 'have been designed to try and run a propaganda war' (11-12). Dutton presents himself discursively as objectively stating the facts and acting on well-based neutral decisions.

Various persons are positioned as engaging in a media 'war' (12) against him with the ulterior motive of twisting the Government's arm to bring people to Australia (12). In this way, those voicing concern about the wellbeing and rights of asylum seekers are seen as prioritising their own emotions over reason and as such cannot be considered with the same weight as statements by the Liberal-National Coalition. In turn, Dutton disengages from questions of morality by insinuating his political decisions and statements are fundamentally based 'on the facts' (9).

1.13.3 Dehumanisation.

As a result of pressure from the PNG Supreme Court ruling to close the centres, as mentioned above, as well as existing pressure from the UN, discussions during the year 2017 began to quickly revolve around what to do with such individuals regarding relocation and what was in the asylum seekers' and Australia's best interest. Though the government ubiquitously denied their responsibility in the matter, shifting blame and rejecting the government's moral accountability, they did need to decide on the manner in which the situation would progress forward. In September 2016 the Australian government had been involved in a strategic political arrangement under Obama's Presidency to transfer the asylum seekers on Manus and Nauru to the US in exchange for the resettlement of refugees from Central America being held in Costa Rica. Then, in April of 2017, a transcript of a leaked telephone conversation between the Prime Minister of Australia Malcolm Turnbull and the new

President of the USA Donald Trump became publicly available. Extract 7 demonstrates segments of this conversation through which both Turnbull and Trump discursively mitigate the brokering of a deal between the two countries while expansively dehumanising asylum seekers in the process.

Extract 7: Fischer Baum, R., Miller, G., Vitkovskaya, J. 2017. ‘This deal will make me look terrible’: Full Transcripts of Trump’s calls with Mexico and Australia, *The Washington Post*, 3 April 2017

1 Turnbull: Well, yes. Mr. President, can I return to the issue of the resettlement agreement that
2 we had with the Obama administration with respect to some people on Nauru and Manus
3 Island. I have written to you about this and Mike Pence and General Flynn spoke with Julie
4 Bishop and my National Security Advisor yesterday. This is a very big issue for us,
5 particularly domestically, and I do understand you are inclined to a different point of view
6 than the Vice President.

7 Trump: Well, actually I just called for a total ban on Syria and from many different countries
8 from where there is terror, and extreme vetting for everyone else – and somebody told me
9 yesterday that close to 2,000 people are coming who are really probably troublesome. And I
10 am saying, boy that will make us look awfully bad. Here I am calling for a ban where I am
11 not letting anybody in and we take 2,000 people. Really it looks like 2,000 people that
12 Australia does not want and I do not blame you by the way, but the United States has become
13 like a dumping ground. You know Malcolm, anybody that has a problem – you remember the
14 Mariel boat lift, where Castro let everyone out of prison and Jimmy Carter accepted them
15 with open arms. These were brutal people. Nobody said Castro was stupid, but now what are
16 we talking about is 2,000 people that are actually imprisoned and that would actually come
17 into the United States. I heard about this – I have to say I love Australia; I love the people of
18 Australia. I have so many friends from Australia, but I said – geez that is a big ask, especially
19 in light of the fact that we are so heavily in favour, not in favour, but we have no choice but to

20 stop things. We have to stop. We have allowed so many people in our country that should not
21 be here. We have our San Bernardino's, we have had the World Trade Center come down
22 because of people that should not have been in our country, and now we are supposed to take
23 2,000. It sends such a bad signal. You have no idea. It is such a bad thing.

24 [12 lines omitted]

25 Turnbull: Can you hear me out Mr. President?

26 Trump: Yeah, go ahead.

27 Turnbull: Yes, the agreement, which the Vice President just called the Foreign Minister about
28 less than 24 hours ago and said your Administration would be continuing, does not require
29 you to take 2,000 people. It does not require you to take any. It requires, in return, for us to do
30 a number of things for the United States – this is a big deal, I think we should respect deals.

31 Trump: Who made the deal? Obama?

32 Turnbull: Yes, but let me describe what it is. I think it is quite consistent. I think you can
33 comply with it. It is absolutely consistent with your Executive Order so please just hear me
34 out. The obligation is for the United States to look and examine and take up to and only if
35 they so choose – 1,250 to 2,000. Every individual is subject to your vetting. You can decide to
36 take them or to not take them after vetting. You can decide to take 1,000 or 100. It is entirely
37 up to you. The obligation is to only go through the process. So that is the first thing.

38 I stood up at the UN in September and set up what our immigration policy was. I said that you
39 cannot maintain popular support for immigration policy, multiculturalism, unless you can
40 control your borders. The bottom line is that we got here. I am asking you as a very good
41 friend. This is a big deal. It is really, really important to us that we maintain it. It does not
42 oblige you to take one person that you do not want. As I have said, your homeland officials
43 have visited and they have already interviewed these people. You can decide. It is at your
44 discretion. As you have the wording in the Executive Order that enables the secretary of
45 Homeland Security and the Secretary of State to admit people on a case by case basis in order
46 to conform with an existing agreement. I do believe that you will never find a better friend to
47 the United States than Australia. I say this to you sincerely that it is in the mutual interest of

48 the United States to say, “yes, we can conform with that deal – we are not obliged to take
49 anybody we do not want, we will go through extreme vetting” and that way you are seen to
50 show the respect that a trusted ally wants and deserves. We will then hold up our end of the
51 bargain by taking in our country [inaudible] that you need to move on from.
52 Trump: Malcolm [sic], why is this so important? I do not understand. This is going to kill me.
53 I am the world’s greatest person that does not want to let people into the country. And now I
54 am agreeing to take 2,000 people and I agree I can vet them, but that puts me in a bad
55 position. It makes me look so bad and I have only been here a week.

Instead of discussing asylum seekers in relation to humanitarian needs and obligations, the two leaders reference them namely in relation to an ‘agreement’ and ‘deal’ that had been brokered between the two nations. Despite Trump’s protracted protest about the agreement that had been made with Obama and the political problems it will pose for him (ll. 7-24), Turnbull perseveres with persuading Trump to honour the previously made arrangement. Turnbull repeatedly extends the idea of a deal having been made between the two nations and the importance of honouring a deal in both business and politics. Turnbull references this as an ‘obligation’ for the USA (34 and 37). He emphasises the importance of the deal repeatedly: ‘this is a big deal, I think we should respect deals’ (30); ‘this is a big deal. It is really, really important to us that we maintain it’ (41). He implores Trump to ‘conform with that deal’ in the agreement that Australia ‘will then hold up our end of the bargain’ (50-51), that he will ‘never find a better friend to the United States than Australia’ (47) and that he is asking Trump ‘as a very good friend’ (40-41).

This private conversation between two world leaders about the fate of asylum seekers provides rare insight into how asylum seekers are constructed as politically problematic for nation states and how decisions about their fate are negotiated. The metaphor of a business ‘deal’ (41) which at the very least should be publicly honoured is central to Turnbull’s repeated

appeals to Trump. Turnbull declares that ‘the obligation is only to go through the process’ (37) and that The USA may ‘examine and take up to and only if they so choose – 1,250 to 2,000’ (34-35) individuals all ‘subject’ to ‘vetting’ (35), meaning Trump may only take ‘1,000 or 100’, as he decides (36). Essentially, this deal does not require anything of Trump other than the appearance of an answer to the Australian public’s questions of asylum seeker relocation and welfare, presumably solved through this agreement. After placing great pressure on Trump to ‘respect’ (30) the deal, Turnbull offers him an image of this deal as being heavily in his favour. He states ‘it does not require you to take any. It requires, in return, for us to do a number of things for the United States’ (29-30).

It is significant to consider the implications of human lives placed in the hands of leaders who treat them as favours held over one another in the future. That asylum seekers are discursively represented by those in power in relation only to the advantages and disadvantages of political decisions regarding them poses obvious moral and ethical concerns. In this interaction, asylum seekers are discursively constructed in a manner that lacks any concern or compassion (see Peterie, 2017); they are instead treated merely in transactional terms as a commodity for the US to exchange in ‘bargain’ (53) for Australia to do ‘a number of things for the US’ (29-30). Arguably, this phone conversation illustrates another means of moral disengagement in which both Trump and Turnbull disassociate entirely from questions of morality and social responsibility and instead focus cynically on their political objectives and consideration of how this will affect the general public’s opinion of them. Implicit in both this conversation and in Extracts 5 and 6, is that positive emotions that might be invoked for the plight of asylum seekers, such as empathy and compassion, are a weakness that must be avoided at all cost. As in previous extracts, the erasure of emotion is seen through this detached conversation in which leadership equates to the handling of business deals, explicitly trading persons as a bargaining ground between nations.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

This study examined the institutional political discourse in Australia relating to asylum seekers. The focus was on statements by the then Prime Minister of Australia the Honourable Malcolm Turnbull and the Minister for Immigration Peter Dutton during the year 2017. An additional transcript involving the President of The USA Donald Trump was also examined due to its repeated discussion in the data corpus. The study primarily explored how asylum seekers were discursively represented by persons of power in the Australian political sphere, especially in light of challenges to related policies. Also examined were the strategies that were engaged with to achieve specific interactional goals. Exploration assessed how speakers constructed their versions of reality as being factual and fair as well as the identities invoked in their talk. The study identified precise strategies that were engaged with by the speakers discursively to realise the interactional goal of policy legitimisation and justification.

Analysis of the data corpus evidentially uncovered previously identified themes of nationalism and the discussion of asylum seekers within contexts of criminality to delegitimise them and extend an ‘us versus them’ narrative that consequently justified their exclusion from the nation-state. However, because such tropes and repertoires have an established basis in the prior literature (see Schqueitzer et al., 2005; and Augoustinos, Due & Lueck, 2015) these were not the focus of analytic interest at this time. Instead, this study aimed to analyse new conceptualisations of how persons of political power discursively represented their positions to justify the unjustifiable. That is, in the wake of the United Nations and PNG Supreme Court challenges to Australia’s asylum policies and public outcry to how the Liberal-National Coalition sought to maintain support for actions that were heavily contested.

Interestingly, a discursive repertoire that represented the militarisation of borders as being conducive to freedom and multiculturalism emerged. Although commonly entwined in

entrenched themes of both nationalism and criminality, the significance of this theme in its pervasiveness throughout the data was significant to address independently. It must be stressed that such explanations of border control, as in this way being associated directly with a culturally inclusive society, went further than justifying methods of exclusion and delegitimisation of asylum seekers – it also erased questions of the government's morality. This repertoire enabled Malcolm Turnbull to declare his unwavering support and high regard for exclusionary practices publicly (Saxton, 2003) while maintaining a non-racist and multiculturalist identity that positioned him favourably in the public eye, regardless of the consequences of his actions.

Strict policies were presented as being advantageous to the flourishing of multiculturalism and social cohesion in Australia, inevitably leading to the portrayal of those crossing borders as being a threat to both of these things. Immigrants and asylum seekers similarly moved past being framed generally as a threat to the nation-state into being framed as a direct threat to multiculturalism and social harmony itself. Questions of morality were revoked, regardless of the consequences of barring individuals, through the presentation of policies as necessary in maintaining a culturally diverse and harmonious Australian society. Through this discursive representation of the threat of those crossing borders to Australia's way of life, there was also the construction of the necessity of governmental decisions being strict to maintain social order (Gellner, 2008). Militarisation of border control was represented as not just being necessary for the nation's safety and way of life but aligned directly with notions of 'freedom'. Excluding others from entering Australia through border control and restrictive practices was illustrated as the foundation of maintaining Australia's ideals of freedom and social congruence, inevitably referring to life only within the perimeters of the nation's border, and simultaneously managing to erase implications that such policies were morally questionable and inhumane.

Simultaneous to the above theme was a process of moral disengagement (Bandura, 1999) that became increasingly evident throughout the progression of analysis. Turnbull and Dutton repeatedly discursively represented their actions towards asylum seekers as being devoid of otherwise necessary questions of self-accountability or responsibility, instead positioning them as merely the act of ‘cleaning up a mess’ left before them by the Australian Labor Party. Through this process of self-moral-disengagement, several things occurred. Namely, the speakers were able to remove themselves from their conventional morality due to a diffusion of responsibility and placement of blame on the predeceasing party. In this way, there was an enabling of the deflection of questions regarding the immorality of their treatment of asylum seekers as they separated themselves from holding any accountability in the matter at hand.

Further, in instances when challenged with facts that contrasted from their own were presented to them, the speakers’ continued this process of disengaging morally by claiming these contrary accounts were motivated by emotion and not reason. Statements by the Liberal-National Coalition were aligned without explanatory depth as being factual, and any other view was positioned within a context of having an emotional underpinning to it, and to the speakers’ motives, and thus was removed from holding weight and being logical. Regardless of what information was presented to them, the speakers dismissed it through engagement with this strategy, enabling them to seem moral and logical, but not emotional, and to de-legitimise contradictions and challenges to their statements and actions (see Edwards, 1997). Emotion became comparable to irrational thinking and also to weakness.

This process of disengagement from questions of morality and social responsibility continued in the private conversation analysed between Donald Trump and Malcolm Turnbull. Asylum seekers were discussed in a wholly disengaged way, this being in the context of a deal

rather than regarding humanitarian concerns. As in previous studies, dehumanising referrals to asylum seekers were in evidence, including in relation to their purported criminality (see Hier & Greenberg, 2010), but what was most evident in this study was how asylum seekers were typically discussed in terms of a business transaction, and not as human beings. There was no need to discredit them; they were simply treated as a trading exchange between the USA and Australia for which future favours would be owed.

Through taking a critical discursive approach to the topic of asylum seekers, this study assessed a wide range of data from the year 2017. The deployment of emotion to neutralise or eradicate contradictory accounts of reality was noted as being particularly strong, as was the interplay of this with other strategies of moral disengagement including blame-shifting and disassociation by deploying the language of business and trade. At the centre of most discussions was a repertoire mobilising nationalism to entrench further disassociation of the humanness of asylum seekers, which worked to justify both the need for the current legislation and treatment of asylum seekers. However, this study built on prior research by going past questions of deployment of nationalism to analyse the specific method of presenting militarisation as being conducive to freedom and multiculturalism so that the speakers were able to maintain non-racist and socially inclusive moral identities while justifying and rationalising practices of social exclusion. This study found the inclusion of these various dynamics to be at play in the discourse through a systematic analysis of the institutional political talk of the Australian government.

Limits to this method include guarding against the hegemony of the ideological and institutional perspectives explored and the time-consuming nature of the analysis (Dant, 1991). Although sources of data were authentic and relevant to the study, a more in-depth qualitative or Jeffersonian Lite analysis of this topic could be conducted to allow the opportunity for new perspectives to emerge. Alternatively, it could be beneficial to conduct a similar critical

discourse analysis over an extended period to gain greater insight into strategies used by politicians for discursively dealing with asylum seekers and policy.

This study creates a space for the questioning of Australia's institutional decision-making regarding individual and national accountability and responsibility towards asylum seekers. It compresses the discourse into its barest nature, facilitating understanding of the subtleties and racialised undercurrents involved in policies that received sharp criticism from many sources including the UN. Such space allows new discourses and ways of seeing asylum seekers to emerge, in turn extending the power of speech to individuals outside dominant institutional political spheres.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Full copies of included transcripts (in order of appearance as extracts)

Extract 1: Malcolm, T. (2017, April 21). *Interview with Miranda Devine, The Daily*

Telegraph, Malcolm Turnbull. Retrieved from:

<https://www.malcolmturnbull.com.au/media/interview-with-miranda-devine-the-daily-telegraph>

MIRANDA DEVINE:

Good morning I'm Miranda Devine and welcome to The Daily Telegraph's first ever Facebook live interview with the Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, coming live to you on The Daily Telegraph website.

