

The Role Of The New Zealand Government In Handling Terrorism Through The Media

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Abstract

New Zealand, which is known as a peaceful country, is faced with the problem of terrorism. Terrorism cases that occur based on the existence of Islamophobic culture and immigrants entering New Zealand also have a connection with the role of mass media in a cause that concerns politics and government. The purpose of this study is to describe the dynamics of terrorism that occurs in New Zealand, as well as the role of the government in solving terrorism through mass media. The method used is a qualitative method with a type of descriptive approach through literature study. Based on the results of the study, it can be understood that the dynamics of terrorism that occur are so complex that then the resolution of terrorism cases is carried out by the government by making policies against actors involved in terrorism tragedies, especially immigrant perpetrators, and collaborating with human rights organizations established by the Foundation Against Islamophobia and Racism (FAIR) which aims to advocate for the human rights of independent Muslims based in New Zealand in counteract Islamophobia. In addition, this article helps to understand that the Government through the Prime Minister of New Zealand also met several Muslim community leaders in Christchurch where he ensured that the New Zealand Government will guarantee the security of every citizen and guarantee the freedom to worship and guarantee the freedom to express the culture and religion of each citizen and with the help of the media in the aftermath of the tragedy of terrorism is expected to reduce the circulation of videos of terror attacks so as not to provoke the community by traumatic, but help victims out of fear of conflict that occurs. The role of the government in efforts to maintain the integrity of the country's territory through cross-sectoral communication and cooperation can then be utilized by local actors to solve problems and participate in maintaining national security.

Keywords: Role of Government, Terrorism, Media, New Zealand.

INTRODUCTION

In the public arena, various issues and social problems such as violence and conflict have always been public consumption presented with various perspectives by the covering media. The media becomes not just a row of letters or images without meaning, more than that, it also acts as a messenger. Not only as a medium, but the media can also position themselves as actors in defining social reality and choosing what issues are considered important and relevant. We can see this phenomenon in the increasingly diverse and sophisticated communication media industry with the presentation of various kinds of information that is abundant. The media underwent a change of character following the political changes taking place in the country. As one of the social forces, the media no longer only conveys reality but works based on tendencies, interests, and alignments that it considers important (Santosa, 2017).

Mass media have two choices when it comes to publishing news, namely meeting the political goals of the media editors themselves or meeting the needs of their reading audiences. Mass media that are concerned with achieving economic goals will choose news with high selling value. However, mass media that want the information to be useful to readers or viewers will contain news that is useful for the audience. Some mass media regard information only as a tool to achieve ideological ends. Information is conveyed to influence and persuade audiences to act and behave by the ideological goals of the mass media. When viewed from a positivistic perspective, the mass media reports various conflict events as value-free activities. The media

only works as a whistleblower that in real reality in society conflict events are rife (Nandang, 2021).

New Zealand is an island country located in the Southwest Pacific Ocean which is usually called the Oceania region. The majority of New Zealand's population is descended from Europeans and Maori. In addition to Europeans and Indigenous Maori, many Asians also inhabit this country located in Southeastern Australia. New Zealand is also the second safest city ranked by the Global Peace Index. Even the relationship between one religion and another is very good and supports each other. In addition, the government and Islamic religious organizations have no problem as long as they do not violate the rules in New Zealand itself. The government strongly supports the needs of the Muslim community such as halal food, places of worship, and others.

In New Zealand, Islamophobia predates the Christchurch shootings. But Islamophobia is more of an act of discrimination against culture. And in recent years New Zealand has seen an increase in discrimination against its Muslim citizens. Racism does not only occur in harassment in everyday life but also online media. A survey conducted by the Islamic Women's Council of New Zealand, involving 100 Muslim women aged 12 to 16, found that 80 percent said they had been "harassed or discriminated against in the past year". Notably, studies of attitudes and values about diversity in New Zealand over the past 20 years have shown that Muslims experience higher levels of prejudice than other ethnic groups and lower levels of "warmth". Another survey of 300 people, conducted by Victoria University's Centre for Applied Cross-Cultural Research, found a perceived threat level of "moderate to high" among Muslim immigrants. (Ningrum, 2020)

