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Spaces of Security and Insecurity

Geographies of the War on Terror

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Chapter 6

Disciplining the Diaspora: Tamil Self-Determination and the Politics of Proscription

Suthaharan Nadarajah

Introduction

The phenomena – or, more precisely, the discourse – of ‘terrorism’ has increasingly come to dominate contemporary international politics. From the alliance building of states waging a ‘global war on terror’ to their domestic measures combating ‘terrorism financing’ or even curbing the ‘glorification of terrorism’,¹ a myriad of terrorism-related techniques, technologies and strategies have evolved in recent times. Whilst these trends have inevitably intensified since the deadly attacks on the United States on 11 September 2001, they have long been emerging, particularly since the collapse of the Soviet Union, after which global liberalism became a strategic project pursued by powerful Western states and their associated institutions and organizations.² Much disputed but now quite unavoidable, the concept of ‘terrorism’ has thus led to a plethora of new power relations which redefine the fields of possibilities for a range of actors around the world, including states, NGOs, business, media, political entities, individuals, both citizen or immigrant, and, of course, armed non-state actors. These ever expanding and diffuse relations of power are producing new subjectivities, new forms of domination and, inevitably, new forms of resistance.

This chapter is an exploration of this phenomenon as it impacts on the question of Tamil self-determination as, played out in relationships between the Tamil diaspora and Western host states. In particular, it examines the consequences of the designation of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE), an armed

1 *The Guardian*, ‘MPs Back Ban on “Glorification” of Terrorism’ (15 February 2006) at <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/terrorism/story/0,,1710278,00.html>>.

2 T. Young, ‘“A Project to be Realised”: Global Liberalism and a New World Order’, in E. Hovden and E. Keene (eds), *The Globalization of Liberalism* (Houndmills: Palgrave 2002) 173–93. See also M. Dillon and J. Reid, ‘Global Governance, Liberal Peace and Complex Emergency’, *Alternatives* 25/1 (2000) 117–43 as well as their ‘Global Liberal Governance: Biopolitics, Security and War’, *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 30/1 (2001) 41–66.

opposition movement that many Tamils consider to be an authentic expression of resistance to oppression by the Sinhala-dominated Sri Lankan state, as a terrorist organization, a process that has intensified since the beginning of the war on terror. The implications of this designation and the conflicting ideas of legitimacy and resistance that it calls into play are well exemplified by Plate 6.1, which shows opposing demonstrations by expatriate Tamils and Sinhalese that took place on 10 June 2008 outside the Commonwealth Secretariat in London while Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa was meeting other leaders. The Tamils, protesting against '60 years of oppression' demonstrated in support of self determination while the members of the Sinhala community challenged the legitimacy of this demand. While the nature of relationships between Western states, the Tamil diaspora and the politics of proscription is considerably more complex than is suggested by this picture, it captures some of the contradictions in the British state's approach to Sri Lanka's conflict: whilst the UK deems the LTTE a terrorist organization using violence against a multicultural democracy, British police erect barricades to separate the polarized Tamil and Sinhala communities.



Plate 6.1 Opposing demonstrations by expatriate Tamils and Sinhalese outside the Commonwealth Secretariat in London, 10 June 2008

Source: Photograph by Suthaharan Nadarajah.

The concept of terrorism has impacted in innumerable ways on the lives of large numbers of ordinary people around the world and, especially, on the activities, strategies and identities of countless entities engaged in politics, broadly defined. This is despite manifest disagreement on what actually constitutes ‘terrorism’. The determined efforts of numerous scholars, research centres and institutions, not least the United Nations, are yet to produce a consensus and even the impatient insistence of leading states has not impelled progress towards a universally acceptable definition. Yet, it is precisely this undefined, even indefinable, trait of ‘terrorism’ – along with its acutely menacing characteristic – that underpins the productive and subjectifying capacity of numerous apparatuses of domestic and international governance. To begin with, as Jenny Hocking puts it,

through its carriage of an implicit yet overwhelming moral illegitimacy, the language [of terrorism] itself neatly averts consideration of complex questions of causation by assigning an apparently uncontested meaning to diverse incidents of political violence. It is a powerful terminology and one which allows for the ready adoption of extreme measures that would otherwise be strongly resisted.³