Good morning Prime Minister.

PRIME MINISTER:

Good morning, isn't this exciting?

MIRANDA DEVINE:

Isn't this exciting? We're making history here.

PRIME MINISTER:

We are indeed.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

And this is your very first interview with a mainstream media outlet.

PRIME MINISTER:

On this one?

MIRANDA DEVINE:

On Facebook live.

PRIME MINISTER:

Yes, yes it is indeed, yeah it is.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

And streaming live to we hope millions of people from your beautiful office in downtown Sydney, I mean is this a sort of a tech-head Malcolm Turnbull innovation to go do announcements more and more on Facebook?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well I think you've got to use every channel, I think Facebook and other online platforms are a very powerful. More and more people are consuming much if not most of their media from their smartphone. You know the smartphone is an extraordinary revolution. You know, if you think the first one, the first iPhone came out in 2007 so that's only ten years ago and now you've got literally billions of smartphones around the world. There's 400 million in India alone.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

But does this give you an opportunity to bypass the mainstream media like Donald Trump does when he talks about fake news, he goes straight to the people, is this your strategy?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well my strategy is to communicate to 24 million Australians as often and effectively as I can and you've got to use the platforms that they use. So it's not a question of mainstream versus new media, it's all of the above.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

So speaking of Donald Trump, his Vice President Mike Pence is coming to Sydney and obviously no coincidence that this comes at a time when North Korea is threatening the world. What capabilities do we have to withstand an attack because Jim Molan who, former General, says that Australia within a year North Korea will be able to hit Australia with missiles. Do we have enough defence strategies?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well we certainly have a very tight alliance with the United States and everything we do in this region, defending Australia, is done in large with the United States.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

Is that what we're relying on them to protect us?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well of course, our defence is part of an alliance so we defend Australia, we have our own very substantial Defence Force as you know and of course our investment in our Defence Force is

the greatest in peace time and we are expanding the capabilities of the Australian Defence Force particularly of course notably the naval ship building program.

But in terms of our, Australia's Defence, it is covered by a series of alliances, the most important of which of course is with the United States. But I'd just say this about North Korea - they currently don't have the ability to deliver a missile that distance to reach Australia and it is vitally important that they are not able to develop it. So the focus of the discussions with Vice President Pence is going to be, one of the key focuses, is how do we maintain the pressure successfully and President Trump has made a good start to this, I believe-

MIRANDA DEVINE:

How do you think he's handling it?

PRIME MINISTER:

I think he's made a good start, that the pressure has got to be on North Korea but also on China. China has the leverage. Now North Korea is not a, you know, a compliant client state of China, not a puppet state in the way that so eastern European countries were of the Soviet Union. We understand that, Chinese have their own frustrations with dealing with North Korea, we get that but-

MIRANDA DEVINE:

Do they have the ability to pull him in? Kim Jong-un?

PRIME MINISTER:

In our view they do because they have overwhelmingly the economic relationship without, if China is in a position to impose economic sanctions on North Korea which would cause the

regime to change course. It's reckless and dangerous conduct is not just a threat to the region, it's a threat to the world.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

And what do you think of Donald Trump all over, I mean do you think you can learn anything from the way he's conducting himself?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well I think, yes, we are all learning a lot from President Trump and he is a remarkable politician. He comes from a completely unique background, a non-political, completely non-political-

MIRANDA DEVINE:

A bit like you.

PRIME MINISTER:

Well yes, yes he's a business man who's gone into politics but of course I went into politics and I was in politics for quite a long time before I became Prime Minister. He's gone from business to become President of the United States. So it's a very, it's a transition from not being ever having any political experience other than you know having run as a candidate I think or explored running as a candidate.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

Is that a bit of an advantage though, like you, to be a bit of an outsider?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well I think it is, yes it can be an advantage, absolutely. Look, I think the reality is with President Trump is that what you know a lot of people have forecast that he would do things very, very differently but as you know, I said this at the time, the America has enduring national interest. You know there were people that said he was going to turn his back on our region? America was never going to do that, it is every American President you know in their own way will make a strong commitment to our region because it's in America's interest to do so and so what do you see? You've seen the Defense Secretary out here in the region, you've seen the Secretary of State and now you've got the Vice President making the earliest visit of a Vice President in a new administration to the region and to Australia, at least in my recollection. So, so this shows a very strong commitment.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

Are you hoping that Mike Pence the US Vice President confirms the Manus Island refugee deal?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well he actually has already done that. He did that before he left in fact. So the process is going on, the American officials have been on the, on Nauru and Manus and they're assessing the applications, so I've got no, I don't, we don't need to be reassured because it was, Vice President was asked about it before he set off on this trip and he confirmed it.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

And Peter Dutton the Immigration Minister has said that the recent Easter time shootings on Manus Island were prompted by some, three asylum seekers taking a local five-year-old boy

back to the camp. Why would the Americans want to have people against whom such allegations are made into their country?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well the Americans will assess all of the people that have been, you know that are there for, that seek to go to the United States. I mean they've got their own vetting process and their own assessment process and that's you know, that is really a matter for them.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

Now the Budget is coming up, is Scott Morrison really framing housing affordability as the centerpiece of this Budget?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well I've read that in the press but I don't think that's a fair, a fair description. I mean the focus of the Budget is and has to be firstly driving continued strong economic growth. You know that is the tide that we have to ensure lifts all boats.

Now that's complicated business, it involves infrastructure, it involves energy, ensuring that we have affordable and reliable energy. I was just down in Tasmania making some announcements about putting new, new capacity ensuring Tassie Hydro has more capacity.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

Turning Tasmania into a battery?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well you know, you know something? It is already to some extent but it has the opportunity to be much greater. I mean Tasmania is a very interesting place in terms of energy. They've got a big hydro resource, they've actually generated twice as much hydroelectricity as the Snowy Mountains Scheme because they generate baseload and they've got the best wind resource in Australia. They have wind farms which can be utilised by up, more than 40 per cent. Because it's in the Roaring 40s, probably you know when the wind is blowing all the time it's not a lot of fun to be there I guess unless you own a wind farm or you're sailing but it is, so they've got a great resource. And as you get more variable renewable energy into the mix; solar and wind. But solar is just taking off everywhere, what you have is more back up-

MIRANDA DEVINE:

But it's not reliable, none of this is reliable though is it?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well of course it's not reliable in the sense of being 24/7. That's why you need to have affordable and reliable gas and you know we're doing a lot of work to ensure that that happens. We've already secured a guarantee of gas for peaking power but there is-

MIRANDA DEVINE:

Rod Simms from ACCC has just said that there's a gas crisis looming.

PRIME MINISTER:

Well there is, well, I tell you there is and that's why I've had the gas producers from the east coast in to see me twice now-

MIRANDA DEVINE:

But it's not working.

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, just watch this space.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

Oh really, OK.

PRIME MINISTER:

Watch this space Miranda-

MIRANDA DEVINE:

Like what?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well I'll, let me, I don't want to channel Joh Bjelke-Petersen and say "Don't you worry about that", everyone is entitled to be worried about energy security and nobody more worried about it than the Prime Minister. I am determined to ensure that our domestic market has all of the gas it needs, affordable and reliable gas. Now I'm working with the industry. What's happened is, that basically and this happened under our predecessors-

MIRANDA DEVINE:

But to make sure they reserve some for domestic use.

PRIME MINISTER:

What I will, I'm going to ensure, we're working with the industry, I'm going to ensure that we have adequate gas supplies for the domestic consumption by whether it's you know industry or households, it's absolutely critical.

You cannot tolerate a situation where we are the largest, we'll shortly be the largest exporter of LNG and we don't have enough gas for our own purposes, now that, that's just not acceptable. I've made that very clear to the industry. They know I am very determined, so-

MIRANDA DEVINE:

And you will punish them if they don't?

PRIME MINISTER:

No, I'm not, that's not my job. My job is to protect the interests of Australians and to ensure that Australians have access to affordable, reliable energy and we meet our emissions reduction targets.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

So with the Budget, what's in it for our readers for their hip pockets?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well wait for Budget night.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

Electricity prices, tax cuts?

PRIME MINISTER:

You'll just have to wait-

MIRANDA DEVINE:

Will it be good for them? For our readers?

PRIME MINISTER:

Of course it will be, it will be good for your readers-.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

They'll notice it in their hip pocket?

PRIME MINISTER:

They will. Your readers will see that the budget is delivering, continuing to deliver stronger economic growth. It's protecting vital services, and it is going to continue to bring our Budget back into balance. Because you know one of the things I know it's often relegated to the finance pages, but throwing a larger and larger burden of debt on the shoulders of our children and grandchildren is not responsible. If we want to ensure that our kids and grandkids have services of the quality that we have, have opportunities of the quality that we have and better, we've got to make sure that we live within our means. Now that's not easy, as you know, because you've got to target-

MIRANDA DEVINE:

Well you inherited a lot of Tony Abbott's problems. Do you think that Tony Abbott is helping the government with his regular media advice?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well look I, I'll look forward to all of my colleagues including members of the backbench talking up the achievements of the Government. And if you think, there's a lot to talk about. I mean we have got through since the election, you know, which obviously was disappointing we would've liked to have won more seats. We've got a one seat majority in the House and we've got nowhere near a majority, we're a minority in the Senate.

But nonetheless we have managed to get through those big industrial reforms, restoring the Australian Building Construction Commission, restoring the rule of law to the construction sector. I mean this, this was written off. We have the childcare reforms through. We've got tax cuts to middle income Australians. And we've secured company tax cuts, so important for our competitiveness in the future. We've secured them for companies and businesses that employ more than half of all Australians who are working. So you know that is just part of what we have done, but we have achieved a lot. Despite the fact, as I said, that we've got a small majority in the House and nowhere near a majority in the Senate.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

You probably don't get that sort of narrative told about you in the media and part of that I guess is because of Tony Abbott. Can you blame him for being angry about you taking his job?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well look I think the important thing is for everybody to, if you're in the government, whatever part of the Party room you're sitting in, whether you're on the front bench or the back bench, everybody has got a commitment to ensuring that the Government does well and the best way to do that is of course, to talk up the Government's achievements. And the, and we are delivering. I mean this is the, I know some of the media, I can't tell you how many press conferences I've had in Canberra where I've had distinguished members of the press gallery

who have said “Come on Prime Minister, admit that you don’t have the numbers to get this bill through the Senate, admit it. Why are you denying the truth?” And then we get the bill passed. So you see, you just have to work at it, keep at it.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

So do you think if you lost 30 Newspolls in a row which was the metric you set for Tony Abbott; would you step down? What would you do, do you have a contingency plan?

PRIME MINISTER:

No, what I am doing is focusing, I’m not focused on that, I’m focused on delivering for the Australian people Miranda, and we are delivering. I mean this is the inconvenient truth that is often overlooked, that so much of the agenda that we took to the election is now law and despite the predictions that it wouldn’t be and that’s a tribute to the whole team. You know, not just the Ministers and you know the Senators and the, but the whole team. We have got so much of our program through and we will continue to do so.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

Now you’re taking heat for your new changes to the citizenship laws and the 457 visa, people are saying from the left that its dog whistling and racist.

PRIME MINISTER:

What rubbish. I mean what rubbish, I mean seriously who, you know these people that say these things, we should be proud of our Australian values. I mean are we, are we proud to be Australian or not? Are we prepared to stand up for Australia, Australian jobs and Australian values or not? Well I am, I know you are, I know your readers are. So this is, we should be

celebrating the fact that we are ensuring that our temporary migration program protects Australian jobs, attracts the best and brightest from the world. Of course, as I said Peter Dutton is in effect head of recruitment, we're trying, we want to get the best and the brightest in the world to fill the skills gaps that need to be filled but we don't want to do that at the risk of prejudicing Australian jobs.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

And the citizenship rules, you have questions in there about - Do you agree with female genital mutilation? Do you think you should beat your wife?

PRIME MINISTER:

They're examples but the questions haven't been settled yet. We are having a discussion about it, which is great, isn't that good, you know I saw even on the ABC they had a VoxBox of people talking about Australian values and most of them agreed with what we're doing but it is important that we talk about it.

If we are passionate patriotic Australians, if we believe in the values that unite us, you see the genius of this country Miranda, is this; we don't define ourselves by reference to a common religion, a common ethnicity, you know a common race, and most countries do one way or another. So what we've got is shared political values.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

Our Judeo Christian western culture, that is at the root of our culture-

PRIME MINISTER:

Well of course it is, that's the foundation of our political system, I mean our whole political system, the parliamentary democracy, freedom, the rule of law, but these values are accessible to everyone, they're not just accessible to Christians and Jews. I mean they're accessible to people of every religion. See that's the genius of Australia.

I am so proud of our nation. We are the most successful multicultural society in the world. And why is that? Because of our values. And that's those values of freedom, equality, a fair go, mutual respect, the rule of law, the equality of men and women. I mean these are, in a sense we share them with other democracies but there is something, and I think you would agree with this, there is something uniquely Australian about our values and our view of the world. Now why should we not put that at the heart of our citizenship process? I think we should.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

Absolutely, but again these questions and the necessity for them, they seemed to be framed towards Muslims who are refusing to integrate and that just brings me to my last question. Throughout the world-

PRIME MINISTER:

Well I disagree with that, I disagree with that.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

Do you?

PRIME MINISTER:

Because the vast majority of Australian Muslims are just as engaged, committed, patriotic as you and me.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

Of course, but female genital mutilation and beating your wife, you know being acceptable, those things are unique to fundamentalist Muslims.

PRIME MINISTER:

I'm not even sure that's entirely true, female genital mutilation is a cultural thing from a number of countries.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

The majority Muslim, African countries.

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, it is a shocking practice, it is utterly illegal, it is abhorrent and it has no place in Australia but equally, violence against women and children does not either and you see this is where respect, you know I talk a lot about mutual respect.

Why is respect so important in this context? Disrespecting women doesn't always lead to violence against women, but that's where all violence against women begins. So mutual respect is the foundation of our great success as a multicultural society, now it is a great Australian value; live and let live, fair go, but you can describe it in a lot of different ways but you know we believe in mutual respect and that is a fundamental part of our values.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

Cory Bernardi and Pauline Hanson love what you've done with both the 457 visas and the citizenship changes but-

PRIME MINISTER:

Just because they support something doesn't mean it's wrong. I mean is that what you're suggesting?

MIRANDA DEVINE:

Of course not no, but it's interesting that you're seen as pivoting towards a more conservative persona then you were originally with. I mean what do you believe, you're seen as a wet, a lefty, a greenie.

PRIME MINISTER:

Look people might create caricature of politicians-

MIRANDA DEVINE:

But that's part of your problem is it? That that the right, the conservatives in your Party don't trust you, they don't think you're a true conservative, a true Liberal, they think you're a Labor guy. Labor-lite, you know that criticism-

PRIME MINISTER:

At the same time as I'm an arch capitalist. To say that that caricature-

MIRANDA DEVINE:

But not mutually exclusive.