The mass shooting of Muslims at two mosques in the city of Christchurch, during prayers on Friday, March 15, 2019, is very concerning, not only for New Zealand but also for the world. The terror act, which killed 50 worshippers at Friday prayers, was described by New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern as a "terrorist attack". The perpetrator, Brenton Tarrant, originally from Australia, allegedly after visiting several other countries (mainly Europe), was radicalized. In addition, the terror in New Zealand occurred in two different places, with the first shooting taking place at the Al Noor Mosque in central Christchurch, and the second shooting at the Linwood Mosque on the outskirts of the city. The shooting killed 40 people, 30 of them dead at the Al Noor mosque near Hagley Park, central Christchurch, and 10 others killed at the suburban Linwood Mosque. All of the victims were Muslims. (Ningrum, 2020)

Racism was an important factor in the shootings that took place during Friday prayers. And with the immigrants coming to New Zealand, more and more Islamic communities have developed sporadically in New Zealand. The terror that occurred in New Zealand had shocked the world, this was because of the circulation of videos when terrorists carried out their actions and broadcast live on social networks which precisely are on Facebook. Since then there have been many people, groups, and institutions who studied the unfortunate incident.

Many discourses state that mass media and terrorism have mutualism symbiosis in reporting. Some mass media use the moment of terror tragedy as something that can benefit when reported. For terrorists themselves, news about their actions is indeed needed, this is used so that at least the wider community knows that they are capable of carrying out these acts of violence and can disturb the community, especially as a form of action that can propagate the government (Wardani, 2017).

The symbiosis of mutualism that occurs between the mass media and terrorists makes it an obstacle for the government to eradicate terrorists. The mass media experienced an increase in print sales and high ratings on television for reporting terrorist news. The media in democratic countries adheres to two principles in reporting news about terrorists, including the principle of freedom to broadcast (freedom to inform) and the principle that the public has the right to know (Wardani, 2017).

Media coverage can polarize public opinion in response to terrorist acts, whether pro or con. Media coverage revolves around radical acts committed by terrorists, the anger of victims and victims' families, and the implications arising after terror acts. Mass media can be a means of supporting acts of terror, such as reporting on the ideology and ideals of terrorists can carry out terrorist goals in carrying out their actions.

In addition, reporting on political goals, the religion of terrorists, and the overall background of terror acts can foster sympathy in the audience, this then makes the media indirectly have played a role in the process of recruiting members of terrorism. There is competition between several mass media in grabbing the attention of the audience, causing the media to sometimes sensationalize a report about terrorists.

The phenomenon of the shooting that occurred at the mosque in the city of Christchurch needs special attention because this is none other than because the victims of this massacre were all Muslims and also this massacre occurred in two mosques in New Zealand and also the massacre was carried out by a white supremacist who believed there was a plan by Islamic extremist groups to invade Western countries. This excessive concern also hurts immigrants who are Muslim and cannot live without fear after this shooting (Aminullah, 2023).

Islamophobia needs to be properly observed to assess the scope and nature of this phenomenon. The false narrative and logic used to attack must be effectively deconstructed and challenged. The narrative of misinformation about Islam and Muslims circulating must be dismantled. It is necessary to reconstruct mainstream ideas around Islam and Muslims, which are closer to the reality of the religion and its practices. This means that dominant ideas about Muslims and Islam in popular culture must reflect their diverse daily experiences.

Some of the things that cause this Islamophobia such as the thick radicalism in society, public discomfort with Islam based on their homogeneity, and the difficulty of immigrant communities in adapting their original nature to the environment around where they live. In addition, people are worried that Muslim immigrants are taking over their jobs where as we know why so many immigrants easily find work compared to native people, this is because immigrants do not give much importance to the salary they get. They are more concerned with getting a job that can support their family than to please themselves (Ningrum, 2020).