However, despite the abhorrence and fear it knowingly invokes⁴, the discourse of terrorism ‘constructs no precise criminal act, rendering terrorism of dubious utility as a legal entity’.⁵ Notwithstanding this, apart from their condemnatory rhetoric, it is primarily through specialist – and usually draconian – legislation that Western states now *constitute* acts of violence as terrorism. In other words, apart from the vocabulary of ‘terrorism’⁶ it is states’ use of anti-terrorism legislation to confront specific acts of violence that serves to *define* these acts as ‘terrorism.’ If a building is torched, the difference between an act of arson and an act of terrorism is the legislation under which the perpetrators are charged – more so, even, than the rationales put forward by those responsible.

Similarly, armed organizations now become defined as terrorists not just when condemned as such by powerful states, but when they are *proscribed* under anti-terrorism legislation. This is especially so when the violence of the organization in question is not directed at the proscribing states or even conducted within their territories. Thus, although proscription is effected through the framework of law, it is a patently *political* act, one moreover which decisively moves the organization *and* further debates around its stated goals out of the space of politics into that

3 J. Hocking, ‘Counter-Terrorism and the Criminalisation of Politics: Australia’s New Security Powers of Detention, Proscription and Control’, *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 49/3 (2002) 355–71, p. 359.

4 R. Jackson, *Writing the War on Terrorism: Language Politics and Counter-Terrorism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press 2005).

5 Hocking (note 3).

6 Richard Jackson has referred to this as the ‘rhetorical construction of reality’ (note 4) p. 2.

of crime and security. Whilst the proscribing state does not have to establish the *legal* case for the ban prior to its enacting, *deproscription* can only be achieved by a successful legal challenge: the burden of proof rests solely with the accused. Notably, quite apart from its acts of violence, proscription delegitimizes the organization itself and, therefore, its salience to the political arena in which it operates. As Hocking's observation above notes, the language of terrorism effaces the context, such as resistance to state oppression or racial persecution, in which non-state violence often takes place. Proscription, moreover, also forecloses or deters further discussion of this effect – outside a legal challenge, that is.

The focus of this chapter is, however, not on armed movements themselves, but on how the international 'anti-terrorism' regime that has emerged over the past two decades enmeshes with other domestic apparatuses and discourses in Western liberal states to actively shape the behaviour of a range of other, *unarmed* political actors. In particular, it considers how the discourse of terrorism serves to 'conduct the conduct'⁷ of actors who are politically active within Western liberal democracies, for example in terms of advocacy in connection with foreign conflicts, and, by extension, the behaviour of residents, citizen or otherwise, who hail originally from these distant places.⁸ Using the Tamil diaspora as a case study,⁹ the chapter examines how the international anti-terrorism regime, gradually extended since the late nineties to include the LTTE,¹⁰ redefines the field of possibilities for ordinary Tamils vis-à-vis their struggle against state oppression in Sri Lanka. Although each country's proscription has different legal implications and has been imposed for different stated reasons, individually and collectively they serve to criminalize the LTTE *and its political project*, especially amid the explicit criticism of both by the proscribing states. Inevitably this has raised serious implications, both within host countries and in Sri Lanka, for the activities, political or otherwise, of other Tamil organizations and individuals. The central claim of this chapter is that the anti-terrorism regime both directly, by coercively shutting down some political spaces, and indirectly, by providing alternative 'safe' spaces, shapes Tamil expatriates' political activity in their *hostlands* towards

7 M. Foucault, 'Governmentality', in G. Burchell, C. Gordon and P. Miller (eds), *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf 1991) pp. 87–104.

8 Whilst not taken up further here, it is worth noting how the dynamics of terrorism-related suspicion and regulation apply to specific populations within Western states such as Tamils, Kurds, Muslims, etc., rather than the wider host publics.