PRIME MINISTER

Is confusing is an understatement.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

A lot of lefts live in Vaucluse.

PRIME MINISTER:

Let me just finish that, this point about values and citizenship and the way we define our identity as Australians by reference to shared political values, this is something I've been talking and writing about for decades. You remember back in the 90s when we didn't entirely see eye to eye on the Republic debate, this is part of the argument I made then - talking about the fact that we define ourselves by reference to these shared political values. And that, that is a, as indeed as Americans do by the way, so you know, that is the genius of an inclusive society is that it must be founded on mutual respect. But you've got to have values, political values, not in a party political sense, but political values that are accessible to everyone. And you should be proud of them and of course they should be at the centre of your citizenship process and of course people should be able to speak English when they become a citizen.

I mean who are you helping by saying to someone you can become a citizen of Australia without learning English. I mean you're not helping them, because if you want to get ahead in this country whether it's economically or in social engagement, English is the key. We all know that, that's what why we spend a fortune when we bring in humanitarian entrants, you know refugees, ensuring that they get English language instruction.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

One last question Prime Minister, we've seen a rise of nationalism in Europe and America and in Australia with Hansonism. Do you think, a lot of that is to do with immigration and culture?

Do you think that western cultures are able to successfully bring in large numbers of Muslims and integrate them successfully?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, the answer to that is that you need to make sure that any migration program is based on good integration. And this is regardless of what the person's religion is. I just say this to you, when I went to the UN last year in Leaders' Week. I gave a speech describing how we were the most successful multicultural society but the foundation of that was that the Australian people understood that we controlled our borders, that we decided who came to Australia, as in John Howard's words, and the circumstance in which they come, how long they stay, we decide which refugees come, we decide which skilled migrants come. The Australian people have to have confidence that their government is running the migration system in their national interest and in nobody else's interest.

Now what's happened in Europe is that they lost control of their borders and that shattered confidence. One European leader after another has said to me, that this you know irregular migration surge of refugees crossing borders and so forth is an existential threat. And so if you want to preserve harmony, if you want to preserve your multicultural society, if you want to preserve the political stability of your nation, you've got to be able to demonstrate that it is the government which the Australian people elect and it alone which determines who comes to Australia.

So strong borders are the foundation, the absolute foundation of our success as a multicultural society and so people on the left who you know criticize that, who want to have porous borders, who want to do what Labor did. I mean don't, you must not forget; we cannot forget that Labor upended John Howard's border protection policies-

MIRANDA DEVINE:

Do you think that they'd do it again?

PRIME MINISTER:

I have no doubt they would because their heart is not in it. I mean they, Kevin Rudd went to the 2007 election and said he was going to turn boats around and he would maintain Howard's strong policies. He gave that pledge. I remember. And then he back flipped on all of that. And of course the predictable happened, took a long time and a great effort to set that right but we have to maintain that. And that's why you can't be apologetic about it. You can't sort of be apologetic about strong borders, an immigration system that is run in the interests of Australia. So whether it's temporary migration, and abolishing 457s as we've done this week. Whether it's strong border protection, whether it is ensuring that our citizenship process respects and values and reinforces our Australian values. All of that is part of a stronger Australia.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

And prioritising Christian and Yazidi refugees in the latest intake from Syria as part of that?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well the 12,000 intake from the Syria conflict zone, that was designed, and again I absolutely defend it. I am proud of it in fact, great advocate for it. It is prioritised, persecuted minorities who are in the Middle East, overwhelmingly Christians, I mean the destruction of the Christian communities in Iraq and Syria, in particular in recent times, is one of the great tragedies of our times.

And of course the Yazidis are another smaller minority that have been similarly persecuted. So offering them priority was the object of the policy because at the end of the day the Muslim communities we hope will find a settlement between Sunni and Shia. But, I don't want to sound too pessimistic but there is a very reasonable case to say that the prospects for Christians and other minorities in those countries are not very promising.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

Well thank you so much Prime Minister for your time, that's it from us. So you can see this video with the Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, in his office, on The Daily Telegraph website from now on.

PRIME MINISTER:

Thank you.

MIRANDA DEVINE:

Thank you.

Extract 2: Malcolm, T. (2017, June 10). *Disraeli Prize Speech: In Defence of a Free Society*. Retrieved from: <http://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/release/transcript-41051>

PRIME MINISTER:

Benjamin Disraeli is a giant of our shared parliamentary tradition.

So I am both grateful and humbled to receive the Disraeli Prize tonight.

Thank you to Dean Godson and the Policy Exchange.

Disraeli entered Parliament in 1837 after four unsuccessful attempts and spent three-quarters of his 44-year parliamentary career in opposition.

We look back at that era through a flickering sepia screen of sentimental memory and compare its apparent elegance to the unruly political times in which we live.

And yet the invective hurled at, and by, Disraeli would be more shocking today, than it was then.

He took no quarter and asked for none. He scrambled to the top of what he called the greasy pole despite being a Jew in an age when anti-semitism was the norm, and despite making his living as a novelist at a time when a Prime Minister's qualification almost invariably came from their ancestors' broad acres or, less often, from the law.

Of course as you look around the table at the G20 there are more than a few leaders - myself included - whose prospects of success seemed unlikely not so long ago.

As Disraeli's contemporary, Mark Twain, observed - only fiction has to be credible.

The tenor of our times is change and at a pace and scale utterly unprecedented in human history.

And in such times what price political labels.

Is every boy and every gal that's born into the world alive still a little liberal or a little conservative?

Is it conservative to support free trade and open markets as Theresa May and I did at the G20 as I did together with Shinzo Abe and Angela Merkel, I'm sure it is – or to call for more

protection as many on both the self-styled “liberal left” and “conservative right” in the United States do today.

The truth is that the labels have lost almost all meaning in the furious outrage cycle of social media politics, long cast adrift to be appropriated, often cynically, by one politician or another as it suits their purpose.

At the heart of our political tradition, whether we describe it as the tradition of the Conservative Party of the United Kingdom or the Liberal Party of Australia, is respect for humanity not in the mass, as the Left like to see us, but as individuals and families, Edmond Burke’s small platoons, Robert Menzies “forgotten people”.

So what we admire about our distinguished predecessors, from Churchill to Thatcher, from Menzies to Howard, is not their label but their dogged devotion to the principles of a free society under the law.

Sovereignty. Law. Security. Liberty.

In 1944 Menzies went to great pains not to call his new political party, consolidating the centre right of Australian politics, “conservative” - but rather the Liberal Party, which he firmly anchored in the centre of Australian politics.

He wanted to stand apart from the big money, business establishment politics of traditional “conservative” parties so styled of the right, as well as from the socialist tradition of the Australian Labor Party - the political wing of the union movement. Menzies said at the time:

“We took the name ‘Liberal’ because we were determined to be a progressive party, willing to make experiments, in no sense reactionary but believing in the individual, his right and his enterprise, and rejecting the socialist panacea.”

It is important to remember the context of Menzies’ new Liberal Party. In 1944 our nations were still fighting a war against fascism. There had been plenty of local admirers of Mussolini and even in some cases Hitler before the War but, by this point, the authoritarian right had no appeal. The Soviet Union was still an ally in the war against Hitler, but the authoritarian Left had no appeal to most Australians either.

At the same time, laissez faire capitalism had not had a good run. The Great Depression had convinced many that the Government needed to play a much bigger role in the economy than the leaders of the Edwardian era would have ever imagined. So classical liberalism was out of fashion too.

The sensible centre, to use my predecessor Tony Abbott’s phrase, was the place to be and it remains the place to be now.

I mention this only to remind that when we quote Menzies, Disraeli, or other political leaders, we need to consider the historical context. Menzies sought a lesser role for Government in citizens’ lives than Labor did, but by our 21st century standards he was hardly an economic liberal. He believed in a highly regulated economy with high tariffs, a fixed exchange rate, centralised wage fixing and generally much more Government involvement in the economy than we would be comfortable with.

Of course he was not alone - his UK and even American counterparts had similar views.

It was a different age.

But a strong thread of principle, of value, connects our party, the Liberal Party, to that of Menzies - one that combines both the liberal and conservative traditions - John Howard's broad church.

And it is best summed up in this way.

From its foundation more than sixty years ago, the Liberal Party has stood for freedom.

Nothing is more fundamental to our philosophy than a deep commitment to individual freedom and enterprise. The Liberal Party stands for freedom or it stands for nothing.

We in the Liberal Party believe Government's role is to enable citizens to do their best - and that commitment to freedom is based in a deep, instinctive respect for the dignity and the worth of every individual. We respect each other when we say: you are free to chart your own course, to make your own choices, and strive to realise your own dreams.

Our opponents on the Left in their DNA believe to the contrary, that is Government knows best.

So in the balance between the individual and the State, our side of politics leans heavily in favour of freedom and the individual - preferring choice over prescription and freedom over regulation, always sceptical about the wisdom and the interference of governments.

The area where we must most carefully scrutinise the relationship between individual freedoms and Government intervention is national security.

Security and freedom are frequently represented as binary opposites - as if there exists a universe in which you could have one without the other.

But these two principles - prioritising public safety and maintaining individual freedoms - are not mutually exclusive. They can be - in fact, they must be - mutually reinforcing.

The question is not what freedoms to forgo for security. It is what security is required to enable our freedom.

The fundamental tenet of liberalism - going back to the classic work of John Stuart Mill - is that people should be free to pursue their own ideas provided their actions do not impede the rights of others to do the same.

This foundational principle of liberalism took on an even greater significance in the twentieth century when threatened by the modern totalitarian state.

The march of both fascism and communism led Karl Popper, to examine what he called "the paradox of freedom".

Freedom he wrote, "defeats itself if it is unlimited. Unlimited freedom means that a strong man is free to bully one who is weak and to rob him of his freedom. This is why we demand that the state should limit freedom to a certain extent, so that everyone's freedom is protected by law. Nobody should be at the mercy of others, but all should have a right to be protected by the state."

And this of course is what we mean when we talk about democracy under the rule of law which constrains the majority as it enables it.

Or as Churchill observed once in the House of Commons, "Democracy is no harlot to be picked up in the street by a man with a tommy gun."

Karl Popper's paradox of freedom was not the rationalisation of a dictator crushing his enemies. To the contrary, Popper was fighting to defend what he called "The Open Society" of freedom, rationality and peaceful debate.

And this is what we in this room are fighting to defend today.

To defend the Open Society - to defend freedom - we cannot give free reign to its enemies.

And those enemies are resurgent.

Terrorism is the starkest and most urgent enemy of freedom. Terrorists seek to disrupt our freedoms and disable our societies based on trust through fear. They seek to create a society in which people are neither free nor secure.

It is in the very pursuit of freedom that we seek a stronger role for the State in protecting citizens against the terrorist threat. By fighting terrorism - with proportionate means - we are defending liberal values.

In order to be free a person must first be safe.

The reality is that individual freedom, liberty, the rule of law, and indeed national sovereignty, are under threat.

In a world of rapid change, we must constantly review and improve the policies and laws that will best keep us safe. To set and forget would be easy, but it would not be right.

When a government abdicates its national security responsibilities the consequences can be fatal - and sometimes catastrophic.

Australia is the most successful multicultural society in the world. 26 per cent of our people were born overseas, in my own city of Sydney the percentage is 37 per cent, and half the population have at least one parent born outside Australia.

Our migration nation is also very diverse with people drawn from every party of the world, the second most commonly spoken language at home in Sydney is Chinese, the third is Arabic.

And yet in an age of increasing uncertainty and friction we live together, citizens of a free society, in relative harmony.

This freedom is enabled by strong national security.

In particular our strong border protection policies have ensured that Australians know once again, as they did in John Howard's day, that it is only their Government which determines who comes to Australia and on what terms they can stay.

Howard's strong policies were dropped by Labor when they were elected in 2007 and over six years there were 50,000 unlawful arrivals and at least 1,200 deaths at sea.

More than 14,500 refugees waiting in UN camps were denied a place under our offshore humanitarian program in those days – the places going instead to those arriving illegally by boat.

Taxpayers paid over A\$10 billion for managing these arrivals – money that could have been spent on hospitals or schools.

It's a record, a shameful record that utterly vindicates the Coalition's border protection policies.

As Europe grapples today with unsustainable inflows of migrants and asylum seekers, the Australian experience offers both a cautionary tale and the seeds of a potential solution.

The lesson is very clear: weak borders fragment social cohesion, drain public revenue, raise community concerns about national security, and ultimately undermine the consensus required to sustain high levels of immigration and indeed multiculturalism itself.

Ultimately, division.

In contrast, strong borders and retention of our sovereignty allow government to maintain public trust in community safety, respect for diversity and support for our immigration and humanitarian programs.

Unity. Security. Opportunity. Freedom.

Australia continues to welcome around 200,000 migrants each year; we have issued an additional 12,000 visas for people displaced by the conflicts in Syria and Iraq, and we increased our broader humanitarian intake by 35 per cent. This could not have happened if had not restored order at the border, maintaining strict security vetting and earn the Australian people's trust that it is the Government that controls who enters Australia and for which purposes, not the criminal people smugglers.

I say to the critics of our border protection policies: Are these not precisely the outcomes that every just and decent society should seek? I believe they are, and I hope you do too.

And it's this foundation that will allow us to effectively deal with the most pressing security challenge of our time – Islamist extremism terrorism.

While small in number, its adherents are resolute in murderous purpose.

They have already eroded a measure of public trust in our pluralism and cast doubt on the ability of our governments to protect their own people.

So we must answer this question - will we cower before their barbarism? Will we change the way we live in the face of these terrorists? Or will we defy them and defeat them as you are doing in the United Kingdom and as the men and women I met today with the Prime Minister at London Bridge and the Borough Markets are doing, defying and defeating those who seek to undermine our way of life?

Now in our response, we draw strength from the finest political tradition ever devised.

The values of Westminster are those of openness, mutual respect and the rule of law.

We believe that a good society is one that welcomes all peoples who commit to these core values. We believe that contending religions and philosophies should have to make their case in a marketplace of ideas. By comparison, the extremists are morally and intellectually bereft. They can offer nothing in life, so they promise glory in death.

It's easy to scoff at the paucity of their vision - many have made the mistake of trivialising the threat they pose.

But as Disraeli once observed, "something unpleasant is coming when men are anxious to tell the truth".

In the fight ahead, there is no space for the mush of moral relativism.

There is no justification for the mass murder of children at a concert in Manchester, or the killing of innocent people on London Bridge and at Borough Market – including the young Australians Kirsty Boden, who had rushed to help people who had been injured and Sara

Zelenak, a young Australian au pair. I met today the two brave metropolitan police officers who gave her CPR and sought to save her life.

We must acknowledge, as so many muslims acknowledge, that Islamist extremism is a disease within the body of Islam itself.

Equally we must recognise that Muslim leaders who stand for mutual respect and democracy whether at home or, like President Widodo of Indonesia, on the world stage are our best allies in the war against Daesh.

And we must also recognise that those who seek to tag all muslims for the crimes of a tiny minority are doing precisely what the terrorists want them to do.

After all, their pitch to muslims in Australia is “you don’t belong here, they don’t want you, this is not your home.”

The last thing we should do is confirm their poisonous propaganda.

The genius of Australia is that we define our national identity not by race or religion or ethnicity but rather by a commitment to shared political values of freedom, democracy, the rule of law, equality of men and women, mutual respect - values accessible to all.