The fear of Islamophobia is also due to a wave of migration without any special requirements or controls. Therefore, people, especially Europeans, feel less able to accept the arrival of immigrants, especially Muslim immigrants. This lack of knowledge about Islam can be helped by the government such as conducting socialization in addition to movements that can be carried out by a group of people from various parts of the world to carry out activities voluntarily. New Zealand, which has been ranked the second safest country, is now tarnished by its name due to the shooting at two mosques in Christchurch (Ningrum, 2020).

The factors that occurred in this shooting were all because the perpetrator wanted to reduce the number of immigrants who came to Europe and Australia. In addition, the gunman, who has joined the right-wing supporters, reasoned that immigrants can never become the land of the white race into the land of immigrants. In addition, the underlying act of terrorism is a feeling of revenge for the hundreds of thousands of deaths caused by immigrants whom he called infiltrators on European soil throughout history and what happened in Stockholm that inspired him to carry out this attack. This incident, the government has done various ways to avoid the recurrence of this incident, and how the government protects immigrants so that they can live side by side and still feel comfortable. The government carries out various ways such as withdrawing semi-automatic weapons from the public, changing the Law on Gun Ownership Rights, establishing cooperation with other countries, and so on.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses qualitative research methods with a descriptive approach. Primary data were obtained from various books and literature related to the research theme, and secondary data were obtained through social media news and related journals. Data validation techniques are performed using triangulation of data sources.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

New Zealand, which is a safe country ranked second in the world that has been held for several years in a row, its title was tarnished due to this tragic incident. Where this incident has something to do with Islamophobia which was quite rife at that time. Where the emergence of Islamophobia in New Zealand is the existence of radicalism that occurs among people where so many groups of people fail to implement nationalism where in the end an excessive and improper understanding of fanaticism is born and spreads besides that it is also because of great envy of immigrants, especially Muslims where many jobs are starting to be taken by immigrants while local people are only a few get a job.

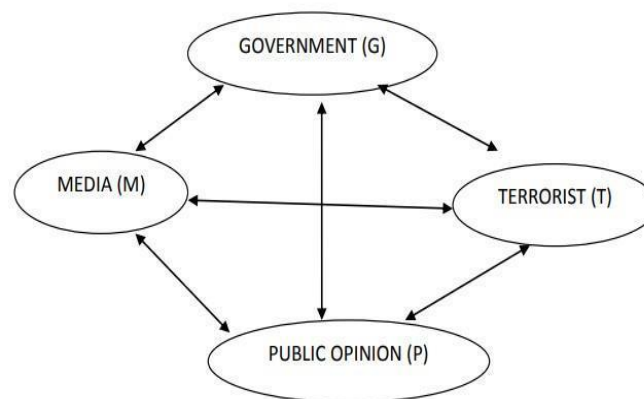
In addition, there are also deep economic disparities in Western societies. It is the marginalized poor who are then exploited by right-wing politicians to be given the anti-immigrant and Islamophobic propaganda mentioned above. Moreover, the arrival of many immigrants from the Middle East threatens the employment of those who are mostly working class. In addition, this is due to immigrants who do not need too many requirements and their energy who work and are ready to work in the country. In addition, there are still many people who still feel uncomfortable with Muslim immigrants because of the difficulty of immigrants assimilating and integrating, and adjusting their original nature to the nature of the environment around them live.

Based on the dynamics of the case that occurred in New Zealand, it is understood that mass media and terrorism are mutually beneficial symbioses that benefit each other. Terror groups need publicity while the media need news that has high information value. Active utilization shows how terrorists use the media to get real effects from their actions. In addition to the active use of media, terrorists also use media passively including: as an external communication network among terrorists; learn the latest counter-terrorism techniques from media reports; be informed about the current activities of the security forces against the terror they are committing; indulge in excessive media reporting of terrorist forces to the point of creating fear on the part of the enemy and preventing the courage of individual police; identify future targets; and find out the public's reaction to their actions.