9 The chapter is based on interviews conducted as part of research for the author's doctoral thesis between 2003 and 2007 with diaspora activists and representatives of Tamil community organizations in Australia, Canada and Europe, as well as officials from Western government departments.

10 Terrorism-related bans on the LTTE under domestic law include the US (1997), UK (2001), Canada (2006) and the EU (2006). India banned the LTTE in 1991. Interestingly, since 2002 the LTTE has not been banned in Sri Lanka; Colombo outlawed the LTTE in 1979 and again in 1998, lifting the ban before peace talks in 2002.

realizing a specific – liberal governmental – vision for *Sri Lanka*.¹¹ Moreover, it is the inherent ambiguity of the notion of ‘support’ for ‘terrorism’ that allows a raft of governmental techniques and technologies, operating alongside the disciplinary framework of anti-terrorism, their purchase on target populations within Western liberal states. It is worth noting, moreover, that when enmeshed with ruthlessly restrictive asylum and immigration regimes, the anti-terrorism regime also shapes the political and other activities of Tamils beyond the hoststate’s borders: ‘supporting’ a banned organization is now sufficient grounds for exclusion.

As a minimum, the behaviours being compelled from Tamil expatriates include rejection of armed struggle and taking up of political struggle in Sri Lanka through non-violent modalities – no matter how ineffectual these might actually be in ending state repression. Going further, the international anti-terrorism regime also induces other behavioural changes amongst politically active Tamils, including refocusing their efforts towards the pursuit of ‘good governance’ rather than ‘self-determination’, a concomitant accordance of primacy to ‘human’ rather than collective rights and so on. Core issues confronting Tamils in Sri Lanka – such as institutionalized ethnic discrimination, embedding of Sinhala majoritarianism within the state bureaucracy and military, absence of physical security and protection of law, lack of media freedom, and so on – thus shift from being justifying elements of their demand for *independence* to being targets for *reform* of the Sri Lankan state.¹² In other words, rather than constituting racist state persecution to be escaped through independent statehood, these elements become reconstituted as failures of governance that must be corrected through state reform. In short, the international anti-terrorism regime contributes through diffuse, peripheral channels towards the transformation of the Tamil liberation struggle into its very antithesis: the *strengthening*, through the logic of ‘reform’, of the hitherto rejected Sri Lankan state. This is not to say this radical change has been achieved; indeed this aspect of the global liberal project is far from complete and recent developments, including deepening state repression in Sri Lanka and the post-proscription evolution of diaspora strategies, have contributed to an intensification of Tamil demands for independence: indeed the increasing use of anti-terrorism measures, including force, can be seen as a shift from governmental to disciplinary efforts and the

11 Foucault (note 7). For a detailed discussion, see M. Dean, *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society* (London: Sage 1999).

12 These have been discussed in the extensive literature on Sri Lanka. See for example S. Bose, *States, Nations, Sovereignty: Sri Lanka, India and the Tamil Eelam Movement* (London: Sage 1994); S. Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities: India, Sri Lanka and the Question of Nationhood* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 1999); R. Herring, ‘Making Ethnic Conflict: the Civil War in Sri Lanka’, in M. Esman and R. Herring (eds), *Carrots, Sticks and Ethnic Conflict: Rethinking Development Assistance* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press 2001) 140–74; J. Goodhand, *Aid, Conflict and Peace Building in Sri Lanka* (London: The Conflict, Security and Development Group 2001); V. Nithyanandam, ‘Ethnic Politics and Third World Development: Some Lessons from Sri Lanka’s Experience’, *Third World Quarterly* 21/2 (2000) 283–311.

exercise of sovereign power. However, an examination of the microphysics of the securitization of politics that the terrorism discourse entails serves to illustrate the wider transformative potency of Western states proscribing a foreign armed organization as terrorists.