So we must never take a backward step from our values - lets face it, a bad idea does not become valid, let alone good, simply because someone claims it was divinely inspired.

Religion and tradition should be acknowledged, but the values that prevail in our society are our values, the laws that prevail in our society are our laws - and no others.

Now, as we honour our law enforcement and security services – who rush towards danger when others flee – we must ensure that they have the powers and resources to stay ahead of the threat.

As our adversaries' methods and tactics evolve, so must ours.

The privacy of a terrorist can never be more important than the safety of the public. The information security of a terrorist or a child abuser must not be protected above the personal security of our children, our communities and our values.

A government that gets this upside down would be abdicating responsibility; its duty of care to its citizens to keep them safe. It certainly is not helping freedoms cause.

This is where Mill's view on liberty is so important - we must not allow harm to be done to individuals and communities where we can act.

This must be the case online as it is offline.

Now the question of Internet freedom is an important one. There is no institution or infrastructure more important to the future prosperity and freedom of our global community than the Internet. There has never been a more transformative democratising technology; its broken down national boundaries and distance. Not so long ago only States and large corporations had megaphones powerful enough to address a nation - now a tweet or YouTube video can reach millions, if not billions, and do so in seconds.

But these remarkable technologies that are designed to unite us are also being used by those who seek to do us harm.

We have seen how terrorists have used, trained in and developed operations in ungoverned places all around the world. This is why Australia and the UK are part of the international coalition to defeat the islamist terrorism of Daesh at its source in Syria and Iraq.

But as the so called Caliphate is destroyed, the terrorists will continue to sue the Internet for recruitment, planning and advocacy.

We cannot allow ungoverned spaces, whether offline or online, to be exploited by those who would do us harm.

The Internet must remain free and secure. But it cannot be ungoverned. Laws offline must apply online. Otherwise, freedom and security will both be lost.

To ensure terrorists are unable to operate with impunity in the ungoverned digital space, I set up a task force last month to drive action on our capability and response to cyber threats.

And just three days ago, in an unprecedented show of solidarity, the G20 agreed to work with industry in the pursuit of public safety and together fight terrorists and organised criminals.

We agreed we would “collaborate with industry to provide lawful and non-arbitrary access to available information where access is necessary for the protection of national security against terrorist threats. We affirm that the rule of law applies online as well as it does offline.”

And I want to thank again as I did earlier today, Prime Minister May for her very strong support in ensuring that we got that strong consensus at the G20.

I will refer to two areas where we need to do more.

First, we need to secure swifter and more effective action by the owners of the big online services, like Facebook, Google and Twitter, to take down extremist material as soon as it appears. By and large I am confident that we can do more in this regard. I think there is plenty of goodwill.

Second, we need to address the problem of encryption. Now encryption is vitally important to protect our security online but just as a locked bank vault or a filing cabinet cannot resist a Court order to produce a document, why should the owners of encrypted messaging platforms like WhatsApp, Telegram or Signal be able to establish end to end encryption in such a way that nobody, not the owners and not the courts have the ability to find out what is being communicated.

The G20 communique is not talking about giving Governments a backdoor to access messaging, nor is it seeking access to the source code that some countries are demanding of companies for the pleasure of doing business in their jurisdiction.

Rather it is saying to Silicon Valley and its emulators - the ball is in your court. You have created messaging applications which are encrypted end to end, they are being used by terrorists and criminals to hide their murderous plans.

You must ensure that these dark places can be illuminated by the law so that the freedoms you hold dear will not be stripped away by criminals your technologies have made undetectable.

This will be a difficult conversation in many places, and especially in the USA, where there is a strong, anti government libertarian tradition on both the left and the right.

But here is the bottom line: the best defence against terrorists' plans is good intelligence. We have in the last few years in Australia disrupted twelve major terrorists plots, including several

that would have resulted in large mass casualty attacks. How many more can we disrupt if every communication, by every conspirator, is encrypted end to end and cannot be read despite every lawful right, indeed duty, so to do?

So these are some of the challenges as we balance liberty and security, ensuring we have the security that enables our freedoms. I want to conclude tonight by thanking you again, ladies and gentlemen, for the honour of the Disraeli Prize.

[ENDS]

Q&A

DEAN GODSON:

Prime Minister Turnbull has very kindly agreed to answer questions. Usual house rules – no question too outrageous, you just have to say your name and organisation first. Do I see any openers?

MATT RIDLEY - THE VISCOUNT RIDLEY DL, HOUSE OF LORDS:

Matt Ridley, House of Lords.

PRIME MINISTER:

Oh hello! How are you? Good to see you again.

MATT RIDLEY - THE VISCOUNT RIDLEY DL, HOUSE OF LORDS:

Very well thank you.

Prime Minister you've said that Britain could learn a lesson from Australia on immigration. What lesson can Britain learn from Australia on your very successful negotiation of comprehensive free trade agreements with China and other major nations?

PRIME MINISTER:

You've just got to get the deals done, Matt. Britain hasn't done a free trade deal or trade deal for a very long time, since it joined the European Union. So there is obviously plenty of work to do to get the negotiating teams and the talent that you need to do it.

But basically if you believe, as your government does, as I believe both sides of politics do in Britain from what I've heard, that Britain needs to find as many open markets as it can, then you just have to get on and negotiate. And look, the chill winds of protectionism are blowing around the world in various places, some more strongly than others but I firmly believe that protectionism is not a ladder to get you out of a low growth trap, it's a shovel to dig it much deeper.

JAMES MASSOLA, FAIRFAX:

James Massola, from the Sydney Morning Herald and The Age newspapers. Thanks for your speech of course and I'd like to pick up a point you made about Sir Robert Menzies in founding the Liberal Party which I'm willing to guess is not going to go unnoticed back home. Can I ask do you believe that Menzies-

PRIME MINISTER:

Well I hope that people have noticed that he founded the Liberal Party.

(Laughter)

You're reflecting very adversely on the historical education of Australians.

(Laughter)

JAMES MASSOLA, FAIRFAX:

Indeed, PM. Can I ask do you believe that Menzies' legacy, and indeed that your governments agenda is in danger of being hijacked by the conservative wing of your party? Why have you made this point?

PRIME MINISTER:

No, I think it's very important as I said in my remarks - and indeed using the phrase Tony Abbott, the first person I heard use in our party anyway, the sensible centre - the path for our party was set by Menzies when he brought together both the liberal and conservative traditions and of course these labels will be most debased in social media outrage cycle of today, but he brought together those traditions. John Howard described it as a broad church. They are brought together and indeed they are shared by most of us, share both traditions, they are not exclusive. But the important thing was to set the party as a party of progress, indeed of innovation. Menzies gave a speech in 1966 I recall where he talked about innovation even more often than I normally do, James, so there is nothing new about Liberal Prime Ministers talking about innovation. But the focus has got to be on delivering for the people you represent and pretty much in any policy area and when I often talk about this in the area of energy, ideology is a very poor guide of policy. The focus has got to be on getting results so that is why I say in respect of energy for example my best guides are engineering and economists, not ideology and politics.

MICHAEL HOWARD - THE RT HON. THE LORD HOWARD OF LYMPNE CH QC,
HOUSE OF LORDS:

Michael Howard, House of Lords.

PRIME MINISTER:

Michael, good to see you again. Thank you so much for coming.

MICHAEL HOWARD - THE RT HON. THE LORD HOWARD OF LYMPNE CH QC,
HOUSE OF LORDS:

You are in an unrivalled position to assess the role which China wants to play in the world and the way in which we should respond. What insights can you share with us?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well I think Michael, that's a big question – let me deal with the first part of it. Chinese people and Chinese leaders, including obviously Xi Jinping see themselves as being restored to the level of pre-eminence that is really the natural order of things. And Deng Xiaoping summed it up very well when he went south – he had a southern tour in the late '70s - as they started to open up China to the world.

If you go back 40 years, China wasn't a closed economy but it represented only a few per cent of global GDP. And he went down there and he talked about the great Chinese navigator, Zheng He I think in about 1500 who set off on these great voyages across the Indian Ocean and you know through what we now call Indonesia and India and so forth, all around that area. And subsequent emperors closed China to the world. And Deng Xiaoping said in the days of Zheng

He when we were open to the world we were strong, when we closed ourselves off we became weak and subject to foreign domination and oppression, invasion and so forth.

And so what the leaders have been doing is seeking to restore China to the prosperity that gives it naturally the preeminence that its population, nearly a quarter of the world's population inevitably entails.

In terms of how Britain should deal with China, it should deal with China as we do - honestly, frankly, openly. We have an honest engagement, a very candid engagement. There are some areas of, well some areas where we would like China to do more. The obvious one, that both Theresa and I talked about today is with North Korea. You know that reckless and dangerous regime is putting the peace of the region and the world at risk, and while we don't suggest that they're doing China's bidding at all, I mean it is not like East Germany was to the Soviet Union, this is a very unruly neighbor but nonetheless, China has the greatest leverage, the greatest ability to bring that regime to its senses without military force, and we are strongly urging Chinese leadership to do that.

ROBERT WRIGHT, THE FINANCIAL TIMES:

Prime Minister, Robert Wright from the Financial Times, you are currently seeking free trade deals with the UK, which I think is a very small proportion of your GDP and can't do a deal immediately and a deal with the European Union which is one of the world's two great trading blocs. I wonder how you think about how you allocate resources in the sense of urgency between doing these two deals?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well I met with the Presidents of the European Council and Commission, Mr Tusk and Mr Juncker just in Hamburg a few days ago and we agreed that we will do all we could to reach agreement on Australia-European free trade agreement before Brexit. In fact, the aim is get to done before 2019.

Those people who are skeptical about the efficiency of bureaucrats and negotiators may feel that's ambitious but that's what we're going to seek to do.

So that is the first priority but then when Britain is free to deal, after it leaves the European Union, we'll be negotiating as quickly as we can. And we can, I can assure, negotiate multiple free trade deals at one time. We've demonstrated that. I mean the China, Korea, Japan free trade deals of the last few years were all under, they were all being negotiated simultaneously and we have quite a few others on the go at the moment.

Indeed, again at the G20 the President of Indonesia Joko Widodo, or Jokowi as he's generally known, he and I agreed that the trade deal that we're negotiating between Australia and Indonesia which is called the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement, or CEPA, that our goal is to get that done by the end of the year. Now that's a very strong commitment and leadership on his part and my part, but I think it gives you an indication that we just want to forge ahead.

Again, I make no bones about this, the more doors to more markets I can open for Australian business to enter the better. That's my goal. Free trade and open markets are a big part, a huge part of our 26 years of uninterrupted economic growth.

ANDREW MACLEOD, KINGS COLLEGE:

Thank you Prime Minister, Andrew Macleod – Committee for Melbourne – sorry, used to be Committee for Melbourne. Kings College I should say. You talk about opening up markets. Now Australia was a leader in creating APEC, the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation, one of the great positives from that is the APEC Business Travelers Card. Now that Britain will be leaving the United Kingdom is there a role that we could perhaps look at creating an APEC Business Travelers Card system in the Commonwealth to encourage trade in the Commonwealth and is that something that Australia and Britain could perhaps do?

PRIME MINISTER:

It is something we'll certainly put on the agenda. But again, we want to do everything we can to facilitate trade and trading opportunities for Australian businesses and of course for foreign businesses to do business with us Australia. That is our position. It is very, very clear. The more opportunities the better.

HARVEY ODZE, THE BOROUGH OF HACKNEY:

Harvey Odze from the Borough of Hackney. Firstly, I'd just like to say that my youngest son is one of those people you mentioned in your address who is an Australian citizen with foreign parentage.

PRIME MINISTER:

Well he's not Robinson Crusoe.

(LAUGHTER)

HARVEY ODZE, THE BOROUGH OF HACKNEY:

When you spoke about the importance of combatting extremist Islamic terror in many ways, in your role as a neighbour and a fellow member of the Commonwealth of New Zealand, next time you meet Bill English, do you think it would be possible to persuade him that his governments action in UNESCO are undermining that role?

PRIME MINISTER:

Thank you, I will as Chris Uhlmann's friend at the ABC Tony Jones would say, I'll take that as a comment and I'll reflect on it. I don't know enough about the matter you're referring to. Thank you.

QUESTION:

I'm from the Chinese Embassy, good evening Prime Minister.

PRIME MINISTER:

Good evening.

QUESTION:

It seemed to me that the British Government is pretty receptive to the Belt and Road Initiative and that the Chancellor said that China and the UK are natural partners because China is the eastern side, and the UK is the western side of the initiative. So what is the position of the Australian Government? I feel that you're a little bit hesitant. Do you consult each other on how to work together with China or with the World on the Belt and Road Initiative? Thank you.

PRIME MINISTER:

There was a big conference in Beijing recently - Belt and Road Conference. Our Trade Minister Steven Ciobo attended it. There is a lot of investment, Chinese investment in Australia. We have a very strong relationship with China. It goes well beyond economics as you know, there is a lot of Australian business in China. Lucy and I more than 20 years ago now actually established a zinc mine in China. So I've been an investor in Chinese mining actually. Most mining investment is coming the other way.

From our point of view we assess all foreign investment on its merits. It is much easier to invest in Australia as a foreigner than it is for example to invest in China as a foreigner. We are a very open economy. We welcome investment and we look forward to deepening ties and links in that regard and in other respects as well. So I think the relationship is very strong and getting stronger.

RORY BROOMFIELD, FREEDOM ASSOCIATION:

Rory Broomfield from the Freedom Association. You mentioned immigration in your speech with reference to security but given that we are leaving the European Union, the United Kingdom is leaving the EU, another freedom that we'll have is reframing our immigration policy to the rest of the world. I wondered what thoughts and recommendations you could give to our Home Secretary on reframing our new immigration policy?

PRIME MINISTER:

Everyone gives me advice how to run Australia – I'm not going to tell anyone else how to run their country. But look, I just repeat, I just refer you to what I said in my remarks that I think controlling your borders is absolutely critical.

John Howard summed it once when he said we decide who comes to Australia and the circumstances in which they come. It is absolutely demonstrably the right thing to do. You have to be in a position where whoever comes across your border, whether they be a business migrant, whether they be a student coming to do a course at a university, whether they are a humanitarian entrant, a refugee, the government must make that decision on behalf of the people whose country it is. It is a fundamental incident of sovereignty so when you outsource your borders, you outsource your sovereignty. And that enables you, if you control your borders, as we have - there has not been one successful people smuggling venture to Australia in more than 1000 days - if you can control your borders and maintain that integrity then you have the social license to have a generous migration program including a generous humanitarian program as we do – one of the largest on a per capita basis. This is not a theoretical proposition.

Kevin Rudd, no relation to the Home Secretary, actually did drop Howard's policies and we know what happened. So there is no question - you've got to be able to control your borders. Different countries and geography and so forth can make that more or less difficult but it is absolutely critical and I think that's, I know that, well I'll let the Home Secretary express her own views on this but I have no doubt that she believes that Her Majesty's Government in right of the United Kingdom should determine who comes to this country, these islands and nobody else.