The relationship between the media and terrorists does not only appear in the use of media for the benefit of terrorists. On the other hand, the media uses terrorists to their advantage. Bloody tragedies, attention-grabbing events, and the dramatic side of acts of terror have always been high-profile commodities for the media. Several things can explain how the media uses terrorists to their advantage, first, *Exacerbating factors: Competition and Speed*. Wilkinson and Ockrent cite two important factors for changing media work: competition and speed. Competition and speed demand that the media work better to compete. In competitions, interesting news material will determine the ability to attract an audience. Speed requires the media to get news from the first source in a short time. Acts of terrorism become interesting material for news as well as require speed to broadcast them. Therefore, the media is competing for the first opportunity in reporting terrorism. Two things gather simultaneously, namely interesting cases and global issues discussed in various countries (Mubarok, 2012).

Agenda-setting and framing theories can explain how terrorism and the media are linked. In agenda setting, the greater the media's attention to a phenomenon, the greater the public's attention to the phenomenon. Framing explains how the media presents news will affect how the audience interprets and understands the phenomenon being reported. The relationship between the interests of terrorist propaganda and the importance of the news value of the media converges in the formulation of the text that was born. The symbiotic relationship between the media and terrorists in the formulation of the text is evident in the news which makes the topic high on the agenda. The media needs the issue of terrorism as the headline, while terrorists try to be at the top of the media report. The meeting of two interests between terrorists and the media influences public perception and government reaction in dealing with terrorism.

Here's an example of a model of the relationship between the media, terrorists, and the government. This model develops links between governments, media, terror organizations, and the formation of public opinion.



Source: (Alkarni, 2005:15-18)

This model describes bilateral relations between two groups and each relationship reflects what is needed from one group to another. The following is an explanation of the model:

1. MG: *media to get information, government to censor information.* The media has the freedom to report on terrorism. The government offered its views in assessing terrorism cases. Government views and media freedom to convey information are juxtaposed together in media coverage
2. MT: *media to cover actions; terrorists to manipulate media and get publicity for their cause and issues.* The media covers and reports on terrorist acts in various forms such as bombings, kidnappings, and sabotage. These various actions are aimed at obtaining publicity from the media. Terrorists try to manipulate cases and issues related to their actions to gain public sympathy. In this condition, the government provides an opportunity for the media to interview terror perpetrators who are caught in the hope that the news conveyed by the media can be more easily known and controlled by the government. Caught terrorists are intimidated into giving positive statements against the government
3. MP: *media to inform the public; the public to understand the whole picture of events from the media.* The media has a role to disseminate information to the public while the public understands the picture of terrorism informed by the media. When the public accesses terrorism information

from media from abroad, the picture of terrorism they get is different from the expectations of local media.

4. TG: *terrorists to change government policies; government to stop the violence.* Terrorists try to influence the government's political policies through various acts of terror they commit. On the other hand, the government is trying to stop all forms of violence and acts of terror. The role of the media in the process of delegitimizing terrorism is needed so that acts of terror are not imitated by the younger generation.
5. TP: *Terrorists use the public as a means to pressurize governments; the public feels safe and expresses dissatisfaction with the violent actions of terrorists and encourages them to use peaceful means to achieve their objectives.* Support from the public for national security is needed by the state. The government expects security and peace in the community. In this condition, the media can help develop news that directs all parties to use peaceful means to achieve their goals. Therefore, terrorist acts using violence are unacceptable.
6. GP: *government convinces the public to be calm and to be disassociated from terrorist; the public seek accurate information from the government.* The public is trying to find accurate information from the government about the conditions that are happening. Therefore, the government is trying to convince the public to trust the policies that have been rolled out in solving terrorism cases.