Shaping, Not Curtailing Politics

To begin with, contemporary (typically Western-led) international efforts to end intra-state conflicts take place in the framework of establishing what Mark Duffield has labelled 'liberal peace'.¹³ These endeavours, increasingly undertaken as part of the wider global liberal project by leading Western states and their associated organizations, institutions and agencies, posits economic interdependence, democracy and the rule of law as constituting the sustainable foundations for world peace.¹⁴ As such, liberal peace is 'irrevocably linked to the territorially sovereign state as an umbrella for political community'¹⁵ and therefore to its stabilization and strengthening against challenges to its authority, an imperative reflected in contemporary anxieties over 'failed' or 'fragile' states (see Chapter 3).¹⁶ Thus, even in the context of minority demands for independence from repressive majoritarian states, what is deemed desirable is not the 'fragmentation' of the state along 'ethnic lines' but rather its strengthening and reform in liberal governmental terms, that is towards a single democratic state with strong liberal institutions, a civic polity and an open economy. (Even in the exceptional instances where new states have emerged, such as in the former Yugoslavia, this has happened through probationary periods of international trusteeship in which, as rites of passage, these tenets of liberal peace have to be adopted and ingrained.)¹⁷

By the same logic, armed movements, including those fighting for national liberation or self-determination, are considered, first and foremost, *threats* to the state that must be compelled to disarm and seek remedy for the grievances they claim to represent through non-violent means.¹⁸ Thus, quite apart from confronting anti-*Western* violence, it is in the worldwide pursuit of liberal peace that the 'War on Terror' has become a 'global' struggle, drawing disparate conflicts in different locations into a single conceptual framework. It is also in this

13 M. Duffield, *Global Governance and the New Wars* (London: Zed Books 2002). For a detailed discussion of the concept also see O. Richmond, *The Transformation of Peace* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan 2007).

14 S. Willett, 'New Barbarians at the Gate: Losing the Liberal Peace in Africa', *Review of Political Economy* 106 (2005) 569–94.

15 Richmond (note 13) p. 13.

16 M. Duffield, *Development, Security and Unending War* (Cambridge: Polity 2007).

17 Richmond (note 13); M. Pugh, 'The Political Economy of Peacebuilding: A Critical Theory Perspective', *International Journal of Peace Studies* 10/2 (2005) 23–42.

18 Richmond (note 13) pp. 81–3.

context that 'terrorism' is no longer a label the Western liberal democracy applies only to domestic threats or foreign attackers. In the past such states have been territorially conservative when outlawing armed non-state actors, with violence in foreign sites not a direct concern except when their own interests and nationals, or perhaps those of close allies, were being targeted. The political wings of armed organizations active in other parts of the world could therefore function freely alongside other dissidents in the territories of Western democracies, often to the chagrin of the states they were opposing. However, this has changed markedly in recent times. Western states, as a matter of routine, now not only condemn non-state violence in far away places as 'terrorism', but also actively respond to it at home with crackdowns against the groups held responsible and their supporters. The shift is exemplified by a British judge's 2007 observations while upholding the conviction under his country's terrorism laws of a Libyan dissident accused of supporting violence against the Ghaddafi regime: 'We can see no reason why', he asserted, 'the citizens of Libya should not be protected from such activities by those resident in this country in the same way as the inhabitants of Belgium or the Netherlands or the Republic of Ireland'.¹⁹ That the regimes being confronted by such 'terrorism' are also sometimes characterized by the proscribing states as repressive or non-democratic is thus irrelevant. So, for that matter, is whether the violence is directed at military or civilian targets.²⁰ Thus it is not simply a question of Cold War-style solidarity between allied states, but the blanket hostility to non-state violence inherent to global liberalism.²¹

Despite acknowledging that the LTTE's armed struggle for independence is waged solely against the Sri Lankan state, most Western states have now proscribed the movement as a terrorist group and included it in their domestic anti-terror actions.²² This has taken place, notably, amid a growing recognition that the global Tamil diaspora, numbering over 800,000,²³ is a key factor in the Sri Lankan conflict. Tamil expatriates are vocal advocates of self-determination and independence, providers of humanitarian relief for the war- and tsunami-affected

19 R v. F [2007] EWCA Crim 243 at <<http://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWCA/Crim/2007/243.html>>.