MATT CHISHTY, COMMANDER OF THE METROPOLITAN POLICE, RETIRED:

Thank you very much Prime Minister. Matt Chishty, a recently retired Commander with the Metropolitan Police. Not deliberately trying to take the debate away from free trade or immigration but I just want you to return to terrorism. What really struck accord with me was your description of these terrorists have got nothing to offer in this life and that is why they're

focused on the afterlife. I think those sort of messages need to be driven home and there needs to be more focus and concentration, especially with the establishments like mosques to talk more about the life and their responsibilities here. But sometimes we get from a small minority quite a disproportionate response back into the public which frightens a lot of middle mainstream Muslim communities in particular. How has your message been received in Australia and what's the response been from your communities across your nation?

PRIME MINISTER:

Every time I talk about this issue I talk about inclusion. The points I've made tonight, the Australians in the audience have heard many times. The terrorists are the ones that want to divide us. We must not become amplifiers for their poisonous propaganda. They have to be called out. You know, this Islamist terrorist extremist movement or, I'm not sure whether that's a philosophy - hardly much philosophical about it - ideology is probably the best word - this Islamist extremist ideology is as we know, it is blaspheming and destroying Muslim societies, or seeking to destroy Muslim societies and the vast majority of their victims around the world are Muslims, as you know. So we have to support those who make the case for inclusion, we have to give them the solidarity that they deserve and they need. And that's why I am always delighted to be with Joko Widodo. Jokowi is the democratically elected leader of the largest majority Muslim country in the world and he stands there and says, he's got plenty of critiques of course as all politicians do, but he says Indonesia proves that Islam, moderation, tolerance and democracy are compatible. It is a very, very powerful message and I always encourage him to speak more on the world stage. Jokowi is one of the great leaders of our times, believe me. He is such an extraordinary example. In this particular battle, he is a really powerful advocate for the values that we all share and that you I know in your service in the Metropolitan Police for which I know everyone thanks you, and I do too, that you've always embodied too.

So thank you very much indeed.

[ENDS]

Extract 3: Dutton, P. (2017, April 24). Interview with Peter Beattie and Peter McGauran. Retrieved from:
<https://minister.homeaffairs.gov.au/peterdutton/Pages/interview-peter-beattie-peter-mcgauran.aspx>

PETER BEATTIE:

Peter, good to see you.

PETER MCGAURAN:

Hi Peter.

PETER DUTTON:

Good to see you, Peter's, how are you?

PETER BEATTIE:

Good mate, very good. Peter over the weekend we saw that it's now 1000 days since the last unauthorised boat arrival, so congratulations. You and your colleagues at the Department of Immigration and Border Protection have saved lives no doubt.

PETER DUTTON:

Yeah well thank you Peter. It's right to pay tribute to the men and women of the Australian Defence Force and there are 16 agencies in total involved in Operation Sovereign Borders. Staff from my own Department in the Australian Border Force are exceptional officers, they're

professional and when you speak to them and hear the stories about when they were pulling bodies out of the water, half eaten torsos, young kids who had drowned on that perilous journey – they don't ever want to return to those days and none of us should. We've been able to keep our borders secure, we've closed 17 detention centres and we've got every child out of detention.

And as you know, when the Howard Government left office in 2007, there were only four people in detention including no children and 50,000 people came on 800 boats and 1,200 drowned at sea.

The important thing to realise though is the threat just hasn't gone away. We've turned back 30 boats containing some 765 people over the course of that last 1000 days and had those 30 boats got through, I promise you this, that there would have been 300, 3,000 that followed. And this problem will not go away because people will always want to come to a country like Australia and this Government has the resolve to make sure that we stare these people smugglers down and we're just not going to - we're not going to step back from that resolve.

PETER MCGAURAN:

True Peter and I think all fair-minded and pragmatic Australians take that approach. Your problem is obviously Manus Island. What a relief it was to see Vice President Mike Pence honour the agreement, however reluctantly. But even if the Americans take a substantial number, even all of the political refugees from Manus Island, you're still left with the issue of relocating a large number of economic refugees. How are you going to do it?

PETER DUTTON:

Well the first point's the most important one Peter and that is that this Government didn't put people on Manus or Nauru. I mean we have inherited a mess and you're right it's our job to clean it up and were doing that.

So when Mr Rudd signed the agreement with the PNG Government there was no arrangement as to what would happen to people at the end of the first year or the second year or the third year. It was open ended and so we still operate under that arrangement, but we have brokered an agreement to the credit of the Prime Minister, then President Obama and now to the credit of President Trump and Vice President Pence as you point out.

They have said that they will honour that deal. That provides us with some hope of moving some people off Manus and off Nauru. But ultimately there are a number of people that have been found not to be refugees, they're not owed protection and the onus is on them to return back to their country of origin because a key part of our success in stopping drownings at sea, getting all of those kids out of detention and keeping our borders secure is that we have not allowed people to come by boat to Australia.

We've been very clear that if you've sought to come to Australia by boat you will never settle here and that applies to people on both Manus and Nauru and it's a key part of the reason as to how we have, at least for this period of time, broken the people smugglers' model.

So we'll work with third countries, we'll work with the PNG Government. Under the agreement that Mr Rudd signed with Prime Minister O'Neill, it was the arrangement that people that had been found to be refugees would settle in PNG and that is still our expectation.

PETER MCGAURAN:

But Peter, political refugees is the agreement with Papua New Guinea, not economic refugees I presume?

PETER DUTTON:

Well people that have been found to be refugees under the 51 Convention and the 67 Protocol, so those people that are fleeing persecution. But Peter, as you say and as the UN points out, there are some 65 million people around the world that understandably want to come to a different country to make a go economically, or take their kids into a better university, or a better health system. All of us as parents would want that, but as we're seeing in Europe and as we've seen here in this country, sovereign countries have the right to exert control over their borders. That's what we've done.

We are bringing people in through the Refugee and Humanitarian Programme. You would've seen over the last couple of weeks a celebration within the Yazidi community. Those people were facing persecution because of their religious belief and essentially were facing genocide from ISIS. We were able to bring those people in the right way, to provide them with support to start a new life in our country and that's the way that this Government chooses to operate its migration programme, not by allowing people smugglers to be in control, who dictate to the government of the day how and when and in what circumstances people arrive into our country. And we're just not going to tolerate that to be the case and we've been very clear about it.

PETER BEATTIE:

Peter I noticed a report, which you may or may not be aware of, from a guy called Ron Knight who is the Member for Manus Island who basically says that the asylum seekers not taken by the Americans he wants declared as illegal aliens and then deported. And obviously whenever there's a report like that there's some suggestion they may come to Australia. If that did happen, what ramifications would that have to the policy the Government's pursuing in the agreement?

PETER DUTTON:

Well Peter it's a good point. If you allow people to come to Australia then the people smugglers are out there again saying, 'look you only have to wait on Manus or Nauru a couple of years, you're going to Australia, pay your money.' And all of the intelligence that I receive from across the region in terms of the people smugglers activity is that they're out there pitching every day, to say, 'look you go to Nauru for a couple of years, eventually you'll end up in Australia. You go to Manus, you're going to end up in Sydney or Melbourne or Brisbane eventually.'

The boats would be back in business and we can't afford that because, as I said before, we're not going to have women and children drowning at sea. We're not going to have loss of control of our borders and our detention centres refilling because we can't verify identities of people who are coming in when they're told by people smugglers to destroy their passports. All of that is just unacceptable at every level.

And so we would see a re-emergence of the boat trade, the flotillas starting up again and that's why we've been very clear, regardless of what this person or anyone else says, they can hear this message very clearly from the Government, from the Prime Minister and myself; they are not going to settle in Australia under any circumstances.

And we'll help them, we do now and hundreds of people before them have taken settlement packages to go back to their country of origin and these people need to do the same.

PETER BEATTIE:

Peter the argument about, or the debate which you've seen which has been running over the last couple of days in relation to the Good Friday shooting on Manus Island. How is that resolved? I mean we all understand politics and the debate that takes place. I know there's an inquiry which is happening, an investigation, how does that resolve in terms of what actually

happened in terms of your position on it? I mean clearly you don't want this hanging around as some area of doubt in terms of what you've been told and what happened, so how do you get that resolved?

PETER DUTTON:

Well Peter, when you've got the ABC and others who are relying on the reports and the accounts of people that have been convicted of fraud and have been excluded from Parliament – they're taking their word over the word of the Australian Government – then I frankly think the ABC has lost the plot and I think they should be out apologising. The trouble is Peter, in relation to a lot of the journalists, they've morphed into advocates and they've lost control of any dispassionate view of this circumstance.

What I said is factual. I stand by it 100 per cent and I'm not going to be covered into a different position when I know what I've said to be the truth. And I'll stand by those comments and I expect the ABC and Fairfax and others to be making an apology in the next 24 hours or so given the revelations that have been released tonight in relation to their discredited witness.

I believe very strongly that there was a ramping up of the mood – of the tension on the ground. We have seen allegations and charges in relation to a number of sexual assaults.

And the fact remains that a number of males who were within the population on Manus Island were involved in leading a young boy into the detention centre and that matter is being investigated.

And If somebody from the ABC or from Fairfax or the Guardian or some of these fringe dwellers out in the internet have a different view, a more substantive view, a more informed view, then let them put it on the table.

But I've provided the facts as they've been advised to me by my Department and those people with knowledge of what's happened on the ground. And I'm not changing my position, my version, one bit because the advice that I've got I've reconfirmed again today.

And these people can take the word of somebody that's been discredited, but that is an issue frankly for the credibility of the ABC, Fairfax and others and I think they need to reflect on their position, because they've really turned into advocates as opposed to professional journalists.

PETER BEATTIE:

So you stand by what you've said on this from the beginning?

PETER DUTTON:

100 per cent. 100 per cent.

PETER BEATTIE:

Now Peter, we also wanted to move on to 457 visas and one area which you know I have a particular interest in is universities. And I notice you've sort of left the door open in terms of the definition of work experience for PhD students coming here and indeed the definition of work. So how will you deal with that? Because they are obviously important to our universities and I've seen reports where you're thinking about this. So what is your thinking and where do you think we can go in relation to universities and the concerns they've raised about this?

PETER DUTTON:

Yeah well Peter, before I make that point, I mean full credit to you, the work that you've done with Queensland Brain Institute, the Queensland Uni and the rest of it. It was a big agenda of

your government. I didn't agree with everything that you did as Premier, but I think you've covered yourself in glory in terms of the work you've done with universities. And Peter Hoj and others, I've been out, we've provided funding when I was Health Minister and otherwise to projects that they're doing around the brain and dementia, Alzheimer's and the rest of it, which is a real scourge on Australians and will increasingly be so. So I think there's some great work being done at other institutes around the country. They're just some of the most amazing people and make you so proud to see the research that they're doing.

So we've built in deliberately to the changes in the 457 programme. When we abolished the 457 programme we allowed twice yearly examination of the skills list. There will be skills that will come on, others that will go off, because we rely on the advice of the Department of Employment. But we've had constructive discussions with the Group of Eight and the universities otherwise about some concerns that they've got and I'm sure that we can work through those.

But what we don't want is a situation where people really aren't selling the virtue of that job; they're selling a migration outcome. So under the old 457 programme, once you'd done your four years, really there was written into the programme the ability to become a permanent resident and then a citizen. Now we need to have a look at that and whether or not that's the motivation for people to be taking up that position or whether, not universities, but some training organisations are using the citizenship outcome as a marketing tool. I'm just not sure that's the proper use of the system.

And so we're happy to have a look at individual cases and circumstances and grievances that people bring up, but the fundamentals remain.

PETER BEATTIE:

So with a university professor, they could go off the list depending on how you feel about it, how you feel that's being used by the universities?

PETER DUTTON:

We take the advice from the Department of Employment. The Department of Employment does an assessment of where there is a skills shortage within the Australian workplace and that's the advice that I need to rely on. But if there's additional information that the universities or others can provide to the Department of Employment, as I say, we've built in a twice yearly reassessment of the list and that's how it should operate.

Under Labor, where they had a doubling of the 457 numbers, there was an enormous list of something like 651 occupations on there where people could come under the 457 visa programme. So look we've rationalised that, we've cut out over 200, but that will change and its due for review in July and then at the end of the year as well.

So we'll work through with the universities and we've got a good relationship with them.

PETER MCGAURAN:

It's good to hear Minister that you're allowing this leeway. And you know for instance in the breeding and racing industries which I'm involved in, there's a shortage of Australian willing workers or skills base and the like. But this has opened up this whole question of to what extent Australians can or will fill a lot of rural based jobs, or even in the restaurant and catering industries. It's a very big topic. Governments for decades have wrestled with it and that is the deliberate non-participation in the workforce by some social security beneficiaries.

PETER DUTTON:

Well this is a two-sided coin I suppose. I mean on the one hand, we need to make sure that we've got jobs available for Australians that's at the forefront of our policy announcement to abolish the 457 visa last week. We want to make sure that we can put Australians into Australian jobs and that should be the default position. If we've got Australians who don't want to work, then the other side of the coin is that there needs to be a tightening up in relation to the way in which the sanctions work and Christian Porter and Alan Tudge in their portfolio of Social Services and Human Services I think have done an incredible job in dealing with that.

The welfare card – which makes it harder for people to spend money on alcohol or drugs or whatever it might be and requiring them to spend the money on supporting their family and providing for their children – all of that is designed to provide a further incentive for people to go into work. And if people aren't working then they can expect to have their benefits suspended or they can go to the back of the queue.

This is a difficulty, I mean we've got a country full of people who have worked hard, who have paid their taxes, who are working part time in retirement, or have recently retired. Those people deserve to have their taxpayers dollars treated with respect. And if young people believe that they don't have to work or they don't have to take that job or an employer's facing the frustration with one of these employees that won't turn up, then we need to clamp down on that and as a Government we are. There's a lot of work that we've done and that we'll continue to do to make sure that those people, if they're of working age and they have a capacity to work, then they work otherwise they won't be getting the benefit.

PETER BEATTIE:

Peter, the citizenship test changes that you've brought in. There's been some debate about them. What was the thinking behind that?

PETER DUTTON:

The thinking was to make sure that given all of the people that want to come to our country, that we have the best people become Australian citizens. And the great story of migration in this country is that people have come from war-torn Europe or war-torn Asia at different times and people have created a great opportunity for them and their families in our country. They've worked hard, they've provided for their children in terms of a good education etc. and we want that to be the story into the future as well. And we need to recognise at the same time that the world's a very different place today than it was even 10, let alone 20 years ago.

I don't think it's too much to ask in saying to people that when you come to our country, we want you to respect the heritage and the culture and background of your country of birth, but when you arrive in Australia and you want to become an Australian citizen then you have to abide by Australian laws. You have to abide by Australian values and be integrated into Australian society and I think that's - I think most Australians would support that as an application of common sense.

PETER MCGAURAN:

Agreed Peter and there's been widespread major majority support for the values and the standards now injected into the citizenship test. For me though the weakness is that if somebody fails the test or doesn't take the test because of a certainty because of one conviction or one idiocy over another, doesn't take the test, well there's no sanction against them. Would you ever consider the test being applied for permanent residency for instance?

PETER DUTTON:

Well Peter, there are different aspects that you can look at. I think if you're a permanent resident in this country then equally there should be an onus upon you to do the right thing and I've

cancelled visas of criminals and people committing offences - outlaw motorcycle gang members and a particular focus on paedophiles and others. And those numbers are up by 1200 per cent over the course of the last 12 or 18 months.

So there's a lot of work that we're doing to make sure that there's greater integrity in the system because again Australians have worked hard and we want to support people in creating a new life in Australia, taking the opportunity here, but we don't want to be taken advantage of. We don't want to be taken for a ride. The vast majority of people do the right thing, but those people that don't, don't need to expect that they can go on to permanent residency or Australian citizenship.