The model illustrates that terrorism is a real threat to a nation's national security. Therefore, cooperation from various parties is needed in overcoming this problem. The diverse interests between the media, terrorists, government, and public illustrate the complexity of their relationship. Here are the levels of terrorist participation in the process of media news formation (COT, 2008):

- When terrorists carry out acts such as bombings, they will wait to see how the media reacts to them. They try to influence media news by choosing targets, determining locations, and time to produce dramatic effects. However, they are not involved in writing news in the media. In this condition, the media plays its role in writing news about terrorist acts.
- Terrorists send video recordings, press releases, and other forms of publication to the media. Terrorists determine diction, construct news, choose actors, and expect the media to report as they see fit. The gatekeeping process in the media will play a big role in determining the form of news that appears. Some media outlets choose to broadcast terrorist statements in their entirety to show originality and maintain the objectivity of the report. Other media choose to censor so that the news that appears according to editorial policy.
- Terrorists have the full ability to control media news. Some of the ways they do this are by creating their media or coercing the media by violent means. The method of violence is to kidnap journalists and force them to report as they wish

About this phenomenon, there are three concepts related to reporting events concerning national security. This concept explains the relationship between the media and the government in responding to the phenomenon. The three concepts are formal censorship, the free press approach, and the informal censorship approach (AlKarni, 2005):

1. *The formal censorship.* The government determines the new material that can be published by the media. This form of censorship is loaded with the ideological content and interests of the

ruler. Regarding national security issues, the government has the right to determine the material of media reporting. This form of censorship is embodied in laws, regulations, and direct supervision of government officials.

2. *The free press approach.* Journalists and media are given the widest freedom without restriction when reporting on issues related to national security. The government does not engage in censorship of any kind. The audience is considered intelligent and able to sort out the content of the news so as not to endanger national security.
3. *The informal censorship approach.* The government does not engage in formal censorship of any kind. The media is given space and freedom to report on issues related to national security. Internal media parties have limits and moral responsibilities to the public in determining news material. The government developed healthy discussions with the media in discussing issues related to national security.

Responding to the dynamics of the case that occurred in New Zealand, this shooting incident, the government has made various efforts to overcome this incident no longer in the future such as joint efforts by utilizing advances in digital information technology to disseminate the value of tolerance and peace in all directions. The Prime Minister of New Zealand and also the President of France who have held a meeting in France to discuss the elimination of online terror. And the two have also made a promise called the "Christchurch Call" which is based on the thinking of the Prime Minister of New Zealand who has asked for help from several well-known social media owners and the Prime Minister of New Zealand has also contacted representatives from every technology company such as Facebook, Twitter, Microsoft, and Google, as well as with several leaders of countries in the world to agree to jointly focus on the promise and social Pulling videos and testimonials of terrorists from their platforms so that the terror, hatred, and fear that the gunman wanted to spread would not spread widely.

The New Zealand government plans to recall semi-automatic firearms that have been circulating in the public by way of the government for the buyback of these firearms reaching 300 million NZ dollars or approximately equivalent to Rp2.8 trillion. In addition to the ban on firearms, the Prime Minister of New Zealand also reorganized the Law on the Rights of Ownership of semi-automatic firearms and tightened it where the law stated that owning firearms is a privilege and limited where the user is only for licensed holders who can be reliable. The government will also introduce a law banning the circulation of most semi-automatic rifles to the public, announcing that there will be an investigation into the special circumstances leading up to the attack at that time (Ningrum, 2020).

The inquiry will find out what the agency already knew, or should have known, about the gunman's access to weapons or any obstruction of information sharing. It will also investigate individuals' travel movements, activities in New Zealand, social media use, and contact with others. However, there are some obstacles faced by the government, such as the government's immigration program which is still not good in the requirements that must be met by immigrants entering New Zealand that allow Muslim fanatics to migrate to New Zealand, his statement was launched by the abundance of acts of terrorism carried out by Muslims in several countries in recent years. is facing an increase in racism and hate speech. Therefore, the attacks that have occurred have ultimately inspired far-right nationalist groups and anti-immigration activists to move actively in cyberspace and the neighborhood.