20 British Home Secretary's response, citing section 3(5)9a of the Terrorism 2000 Act, to the British Tamil Forum's appeal against the proscription of the LTTE (11 January 2008).

21 Richmond (note 13) pp. 81–3. See also A. Guelke, *The Age of Terrorism and the International Political System* (London: I.B. Tauris 1998).

22 See note 10.

23 Whilst there are no firm recent figures for Tamil Diaspora numbers, in June 2001, the UNHCR estimated the stock of internationally displaced Tamils to be 817,000, most of whom are/were refugees or asylum seekers. Canada topped the list, hosting an estimated 400,000 Tamils, followed by Europe (200,000), India (67,000), the United States (40,000), Australia (30,000), and another 80,000 living in a dozen other countries. Figures cited in D. Sriskandarajah, 'The Migration–Development Nexus: Sri Lanka Case Study', *International Migration* 40/5 (2002) 283–307.

Tamil areas of the island and, in particular, are a source of financial, moral and political support for the LTTE.²⁴ The diaspora has thus increasingly become a key target and also a *vehicle* for global liberal governmental efforts. Although the language of terrorism has long been used by international actors in relation to the LTTE,²⁵ now, more so than at any time before, the discourse of terrorism has come to mediate the multifaceted relationships between expatriate Tamils, their host states and populations, the LTTE and other international actors. To examine how the international anti-terrorism regime, encapsulating or permeating a range of domestic governmental apparatuses, actively shapes Tamils' conduct, this chapter considers what might otherwise be an unremarkable area of activity in the West: advocacy at home for political causes abroad.

In keeping with its oft-reiterated 'with us or against us' rhetoric, the international anti-terrorism discourse places political actors – not just armed organizations – into binary categories of acceptable and unacceptable. There are gradations within such distributive categories,²⁶ but the legal act of proscription defines a clear step of exclusion: just as being denounced as terrorists is one thing and being banned quite another, being criticized for specific 'extreme' views is quite different to being prosecuted for 'supporting' or 'glorifying' terrorism. The difference, crucially, depends more on the subjective opinion of the authorities than specified or self-evident criteria. It is not simply a question of not being able to express support for outlawed violence, say by invoking the principles of self-defence against genocide or resistance to state repression. Rather, proscription comes to have a much wider impact in the 'global' political space that banned armed organizations function within by enabling the categorizing of *political* positions or goals as acceptable and unacceptable (using the labels of 'moderate' and 'extremist' for example). There is not necessarily an automatic mapping: bans of the 'reprehensible' LTTE have sometimes been accompanied by assertions by the proscribing states that the organization has 'legitimate goals'²⁷ (that is, Tamil 'grievances'). However, the international discourse around Sri Lanka has also long held the demand for Tamil independent statehood to be 'extreme' and that for federalism or autonomy (i.e. accepting Sri Lankan sovereignty) to be a 'moderate' position. With the Tamils' claim of the right to self-determination (that is, that the appropriate form of governance for them is *their* prerogative) remaining unresolved, such international assertions are arbitrary acts of power – that is, of politics – rather than findings of

24 D. Byman, P. Chalk, B. Hoffman, W. Rosenau and D. Brannan, *Trends in Outside Support for Insurgent Movements* (RAND 2001) at <http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/2007/MR1405.pdf>.

25 S. Nadarajah and D. Sriskandarajah, 'Liberation Struggle or Terrorism? The Politics of Naming the LTTE', *Third World Quarterly* 26/1 (2005) 87–100.

26 M. Brigg, 'Post-Development, Foucault and the Colonisation Metaphor', *Third World Quarterly* 23/3 (2002) 421–36, p. 428.