The interesting thing when you look back has been the silence from the Labor Party over the course of the last few days. Last week Mr Shorten had a number of his frontbenchers out saying different things and it's really unclear to me still now – even days later after our announcement – what Bill Shorten stands for in this space. And I think it's really incumbent upon the Labor Party to come out in a bipartisan way, support what I think is common sense in what the Government's put forward here and reign in some of the extremists within his own Party that don't believe in some of the values that we've talked about last week.

I think for example, if somebody's committing domestic violence, if they're a perpetrator of domestic violence, if they're abusive of women within the family unit, I don't think they should become Australian citizens. And equally I think it's important that people need to be able to speak the English language at least to the level of competent which we've included as part of this reform. But again, it seems the Labor Party's divided even on that point.

PETER MCGAURAN:

Yes. Actually Peter I believe all that, just to repeat myself, should be also applied for permanent residency. Moving to the Budget, which is obviously politically make or break for the Government in the short term, as it is economically for the country. Do you agree with the majority of economists who link one of the major factors for housing affordability - which will be a key plank of your Government's Budget - with the level of immigration?

PETER DUTTON:

Well Peter, I'll comment on the immigration part. In terms of the Budget, I'll leave that up to the Treasurer and the Finance Minister and the Prime Minister to comment on any specific measures or economic policy.

We have a net migration figure in this country of about 190,000 a year. It's come down quite dramatically since Labor was in power. Under Mr Rudd and Ms Gillard it was well over 300,000 a year in net terms. What we do know is that the majority of people do go to Sydney and Melbourne followed thirdly by Brisbane and it does have an impact in relation to providing those services - the housing, education - given the numbers that are involved and that, people will argue, could be a good or bad thing. I think we need to have a sensible debate about where people are going.

Certainly it's the case that from my perspective and others who take part in this debate, if we can encourage people out to regional areas where there are shortages, there are job vacancies available. I think it's a great thing to try and provide support to people to move out to regional areas, but ultimately if people are coming here to become citizens then they will make decisions about where to live, no different than others that have been here for generations. They rotate around family or support or jobs and you can't require or mandate that people live within a particular postcode. So we need to have a sensible debate about. But of course it has an impact

on the delivery of all of those services when people are rotating to one or two or three capital cities.

PETER BEATTIE:

Peter we've only got a couple of minutes left, but I'm not going to miss this opportunity and ask you something about Tony Abbott. I saw your comments on the weekend about respect being mutual, that he's entitled to respect and former Prime Ministers are entitled to respect, but we has to obviously respect the current Prime Minister, or something to that effect. I don't want to verbal you. What does the Party actually do in relation to Tony Abbott? Because we had the key researcher from Newspoll on last week and what he basically said was that every time Tony puts his head up and makes comments about these things it's divisive and the Liberal Party's vote's effected and it drops. Clearly the current position can't continue, so how does the Liberal Party actually resolve this with a former Prime Minister and a current Prime Minister? What do you think the direction should be?

PETER DUTTON:

Well the first rule Peter is to leave the commentary to the commentators and ...

PETER BEATTIE:

...that's you Peter...

PETER DUTTON:

...and not comment further. So look, my approach has been that as a – I have this view and I'm sure it's shared by many, but I'm a member of the Cabinet. If I accept an invitation from the leader of the day, the Prime Minister of the day, to be a member of the Cabinet then my loyalty is to the leader. And if I don't have confidence or faith in the leader then I resign from the

Cabinet and I don't serve in that ministry. I think that is an important approach to Westminster Government.

People have their own views. I was loyal to Tony Abbott as a member of his Cabinet. I accepted Malcolm Turnbull's invitation to be a part of his Government because I believed I could be loyal to him as leader and I did the same for John Howard when I served in John Howard's ministry. That's my approach and others can speak for their own approaches.

As I said on the weekend, we have a great deal of respect rightly for former Prime Ministers, for former leaders, as the Labor Party does for their former leaders and Prime Ministers. But it's a two way street. The respect goes both ways, the respect goes not only toward the former leader, but from the former leader, back to the current former leader and Party as well. And that's my approach, but again, commentators will comment on these things and you're best placed to comment on those sort of internal matters than we are.

I think what's most important - and when you talk about what people believe in - I mean people stop me on the street all the time saying we want to make sure our borders are secure. We want to know who's coming into our country. We support you in kicking out people that have committed crimes against Australians. We support you on the citizenship measures and the 457 abolition. People want to see their politicians talking about the matters that are important to them and in my space I think they're the priorities and I'm just going to continue to do that work and I know my other colleagues share the same view.

PETER BEATTIE:

Well Peter thanks. You're in a tough portfolio in Immigration. Doesn't matter who has it, it's one of the most difficult portfolios in any government. So to that extent we wish you well and thanks for being with us.

PETER DUTTON:

Thanks Peter and thanks Peter very much.

PETER MCGAURAN:

Thanks Pete.

[ENDS]

Extract 4: Dutton, P. (2017, August 10). *Doorstop Interview, Parliament House.*

Retrieved from: <https://minister.homeaffairs.gov.au/peterdutton/Pages/Doorstop-.aspx>

Subjects: Multi-agency operation; Manu Island; same-sex marriage plebiscite.

PETER DUTTON:

[start of recording]

...allegations and I'm advised that there's been one serving ABF officer who has been arrested as part of the Operation that people have seen over the course of the last couple of days in Sydney and obviously much further beyond. I'm also advised that there is a former Customs officer who has been arrested as part of the same Operation.

I want to apologise to all of the Australian Border Force officers for the alleged conduct of this one officer. This besmirches 5,500 officers who do a great job and the Government has put a lot of money into ACLEI to make sure that we can stamp out any corruption and like any law enforcement agency – whether it is the Australian Federal Police, the New South Wales Police, Queensland, Victoria, wherever it might be – we have the same resolve to weed out those people that would do the wrong thing.

It just takes one bad apple and there's obviously been a significant effort in relation to this investigation and we've been very supportive over a long period of time in relation that investigation. It should serve as a very clear warning to other people who might be minded to involve themselves in activities which are against the law that there are serious consequences to pay for that and I make just one more comment; that is to congratulate the Australian Federal Police and all of the agencies, the hundreds of officers who have been working on this particular Operation for a long period of time.

Obviously the scourge of drugs in our society is well known. So whether people are involved in the manufacturing or distribution of drugs, there is a big effort and a continued effort to try and expose those people, arrest and prosecute those people.

JOURNALIST:

How hard is it to find them and weed them out? I know we heard in a Senate Committee the other week about the number of people who have cards on the docks and they don't necessarily hand them back once they have been accredited. How hard is it to find the rotten apples and to weed them out?

PETER DUTTON:

The fact is that there's been corruption on the ports since the time of white settlement in our country. If you go back and read the history of the Sydney docks and ports in Melbourne and whatnot, where there's been exchange of goods and money at ports, there has always been corruption; there always will be and our job is to weed it out.

This should serve as a very clear message to anybody who is involved in, at the fringes of, consorting with any sort of criminal behaviour, then they need to realise that in the 21st century it is impossible for these people to commit crimes and to get away with it.

So we are going to continue to put more money into the investigative arm, which is ACLEI, which obviously is a separate authority from the Australian Border Force and as I say, like any law enforcement agency, it is hard to find these individuals, but when we're made aware of allegations, they're fully investigated and if they're substantiated then people face significant consequences.

JOURNALIST:

Minister, a man on Manus Island under Australia's care died this week. Do you and the Government take responsibility for that?

PETER DUTTON:

As I have said there will be a coronial inquest and no doubt a PNG Police investigation, which I'm advised is already underway. So I'll leave that detail to the PNG authorities to comment on.

Obviously as I've stated to you on many occasions, I don't want people on Manus Island. I've set a close date of the 31st of October. I didn't put people on Manus Island. My responsibility is to clean up the mess that was left to us by Labor because they had put people on Manus Island.

The important thing is that we aren't adding to the numbers on Manus Island. We have brokered an arrangement, as you are well aware with the United States, to take people from Manus and Nauru and we are doing that at the same time that we have stopped boats. That means that we are not adding to the numbers with new boat arrivals – bearing in mind at the peak of Labor's loss of control of our borders they were pulling a thousand people a week off boats and 1,200 people drowned at sea – we have not had one drowning under Operation Sovereign Borders and you know the hypocrisy expressed by Adam Bandt yesterday...he didn't ask one question of Labor in the House when 1,200 people, including men, women and children drowned at sea.

So we aren't going to take the hypocrisy of the Greens on this topic because they were complicit with the Labor Party when they set up for, not one, but 1,200 people to drown at sea. The loss of one life is one too many and I'm determined to get people off Manus and to do it in such a way that we don't restart boats and that remains the absolute resolve of this Government.

JOURNALIST:

Will the man's body be able to come to Australia for some kind of...

PETER DUTTON:

...I don't have any comment to make otherwise in relation to the issue.

JOURNALIST:

Just going back to these charges. The ABF has been under repeated scrutiny over the past few months. Do you think that this undermines Australians opinion of Border Force?

PETER DUTTON:

No. I think you've seen the Australian Border Force central to the investigation with the Australian Federal Police that has led to the great success with these raids over the last couple of days.

The Australian Border Force has 5,500 officers and like any law enforcement agency there will always be a very, very small corrupt element, but I've put that corrupt element on notice. I don't care whether they're within the ABF, within the Australian Federal Police, any agency across the Commonwealth, we have put additional resources into ACLEI, I've put additional resources into the professional standards unit within the Australian Border Force and we have led to the outcome here today of an officer being arrested. I put on notice, as I've said before and I'm very

serious about this, I won't tolerate one instance of corruption. We have a very important job to do and we are not going to be distracted by rogue elements that act like criminals that we are supposed to be locking up.

So I can't be any clearer in relation to how strong my resolve is and how personally I feel about this because it besmirches the 5,500 good officers within the ABF and the Australian public should have full faith in the AFP, in the Australian Border Force, the work that they do every day, just as I do.

JOURNALIST:

Can I ask you about the postal plebiscite? In many ways you're the mastermind and you were the driving force from what seems behind the Government for this. Is it right that the Bill be circulated before the plebiscite takes place so that people understand full well what they are voting for with the yes or no campaign?

PETER DUTTON:

Well look, I think the important thing is that we are moving now to honour our election commitment that is that because we can't get a plebiscite through, even though Bill Shorten at one stage supported a plebiscite, we can't get the plebiscite through the Senate – that's been knocked back now on two occasions – so we move to the postal plebiscite.

I want to pay tribute to Malcolm Turnbull because he is honouring his election commitment in a way that for example Julia Gillard never did, which was the undoing of her Prime Ministership. So I think Malcolm Turnbull has shown the courage to deal with a very difficult issue and we need now to go through that process.

In terms of the process otherwise, it's an issue for Mathias Cormann who is the Acting Special Minister of State to talk through any of that detail.

I haven't made any public comment in relation to this issue. I've expressed my comments publicly before in relation to the issue, but now that that matter has been settled, I'm the Immigration Minister and the Minister for Border Protection and I just don't want to add to that.

JOURNALIST:

But Minister it is an idea that you pushed and now we find out that, you know, the Electoral Act won't apply, can't apply to this particular vote which means there won't be any of the normal rules against bribery, about campaign material having to be authorised. Is that concerning? I mean what might be put out there in this campaign?

PETER DUTTON:

No, I said this morning that the debate on both sides should be conducted in a respectful way. I condemn absolutely people who are on the fringes of this argument – whether they are on the Left or the Right – putting out garbage about children of gay couples and all of that is rightly condemned. It has no place in any debate in our country.

It needs to be a respectful debate and these people that dismiss the views of people with strongly held religious belief, people who don't believe in same-sex marriage that somehow their view is worth less than somebody who is strongly in favour of same-sex marriage is a nonsense.

People have legitimate views on both sides of this argument and the beauty of the postal plebiscite is that people will be able to have their say and for an important social change, my

judgement is that people should have their say and that once the matter is resolved, it is obvious to all then the view of the Australian public.

JOURNALIST:

How much damage will be done if a large chunk of people refuse to vote and in effect had a protest vote and didn't vote? And would you have more authority if you had a couple of questions? Perhaps this spending \$122 million would be an ideal opportunity to ask people about the Republic and a whole stack of other issues, if you really think this is a great way to proceed with democracy?

PETER DUTTON:

Well I'm not often quoting *The Sydney Morning Herald*, but Peter Hartcher quoted I think the 38 per cent figure out of France where 38 per cent of people had voted for President Macron. Nobody is suggesting that that was an illegitimate vote because of turnout at 38 per cent...

JOURNALIST:

...so 38 per cent of people is going to be a good result?

PETER DUTTON:

Look, I mean that's for others to judge. I think it's important for this plebiscite to take place because it is an important social change, if that's what happens at the end of the process, but people need to have their say and those...I don't care whether you are in favour or against gay marriage, you should be entitled to have your say and those that shout down one side or the other, really just demean themselves. So let's have a respectful debate and we'll know the results within a few months.

JOURNALIST:

It's all well and good to say that you want people to conduct this debate with civility, but if the Electoral Act doesn't apply, you don't really have any control over that do you?

PETER DUTTON:

Well as I say, people can make comments. We've got freedom of speech in this country. There are many communities; the Jewish community is one for example where there are hateful things said online about Jews or kids within Jewish families, whatever it is and it's distasteful. It is disrespectful and it is unacceptable across society any form of discrimination or those sorts of comments which are not found in any factor at all and don't have a place in our debate.

But there is freedom of speech. People can say what they want in our country, which is a great pillar of our democracy, but people need to be respectful, they need to be mindful of the views of others and I'm hoping that that's the way the debate will be conducted.

JOURNALIST:

Just on the turnout issue again. I've spoke to a couple of your colleagues who are pushing for change this week and they've said that if there is a low turnout that they may not respect the result, they may still push for a Private Members' Bill or to get same-sex marriage legalised in some other way if it comes back no, but there's a very low turnout. What do you say to them?

PETER DUTTON:

Well there are lots of hypotheticals in that. In terms of turning out, I think Mark Dreyfus tweeted yesterday I understand to say now is the time to get on with the campaign and I think that's what will happen on both sides, that's what we've predicted once a decision had been made, once a process had been put in place, both sides will quickly turn themselves to putting

their respective cases and putting the case for people to vote in the plebiscite. That is a good thing because people should have their say.

We went to the election with an election commitment. Now we could quite easily be standing here with you asking me questions about why Malcolm Turnbull had broken his election promise. He hasn't. He honoured the election promise. That's what we took to the people and he has honoured that and full credit to him.

JOURNALIST:

Given the turnout rate in France, can you commit that if a similar turnout rate was to happen with this postal vote that you would trust the validity of that result?

PETER DUTTON:

As I say, it's a question for others that are involved in the process and the conduct of the postal plebiscite. I don't have any say in relation to...

JOURNALIST:

...do you support a yes or no question, is that what you support?

PETER DUTTON:

I've said that from my perspective I personally don't believe in the change. I believe that marriage should be between a man and a woman. I've held that view for a long period of time. Equally I've said because I have strongly advocated the democratic process here, that I will be bound by the outcome; that is that if the majority of Australians come back and say that they support the change, I will be voting in the Parliament in favour of the change in relation to same-sex marriage...