Therefore, the New Zealand Government strives to protect immigrants, especially those who are Muslim, well. Because there are still many whites who still worry about immigration, and who feel that immigrants, from Asia, and elsewhere 'undermine' the culture and identity of certain dominant white groups. Therefore, the New Zealand Government also collaborates with the Human Rights Organization established by the Foundation Against Islamophobia and Racism (FAIR) which aims to advocate for the human rights of independent Muslims based in New Zealand and counteract Islamophobia in addition to The families of the victims and victims of the attack will be treated with the highest respect and provide full support to all those affected by this tragedy. In addition, this has also led to an increase in police members both in New Zealand and, Auckland, and throughout the country (Ningrum, 2020).

The Government through the Prime Minister of New Zealand also met several Muslim community leaders in Christchurch where he ensured that the New Zealand Government would guarantee the security of every citizen and guarantee the freedom to worship and guarantee the freedom to express the culture and religion of each citizen. The government is also making efforts to reduce the circulation of videos of these terror attacks. So it can be seen that Islamophobia that occurred especially at the time of the shooting in New Zealand which had an impact on increasing threats to Muslim immigrants in New Zealand is not too worrying although there are still people who act threatening and worrying but the government responds quickly and tries to defuse so that the problem does not happen again and try to protect its people.

CONCLUSION

Terrorism can occur wherever we are, whether due to differences in culture, ideology, or even between religions. Every human being can engage in acts of terrorism. It is up to each individual how the individual receives the stimulus, responding to the strength of the stimulus arising from an event that can cause a change in potential problems. Terrorism is a threat to the harmony of people's lives and even a threat to the disintegration of the nation. The logical consequence of a plural nation like Indonesia is the growth of horizontal conflicts in society. Mass media is the source of information that has the most influence on people's mindsets.

The New Zealand Government is partnering with the Foundation Against Islamophobia and Racism (FAIR) which aims to advocate for the human rights of independent Muslims based in New Zealand and counteract Islamophobia in addition to The families of the victims and victims of the attack will be treated with the highest respect and full support to all those affected by this tragedy. Responding to the dynamics of the case that occurred in New Zealand, this shooting incident, the government has made various efforts to overcome this incident no longer in the future such as joint efforts by utilizing advances in digital information technology to disseminate the value of tolerance and peace in all directions.

The influence of mass media on people's mindsets is because the media can create impressions/images and perceptions that the news displayed is more real than reality. Mass media is a filter or gatekeeper who selects various things related to cultural conflicts whether they are newsworthy or not. The media always chooses issues, information, or forms of content that are "chosen" about anything that deserves to be known and get the attention of the audience. Mass media has the power to construct values in society. For example, through reporting on the negative effects of terrorism, comments from experts and anti-conflict community leaders as

well as writings, images, and reader letters containing the reality faced by society with the continued existence of acts of terrorism, the media can quickly construct the wider community because of its long reach.

Reducing the impact of terrorism reporting among the younger generation is a responsibility that must be shouldered by the media. Media crews related to reporting on terrorism need to have awareness and a strong will to reduce the adverse effects of the news they make. The chronology, procedures for carrying out actions, how to raise funds and terrorist ideology do not need to be reported in detail along with illustrations that can be exemplified. News material can be replaced with a counterterrorism strategy that contains strengthening the spirit of nationalism, and solidarity, respecting differences, and diverting the attention of the younger generation so as not to imitate terrorist acts. In the end, the ability of the media to respond to terrorism cases with intelligent reporting is needed so that press freedom is maintained without having to cause adverse effects with the birth of new terrorists inspired by media reporting.

The media is given the freedom to report anything including spreading the ideology of terror, how to commit terror, chronology, types of weapons, and techniques for committing terror. This information is certainly very dangerous if read by audiences who have the same ideological leanings as terror perpetrators. They can imitate patterns and ways of committing terror by learning from media reports. The phenomenon of Islamophobia and cases of terrorism in New Zealand can be repeated. National security is a common interest including the interest of freedom.

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