27 *Tamil Guardian*, 'US: LTTE Has "Legitimate Goals, Unacceptable Methods" Report Compiled Using Agency Reports' (14 June 2006).

international law. Nonetheless, in the context of organizations like the LTTE being proscribed, these *assertions*, rather than international law, come to emphasize the acceptability or otherwise of political stances taken up within Western liberal states. For example, an oft-stated assertion by the United States, the first Western state to outlaw the LTTE, is that to be deproscribed, the organization must first renounce violence 'in word and deed' *and also* give up its goal of an independent Tamil Eelam. Addressing a 2002 donor conference at which an LTTE delegation was participating as part of the Norwegian led peace process, US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage stated:

Let me leave no doubt: my nation stands firm in the resolve that the tactics of terror can never achieve legitimate aspirations. ... We urge the LTTE ... to make it clear to the people of Sri Lanka and indeed to the international community that the LTTE has abandoned its armed struggle for a separate state; *and instead accepts the sovereignty* of a Sri Lankan government that respects and protects the rights of all its people.²⁸

It is this *conflation* of armed actors' violence ('terrorism') with specific political goals which global liberalism finds unacceptable that enables the categorization and sorting of other actors who, whilst not involved in armed struggle, are active in the same political space: to demand Tamil Eelam is to be deemed sympathetic to the LTTE. Crucially, it is this conflation, more than anything else, which enables 'supporters of terrorism' to be identified and labelled as such. This is not to say that taking up specific political stances will directly result in prosecution under anti-terrorism legislation. Rather, it is to suggest that taking up such positions is to *risk* drawing the invasive attention of terrifying and extensive state security apparatuses, as well as exclusion and marginalization from legitimate domestic spaces, such as lobbying access to centres of power. This 'categorical suspicion'²⁹ also paves the way for officialdom's resistance to, if not obstruction of, specific instances of legitimate activity such as staging rallies and public meetings, leafleting, public broadcasting, and so on. Inevitably, it especially raises serious difficulties for fund raising in support of such political activities. At an individual level, it can raise difficulties in travel (e.g. visas and work permits, 'no-fly' lists, etc), employment (certainly in the military and defence industry, but also in civil service or private industry roles where even low levels of security clearance are needed) and so on.

Thus, it is this implied equivalence of unarmed actors' *political* positions to support for the *violence* of 'like-minded' armed actors that allows a variety of

28 Address to Aid Conference in Oslo, Norway (25 November 2002) quoted in *TamilNet*, 'US Calls to Renounce Violence' (emphasis added) at <<http://www.tamilnet.com/art.html?catid=13&artid=7892>>.

29 G. Marx, *Undercover: Police Surveillance in America* (Berkeley: University of California Press 1988).

governmental techniques and technologies within Western states their purchase. Moreover, it is amid this implied equivalence between specific political positions and support for 'terrorist' violence that coercive apparatuses enabled by the discourse of (anti-)terrorism come to induce positional and behavioural *compulsions* amongst political actors in the West. In the wake of the proscription of an armed organization, the central question other unarmed actors come to face is how to engage in politics without incurring the ostracizing and manifestly dangerous label of 'supporters of terrorism'. At a basic level, if they are to safely pursue their political goals, they must adopt specific behaviours including discernibly distancing themselves from, even condemning, the 'terrorists' fighting for these goals. As in the case of the Tamils, the implications for a people remaining united while seeking national liberation from racial oppression are obvious. Moreover, by enacting legislation that threatens severe punishment for 'supporting' terrorism, the terms of what does and doesn't constitute acceptable *advocacy* are also set. For example, if a proscribed organization enters into negotiations with its state adversary, how can its stances on the issues under negotiation be endorsed by other Tamil actors – especially if the proscribing state strongly opposes these positions? If the organization breaks off peace talks and resumes its military campaign citing reasons (say non-implementation of agreements already reached or continuing state violence) that host states deem unacceptable, what are the consequences of echoing these reasons? As noted above, it is not a question of whether a particular viewpoint has merit or not in itself, but whether it is possible to articulate it without fear of being punished for supporting the *violence* (that is, terrorism) of armed actors also holding these views. The range of advocatable positions available to unarmed political actors thus narrows and is sometimes closed off altogether by the outlawing of other *armed* actors.