JOURNALIST:

Is that the case regardless of the turnout?

PETER DUTTON:

Yes, because I think again the chicken littles out there will be proved wrong – as they were a month ago. I think people will now turn their efforts to turnout. I think that's important and I think at the end of this process, frankly, there will be greater legitimacy to change if change is to take place or people will have heard from the Australian public if it turns out that people are in a majority against the change and we respect that either way.

JOURNALIST:

But how will people know what they're voting for if the Bill isn't circulated before the postal plebiscite takes place?

PETER DUTTON:

No look in terms of this, now you've drawn me down a path where I said I wasn't going to comment, but...

JOURNALIST:

[inaudible]

PETER DUTTON:

That is not right, but let me answer it this way; I think it is right that it is a Private Members' Bill at the end of the process. I don't think it should be a Government Bill and that's been the Cabinet decision and that's important for a couple of reasons because we have the ability for Members of Parliament, on both sides of this debate – as we saw with the David Fawcett

process – able to construct a Bill – as we've seen with other conscience votes or free votes in the Parliament. There's a history of this where advocates and people that don't support the change are able to move amendments, are able to deal with issues that are important to them, that they want to see reflected in the Bill and those issues can be tested on the floor of the Parliament and not just in the House of Representatives, but in the Senate as well.

So there will be a process of compromise. I think that will provide ultimately with a stronger Bill. But the concept of a change to the definition if you like to support or to oppose same-sex marriage is the substantive issue that's to be dealt with in the postal plebiscite and that is what's being voted on. The minutia of the Bill will be determined at a later time.

JOURNALIST:

And just to be very clear, do you call on all your colleagues to respect the result of this vote no matter the turnout and no matter the result?

PETER DUTTON:

Of course I do. I want people to, as I say genuinely, I want people to engage respectfully in the process. I've been very genuine in terms of my involvement in this process and wanting to see us keep our election promise, to make sure that people had their say because it is an important social matter, where people as I say, for good reasons, understandable reasons, have views for and against and once we determine those views then the outcome should be respected by people.

People who say that 'look it's a non-binding vote' if there's a majority of people who support same-sex marriage then it somehow can't get through the Parliament, as I've explained and others in my position have explained, we will be voting in favour of same-sex marriage if there is a majority out of the plebiscite and that does assure its passage through the Lower House.

I've been very clear publicly and privately about that being my position for a long period of time and that's not going to change.

Thank you.

[ends]

Extract 5: Dutton, P. (2017, November 27). *Interview with The Project, Channel 10.*

Retrieved from: <https://minister.homeaffairs.gov.au/peterdutton/Pages/Interview-with-The-Project,-Channel-10.aspx>

Subjects: Manus Island.

E&EO.....

WALEED ALY:

We thank now the Immigration Minister Peter Dutton for joining us tonight.

PETER DUTTON:

Pleasure, thank you.

WALEED ALY:

So this all it seems boils down to West Lorengau. There are three facilities. Two of them are broadly ready. There is one that it seems isn't. You've been saying it is. We've got video of it here that was provided I think Saturday. It shows it as a construction site. The UN's saying that. Tim Costello has just been there and is saying that. Why isn't it ready?

PETER DUTTON:

Let's just take a step back. There were 600 people that were in the Regional Processing Centre Waleed, so those people have come out. There were some 140 or so non-refugees – so people that have been found not to be refugees – the rest were refugees. So we've got three centres. We've got big numbers and obviously we need to accommodate those.

The East Lorengau Centre I think has got 305 people in it at the moment – there's capacity for 400; at a stretch 440. We've got 102 people that are getting medical assistance in Port Moresby at the moment. What the construction is about is not about the 600, it's about trying to grow the capacity for those people when they come back from Port Moresby – and also we've got about 52 people in Australia at the moment that are getting medical assistance – and the plan is that they will go back once all of that medical assistance has been given.

So nobody denies that there's construction work going on, but it's to actually increase by a couple hundred beds so that we can bring people eventually from Port Moresby and potentially from Australia as well.

So for the 600 we've got existing accommodation. We've spent probably close to \$10 million on the East Lorengau Centre. It's been up and running for the last two or three years. There's capacity there for the existing numbers, but we are growing the number.

WALEED ALY:

That's the point there isn't...but none of those numbers you cite change the maths, right? You've got East Lorengau working, fine. It's not enough for the number that are there at the moment and so that's why you need West Lorengau. It's not done.

PETER DUTTON:

Let's just go through it; so at West Lorengau at the moment there's 142. We've got capacity growing to 240 at that site. At Hillside Haus we've got 104 people. They can accommodate 170 people and there's construction there as well to go to 198.

So for all of the people that have come out – and we've got some people that have decided not to go into any of the centres; we've got some people, refugees who have entered into relationships with people on Manus Island, they're married, they've got kids and they've decided not to take up the accommodation option at all, so they are living within the community – there are a number of people that have taken that option as well.

STEVE PRICE:

So wouldn't it have been better to leave Manus operate and not turn off the water and the power until everything else was finished, so that you could then have a seamless transition?

PETER DUTTON:

But Steve all of the capacity was there before people had to move from the Regional Processing Centre. We'd given six months' notice. We'd spent \$10 million on the new facility at East Lorengau; the other two facilities at Hillside Haus and West Lorengau as well, but we have got construction works so that we have greater capacity, needed capacity for people, the 102 that are getting medical assistance at the moment, – they're not due to come back for a while – and the construction work will be done by the time they get back.

STEVE PRICE:

Tim Costello says you're not telling us the truth.

PETER DUTTON:

But again, part of the problem here is that there's a lot of tweets and a lot of information, it's an emotional area. I can understand a lot of people want all of these refugees, non-refugees to come to Australia. I understand that Steve. Now, the job I've got is to make sure we don't get new boats start. The people smugglers are saying at the moment if you can get to PNG for a couple years or to Nauru then you'll come to Australia. I don't want that. I don't want drownings at sea.

WALEED ALY:

None of that is relevant to this current controversy. This isn't about those people coming to Australia. This is about the fact that you had a Supreme Court ruling in PNG that said this whole thing was illegal, gave you a closure date. You therefore had to have facilities ready by that closure date and you don't. Now there are these people who are starving.

PETER DUTTON:

Waleed, I've just read out the facts to you mate. I understand the emotion that's involved...

WALEED ALY:

...I'm not being emotional about it...

PETER DUTTON:

...I've given you the facts...

CARRIE BICKMORE:

...but what about Tim Costello who has actually been there; because you haven't been there. He's been there and he's saying that you're not telling the Australian public the truth. So is he lying or are you lying?

PETER DUTTON:

Again, look at what I've just said. There is construction work going on, but it doesn't relate to accommodation for the 600 people that have come out of the Regional Processing Centre.

Nobody denies that there's construction taking place, but the construction works that are taking place at the moment increase the capacity so that we can accommodate the extra 154 or so people who are in Port Moresby, or are in Australia, or for some who have said I don't want to live there, I'm happy with the arrangements on Manus, I want to live in the community; I've got kids to a local PNG wife and they're in a relationship with somebody there. So we're creating extra capacity. That's what the construction work is about.

For the people who have come out of the Regional Processing Centre – to go to your point Waleed – I mean we have done the construction work, we have provided the facilities that are there and there's a lot of misinformation that's around. We spent about \$30 million a year on medical services as well. There's bus transport that goes around. These are open centres where people come and go from the centre, as opposed to a jail I guess, a view that people would conjure up in their own minds. So if you just take a step back from the emotion that's on Twitter; yes I understand people...

STEVE PRICE:

...you can understand the public, because the public hear two completely different stories; one from you and one from the refugee activists.

WALEED ALY:

Well it's not just...this is an important point; it's not just activists, Tim Costello is not an activist, he leads a humanitarian organisation, he ran a humanitarian mission, he's not active on

Twitter, re-tweeting refugees that are...that's not his bag. He just goes over there and says this is what I saw, and it's backed up by the UN and what he saw, and what he says he saw is that there's just insufficient capacity.

PETER DUTTON:

Waleed, the UN wants people on Manus to come to Australia, right? That's their stated position. Now, there are lots of...

WALEED ALY:

...so the UN is making up facts in order to...

PETER DUTTON:

...there are lots of good people that have a lot of emotion in this space. There's a letter out today from academics, from doctors, lots of people who want people to come from Manus to Australia. I have to make a decision – I didn't put people on Manus – I want to get them off, but I want to do it in a way that doesn't restart boats and the intelligence that's available to me from Indonesia, from Sri Lanka, from Vietnam, all of those areas where we have a footprint, we look at what people are saying; they are saying right now that if these people come from Manus to Australia, then the boats will restart.

WALEED ALY:

Can you explain one thing to me just on that point because we are running out of time. Why is it if they end up in America that won't be an incentive?

PETER DUTTON:

Because New Zealand is a very different situation to any other country. If you're living in New Zealand, it's essentially like an extension of Australia. So you can come on what's called a 444 visa, which is issued on arrival. So if you're a New Zealand citizen, you have an as of right travel from Auckland to Sydney.

WALEED ALY:

But you could change that with a legislative fix. The end of the story though that if they end up in America...

PETER DUTTON:

...we tried to do that and we couldn't get it through...

WALEED ALY:

...sure, but if they end up in America, that's a pretty sweet deal isn't it? I mean it's the same problem. Why wouldn't that start the boats?

PETER DUTTON:

But again; a) because if you get to America you're not coming to Australia...

WALEED ALY:

...so you think they only want to get to Australia and America's not good enough for them?

PETER DUTTON:

Waleed, I get the intelligence reports, I see the information, the interviews with people; they want to come to Australia. I understand that. There are 65 million in the world that want to

come to Australia. Last year we had the biggest offshore intake of refugees since 1983 – so we are doing a lot on that side.

I want to get people out of Manus. I don't want false hope being provided to them. We've provided settlement packages to go back to their country of origin. The deal that Mr Rudd struck with Prime Minister O'Neill is that the refugees will settle in PNG. We've got third-country arrangements, including the US, and I'm hoping we'll get more people uplifted from Manus to the US as quickly as possible. I want it closed. I don't want new arrivals filling the vacancies and we're trying to do that in the most sensible way possible.

WALEED ALY:

Alright. We are unfortunately out of time. I'd love to keep going with this, but thank you very much for turning up. We appreciate it.

PETER DUTTON:

Thanks mate. Cheers.

[ENDS]

Extract 6: Dutton, P. (2017, November 24). Press Conference, Brisbane. Retrieved from: <https://minister.homeaffairs.gov.au/peterdutton/Pages/Press-Conference-Brisbane-24112017.aspx>

PETER DUTTON:

Thank you for being here today.

I'm really pleased that people have now moved out of the Regional Processing Centre.

People were given six months notice that the Regional Processing Centre was closing. The very clear message that the Government's had from day one, that I repeat today, is that these people will not be coming to Australia.

The Australian taxpayer has provided millions of dollars for new centres for new arrangements for people to leave the Regional Processing Centre and to move into those centres.

What we want now is for people to accept their offer to go to the United States, to accept the resettlement package and go back to their country of origin, to settle in PNG, to go to Nauru; but under no circumstances are people coming to Australia.

I've been very clear with the advocates here in Australia and I repeat this again today: you are offering out false hope to people who are in a difficult situation, as we've seen with the footage over the last couple of weeks, you have compounded their problems by allowing them some message of false hope that somehow if they stayed in the Regional Processing Centre in those conditions, that it would twist the arm of the Australian Government that we would change our policy and somehow those people would settle in Australia.

That cruel hoax needs to come to an end.

The Labor Party and the Greens and these advocates have been holding out this cruel hoax and providing this false promise to people who are in a very difficult situation and it needs to come to an end today.

I see Mr Newman has put out a press release calling for all sorts of things. He should put out a press release apologising on behalf of the Labor Party for putting these people on Manus Island in the first place.

Now we will work with the PNG authorities, as we have done in the past, to make sure that services are provided at the East Lorengau centre, at Hillside Haus and the other centres, provided by way of accommodation, for these people.

But I have been very clear that the intelligence has said to us that if you send people to New Zealand, the boats will restart and New Zealand is not an option that's on the table for us now and for Labor to be calling for these people to go immediately to New Zealand shows the same emotion that Kevin Rudd and Julia Gillard had when they undid the policies that stopped the boats under John Howard.

It's very clear to all Australians that if Bill Shorten was to be the Prime Minister after the next election, then clearly the Left would take the policy over again, the boats would restart, the drownings at sea would recommence and the kids would be back in detention.

Now I'm not going to allow that to happen.

We are not going to have deaths at sea. I'm not going to allow the people smugglers to get back in control of this arrangement.

Operation Sovereign Borders has come together over the last few years. We made announcements about the closure of the Regional Processing Centre as the next stage in Operation Sovereign Borders and we are not going to blink in the face of people smugglers trying to put new people onto boats. That is not going to happen under this Government.

I am pleased that people have moved out of the Regional Processing Centre. I want to thank the PNG authorities for the work that they've done. Both the immigration authorities as well as the police on Manus Island and we will continue to work with these people to see if the offer of a resettlement in one of these other countries can be facilitated because, as I say, under no circumstance will people be coming to Australia.

JOURNALIST:

Mr Dutton have you heard of any reports of injuries from the authorities or the people they were removing this morning?

PETER DUTTON:

My understanding of the injuries, and this may have been an injury from yesterday, but talking about three people as I understand. All three are if a minor nature, one is dehydration which, actually again I think was an issue from yesterday. There was an issue with a person who was running from the centre, tripped, and I think has minor grazings I am advised, and I'm advised there is one other person has an ankle issue which I think relates to an insect bite or something. That's the information I have, that I've been advised of.

There are lots of claims here, all I would say to you is, look at the facts as opposed to the emotion. All of the claims that have been made over months and months by advocates here have all been designed not to convey fact to the Australian people or to the media, they have been designed to try and run a propaganda war to try and twist the Government's arm to bring people here.

So there is a lot of emotion in this space. People have been moved from the Regional Processing Centre into the new arrangements and we will provide whatever support we can. As I say whatever support we can to see people resettle elsewhere.

I've said for a long time, I wanted the Regional Processing Centre closed. I don't want people living there. We've provided the new arrangements, but it is a temporary arrangement until people can go back to their country of origin.

JOURNALIST:

Were you concerned at all about any footage that has been released showing police hitting someone?

PETER DUTTON:

Well again I would like to see the footage, because there are lots of claims made on social media. There are clips that are taken, but a lot of this doesn't add up to the facts on the ground.

People have complained about the living conditions within the Regional Processing Centre because they trashed the place and we've provided a new \$10 million facility for people to move into.

We didn't trash the accommodation. We turned the water and power off with six months notice and asked them to move from that centre into the new centre, and again, all of this is designed by way of trying to twist the Government's arm which is just not going to happen. And offering out this false hope to people is unacceptable.

The fact is the Regional Processing Centre was on the naval base on Manus Island. If people were squatting here in Enoggera or at Holsworthy, wherever it might be on a naval base or an army or defence base around the country, at some point the police would move in to move them out.

These people had been given ample notice to move out of the Regional Processing Centre because we wanted to move them into a better, newer, accommodation facility.

The fact people have tried to twist this into some sort of political outcome, particularly the actions of the Greens and the Labor Party here, have been completely shameless, given that they were the parties in Government when these people tried to arrive in Australia by boat and were sent to Manus Island.

JOURNALIST:

There will be another rally tonight, no doubt, with the election tomorrow. What do you say to those people – is it still going to be false hope?

PETER DUTTON:

People can march all they want. I've presided over an arrangement where I've got every child out of detention. I've closed 17 detention centres. We had the biggest offshore intake of refugees last year since 1983. So we have the ability to control our borders and still have a generous intake of refugees. But I'm not going to allow 1200 people to drown at sea.

All of these do-gooders and advocates and people that are holding out this false hope, and frankly, lying to the people on Manus Island, where were they when 1200 people drowned at sea and 8,000 kids went into detention under Labor?

Where were they?

This is the difficulty – they are full of advice and no doubt some of them have big hearts and are generous, but they are providing false hope.

These people are not coming to Australia.

I've been clear and consistent, we've not said one thing and done something else.

The advice is clear, if you allow people to go to New Zealand, and it's a back doorway into Australia, the boats will restart.

That's Labor's recipe for disaster after we're still in the process of cleaning up their last disaster.

So it seems to me that Bill Shorten and the Labor Party haven't learnt the lessons of Rudd and Gillard and if they were elected at the next election, you would see the same deaths at sea and the same disaster of people arriving on boats.

JOURNALIST:

Just going back to the trashing that you mentioned earlier, do you have any proof of that vandalism?

PETER DUTTON:

Well you've seen the footage which is clear for all people to see. Their own footage which they tried to spin into people being led to believe that somehow that was the condition in which they were asked to live.

They were told six months ago that we had a close date of 31st of October. The new facility was arranged. It was built. Its been provided for by the PNG authorities with Australian Government funding. Yet, all of these actions, as I say, are designed to try and get a different political outcome.

Now the Greens might think if people come from Manus, that's a great political win for them. They didn't care when people drowning at sea when they were in Coalition with the Labor Government under Gillard.

But the fact is that we have stopped those drownings, we have got the kids out of detention, I want to get people off Manus Island. I didn't put the people on Manus Island. My responsibility is to get them off and clean up Labor's mess and that's what I'm doing.

JOURNALIST:

The PNG police spokesman says that the future of the men on Manus is Australia's responsibility, what's your response to that?

PETER DUTTON:

There's been a Regional Processing Centre arrangement that was signed by Mr Rudd and Prime Minister O'Neill, that's the arrangement that we operate under which is the Government to Government agreement and obviously we work very closely with the PNG authorities and, as I said before, I thank very much the efforts of the customs and immigration people within PNG, as well as the PNG defence force, where the base is located, as well as the police within PNG as well.

But the Regional Processing Centre arrangements that we operate under were negotiated by Labor.

They mean that people that have been found to be refugees have the ability to settle in PNG and that's the arrangement we operate under to this very day.

Thank you.

[ENDS]

Extract 7: Fischer Baum, R., Miller, G., Vitkovskaya, J. (2017, April 3). 'This deal will make me look terrible': Full Transcripts of Trump's calls with Mexico and Australia, *The Washington Post*, Retrieved from: <https://minister.homeaffairs.gov.au/peterdutton/Pages/Interview-with-The-Project,-Channel-10.aspx>

WALEED ALY:

We thank now the Immigration Minister Peter Dutton for joining us tonight.

PETER DUTTON:

Pleasure, thank you.

WALEED ALY:

So this all it seems boils down to West Lorengau. There are three facilities. Two of them are broadly ready. There is one that it seems isn't. You've been saying it is. We've got video of it here that was provided I think Saturday. It shows it as a construction site. The UN's saying that. Tim Costello has just been there and is saying that. Why isn't it ready?

PETER DUTTON:

Let's just take a step back. There were 600 people that were in the Regional Processing Centre Waleed, so those people have come out. There were some 140 or so non-refugees – so people that have been found not to be refugees – the rest were refugees. So we've got three centres. We've got big numbers and obviously we need to accommodate those.

The East Lorengau Centre I think has got 305 people in it at the moment – there's capacity for 400; at a stretch 440. We've got 102 people that are getting medical assistance in Port Moresby at the moment. What the construction is about is not about the 600, it's about trying to grow the capacity for those people when they come back from Port Moresby – and also we've got about 52 people in Australia at the moment that are getting medical assistance – and the plan is that they will go back once all of that medical assistance has been given.

So nobody denies that there's construction work going on, but it's to actually increase by a couple hundred beds so that we can bring people eventually from Port Moresby and potentially from Australia as well.

So for the 600 we've got existing accommodation. We've spent probably close to \$10 million on the East Lorengau Centre. It's been up and running for the last two or three years. There's capacity there for the existing numbers, but we are growing the number.

WALEED ALY:

That's the point there isn't...but none of those numbers you cite change the maths, right? You've got East Lorengau working, fine. It's not enough for the number that are there at the moment and so that's why you need West Lorengau. It's not done.

PETER DUTTON:

Let's just go through it; so at West Lorengau at the moment there's 142. We've got capacity growing to 240 at that site. At Hillside Haus we've got 104 people. They can accommodate 170 people and there's construction there as well to go to 198.

So for all of the people that have come out – and we've got some people that have decided not to go into any of the centres; we've got some people, refugees who have entered into relationships with people on Manus Island, they're married, they've got kids and they've decided not to take up the accommodation option at all, so they are living within the community – there are a number of people that have taken that option as well.

STEVE PRICE:

So wouldn't it have been better to leave Manus operate and not turn off the water and the power until everything else was finished, so that you could then have a seamless transition?

PETER DUTTON:

But Steve all of the capacity was there before people had to move from the Regional Processing Centre. We'd given six months' notice. We'd spent \$10 million on the new facility at East Lorengau; the other two facilities at Hillside Haus and West Lorengau as well, but we have got construction works so that we have greater capacity, needed capacity for people, the 102 that are getting medical assistance at the moment, – they're not due to come back for a while – and the construction work will be done by the time they get back.

STEVE PRICE:

Tim Costello says you're not telling us the truth.

PETER DUTTON:

But again, part of the problem here is that there's a lot of tweets and a lot of information, it's an emotional area. I can understand a lot of people want all of these refugees, non-refugees to come to Australia. I understand that Steve. Now, the job I've got is to make sure we don't get new boats start. The people smugglers are saying at the moment if you can get to PNG for a couple years or to Nauru then you'll come to Australia. I don't want that. I don't want drownings at sea.

WALEED ALY:

None of that is relevant to this current controversy. This isn't about those people coming to Australia. This is about the fact that you had a Supreme Court ruling in PNG that said this whole thing was illegal, gave you a closure date. You therefore had to have facilities ready by that closure date and you don't. Now there are these people who are starving.

PETER DUTTON:

Waleed, I've just read out the facts to you mate. I understand the emotion that's involved...

WALEED ALY:

...I'm not being emotional about it...

PETER DUTTON:

...I've given you the facts...

CARRIE BICKMORE:

...but what about Tim Costello who has actually been there; because you haven't been there. He's been there and he's saying that you're not telling the Australian public the truth. So is he lying or are you lying?

PETER DUTTON:

Again, look at what I've just said. There is construction work going on, but it doesn't relate to accommodation for the 600 people that have come out of the Regional Processing Centre.

Nobody denies that there's construction taking place, but the construction works that are taking place at the moment increase the capacity so that we can accommodate the extra 154 or so people who are in Port Moresby, or are in Australia, or for some who have said I don't want to live there, I'm happy with the arrangements on Manus, I want to live in the community; I've got kids to a local PNG wife and they're in a relationship with somebody there. So we're creating extra capacity. That's what the construction work is about.

For the people who have come out of the Regional Processing Centre – to go to your point Waleed – I mean we have done the construction work, we have provided the facilities that are there and there's a lot of misinformation that's around. We spent about \$30 million a year on medical services as well. There's bus transport that goes around. These are open centres where

people come and go from the centre, as opposed to a jail I guess, a view that people would conjure up in their own minds. So if you just take a step back from the emotion that's on Twitter; yes I understand people...

STEVE PRICE:

...you can understand the public, because the public hear two completely different stories; one from you and one from the refugee activists.

WALEED ALY:

Well it's not just...this is an important point; it's not just activists, Tim Costello is not an activist, he leads a humanitarian organisation, he ran a humanitarian mission, he's not active on Twitter, re-tweeting refugees that are...that's not his bag. He just goes over there and says this is what I saw, and it's backed up by the UN and what he saw, and what he says he saw is that there's just insufficient capacity.

PETER DUTTON:

Waleed, the UN wants people on Manus to come to Australia, right? That's their stated position. Now, there are lots of...

WALEED ALY:

...so the UN is making up facts in order to...

PETER DUTTON:

...there are lots of good people that have a lot of emotion in this space. There's a letter out today from academics, from doctors, lots of people who want people to come from Manus to Australia. I have to make a decision – I didn't put people on Manus – I want to get them off,

but I want to do it in a way that doesn't restart boats and the intelligence that's available to me from Indonesia, from Sri Lanka, from Vietnam, all of those areas where we have a footprint, we look at what people are saying; they are saying right now that if these people come from Manus to Australia, then the boats will restart.

WALEED ALY:

Can you explain one thing to me just on that point because we are running out of time. Why is it if they end up in America that won't be an incentive?

PETER DUTTON:

Because New Zealand is a very different situation to any other country. If you're living in New Zealand, it's essentially like an extension of Australia. So you can come on what's called a 444 visa, which is issued on arrival. So if you're a New Zealand citizen, you have an as of right travel from Auckland to Sydney.

WALEED ALY:

But you could change that with a legislative fix. The end of the story though that if they end up in America...

PETER DUTTON:

...we tried to do that and we couldn't get it through...

WALEED ALY:

...sure, but if they end up in America, that's a pretty sweet deal isn't it? I mean it's the same problem. Why wouldn't that start the boats?

PETER DUTTON:

But again; a) because if you get to America you're not coming to Australia...

WALEED ALY:

...so you think they only want to get to Australia and America's not good enough for them?

PETER DUTTON:

Waleed, I get the intelligence reports, I see the information, the interviews with people; they want to come to Australia. I understand that. There are 65 million in the world that want to come to Australia. Last year we had the biggest offshore intake of refugees since 1983 – so we are doing a lot on that side.

I want to get people out of Manus. I don't want false hope being provided to them. We've provided settlement packages to go back to their country of origin. The deal that Mr Rudd struck with Prime Minister O'Neill is that the refugees will settle in PNG. We've got third-country arrangements, including the US, and I'm hoping we'll get more people uplifted from Manus to the US as quickly as possible. I want it closed. I don't want new arrivals filling the vacancies and we're trying to do that in the most sensible way possible.

WALEED ALY:

Alright. We are unfortunately out of time. I'd love to keep going with this, but thank you very much for turning up. We appreciate it.

PETER DUTTON:

Thanks mate. Cheers.

[ENDS]

Appendix 2

Exemplar extracts: Border control equating to multiculturalism, freedom, harmony and/or Australian values

Extract 1

We discussed the very principle that I raised at the United Nations last year when I made the point there that our strong border protection – which the Coalition Government, under the leadership of PM Abbott in 2013, continued under my Government and enhanced under my Government – our strong border protection gives Australians confidence in the immigration system, gives them confidence in our humanitarian programs, underpins the commitment in our – the most successful multicultural society in the world.

- Transcript: Malcolm Turnbull, 22 April 2017

Extract 2

Can I just make a few observations though about the situation with people smuggling and refugees in general. After the Labor government came into power in Australia in 2007, John Howard's strong border protection policies were altered. As a result, we saw over 50,000 unlawful arrivals and 1200 deaths at sea. Australia's immigration policy had been outsourced to people smugglers, the worst of the worst criminals. There were 8,000 children in detention at one point, it was a catastrophe. Rudd, as you know, was replaced by Julia Gillard and then came back briefly before an election and it was during that period that he recognised the failure of his changes to border protection policy and asylum seekers who had been intercepted were taken to Nauru and Manus. Since then, the boats have stopped. There has not been a successful people smuggling

operation directed at Australia for well over a thousand days. There no children in detention. That has been a great achievement.

- Transcript: Malcolm Turnbull, 05 November 2017

Appendix 3

Exemplar extracts: Threats to Australia by those crossing borders

Extract 1

More than 14,500 refugees waiting in UN camps were denied a place under our offshore humanitarian program in those days – the places going instead to those arriving illegally by boat. Taxpayers paid over A\$10 billion for managing these arrivals – money that could have been spent on hospitals or schools. It's a record, a shameful record that utterly vindicates the Coalition's border protection policies.

- Transcript: Malcolm Turnbull, 10 July 2017

Extract 2

The important thing to realise though is the threat hasn't gone away. We've turned back 30 boats containing some 765 people over the course of the last 1000 days and had those 30 boats got through, I promise you this, that there would have been 300,000 that followed. And this problem will not go away because people will always want to come to a country like Australia and this Government has the resolve to make sure that we stare these people smugglers down and we're just not going to – we're not going to step back from that resolve.

- Transcript: Peter Dutton, 24 April 2017

Appendix 4

Exemplar extracts: Dismissal of other accounts

Extract 1

Well Peter, when you've got the ABC and others who are relying on the reports and the accounts of people that have been convicted of fraud and have been excluded from Parliament – they're taking their word over the word of the Australian Government – then I frankly think the ABC has lost the plot and I think they should be out apologising. The trouble is Peter, in relation to a lot of the journalists, they've morphed into advocates and they've lost control of any dispassionate view of this circumstance. What I said is factual. I stand by it 100 per cent and I'm not going to be covered into a different position when I know what I've said to be the truth. And I'll stand by those comments and I expect the ABC and Fairfax and others to be making an apology in the next 24 hours or so given the revelations that have been released tonight in relation to their discredited witness. I believe very strongly that there was a ramping up of the mood – of the tension on the ground. We have seen allegations and charges in relation to a number of sexual assaults. And the fact remains that a number of males who were within the population on Manus Island were involved in leading a young boy into the detention centre and that matter is being investigated. And If somebody from the ABC or from Fairfax or the Guardian or some of these fringe dwellers out in the internet have a different view, a more substantive view, a more informed view, then let them put it on the table. But I've provided the facts as they've been advised to me by my Department and those people with knowledge of what's happened on the ground. And I'm not changing my position, my version, one bit because the advice that I've got I've reconfirmed again today. And these people can take the word of somebody that's been

discredited, but that is an issue frankly for the credibility of the ABC, Fairfax and others and I think they need to reflect on their position, because they've really turned into advocates as opposed to professional journalists.

- Transcript: Peter Dutton, 24 April 2017

Extract 2

Well Ray, I have been very clear that my job is to act in our national interest and to make sure that – as I say, our priority is to get people off Nauru and Manus who have been there for a long period of time now. They were there because Labor allowed 50,000 people to come on 800 boats. It's been well over 900 days since we have had a successful people smuggling venture and the people smugglers are still out there. People who think that this problem has gone away only need to look at their television sets of a night-time to see what's happening in Europe and people would quickly be lining up again in Indonesia or Sri Lanka, or wherever it might be, to get onto boats if they thought the way was open again. So look Labor can play these silly games. In the end, what Julie's concentrating on, what I'm concentrating on, the Prime Minister is concentrating on, is cleaning up Labor's mess and I think we have been successful by anyone's test in terms of stopping the boats and we now need to get people of Manus and Nauru.

- Transcript: Peter Dutton, 23 February 2017