Crucially, the anti-terrorism regime's coercive effects not only close off some spaces, but also *promote* other, more preferable, political positions. Just as it discourages certain behaviours, such as advocacy of anti-state violence and the championing of 'extreme' positions (such as independence), it also *encourages* the taking up of other, more 'moderate' positions. Thus it is not simply a question of silencing or curtailing debate, but the more productive effect of shaping and directing its terms. With its punitive apparatuses poised over some spaces and withheld from others, the international anti-terrorism regime promotes the articulation and adoption by the target population of a range of *liberal governmental* positions. At a basic level these include, as noted above, rejection of armed struggle and the adoption of non-violent methods. However, as in the case of Tamil expatriates, the regime goes much further, for example encouraging the politicization of what are deemed 'inclusive' rather than 'exclusive' identities – for example adoption of a 'civic' (Sri Lankan), as opposed to 'ethnic' (Tamil) one, accordance of primacy to human, rather than collective, rights and so on. In short, by setting out what are 'moderate' and 'extreme' views and simultaneously wielding the punitive apparatuses enabled by proscription, the international anti-

terrorism regime constitutes the disciplinary and sovereign framework required for the expansion of liberal governmentality.

Disciplining the Diaspora

This illiberal aspect of the anti-terrorism regime is no longer disguised, as exemplified by the harsh penalties dealt out in Britain for those held to be ‘encouraging’ or ‘glorifying’ terrorism.³⁰ This might, at a first glance, seem a contradiction to the notion that the regime seeks to promote liberal values abroad. However this inconsistency fades when considered in the context of the global liberal project which posits these ‘universal’ values as an unalloyed (and thus incontestable) ultimate good, in the interests of which extreme, patently illiberal measures, including massive military violence, are justified.³¹ Terrorism proscriptions enable a domestic disciplinary framework, one based on apparatuses of coercion, surveillance and, as discussed below, behavioural training, that seeks to actively produce well behaved citizens of liberal governmentality. As proscription is primarily a legal sanction, the coercion is underwritten by poised state machinery: police and other internal security forces, prisons, deportations, individual sanctions (including restrictions on travel, employment, access to welfare, etc.) and so on. Beyond these, the much publicized practices of ‘rendition’ and other extra-judicial aspects of the ‘global’ anti-terrorism architecture (including the sharing of ‘terrorism intelligence’ with other states) are amongst the fearsome consequences of crossing the indiscernible and ever shifting line of ‘supporting terrorism’ whilst living in the West. Thus the disciplinary framework is closely linked not just to governmentality but also to sovereign power.

Terrorism-related surveillance begins with the overt deployment of state apparatus, including the police, intelligence services and other regulatory structures. Public rallies and demonstrations often require police approval, which is frequently not forthcoming for events organized by pro-Eelam Tamil actors but is easier for ‘moderate’ actors to obtain. Even when approved, events are increasingly subjected to overt monitoring, with grim-faced uniformed police photographing and videotaping those attending as well as those on stage. In the context of manifest Western, opposition to the Tamil Eelam project, such menacing security presence inevitably induces a high degree of self-regulation amongst both speakers and attendees, as well as a reluctance to participate in some events. Slogans and placards must be careful to avoid being *seen* as supporting (or in the UK, ‘glorifying’) terrorism. Speeches must also remain within these unspecified limits, which, as noted above, are more subjective assessments by authorities than

30 See, for example, Amnesty International’s criticism of drafts of the Terrorism Act (2005) at <<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/EUR45/038/2005/en/dom-EUR450382005en.html>>.

31 Dillon and Reid (note 2).

clearly defined parameters. The text of leaflets, publications and even Internet websites must be 'self'-regulated in the same manner, as must reporting and commentary by Tamil expatriate media.³²

In addition to this formal oversight is the state's surveillance 'at a distance' i.e. its efforts to co-opt the citizenry as part of its terrorism-related scrutiny. Public advertisements – posters, radio broadcasts, etc exhorting citizens to 'report anything suspicious' (and encouraging them to err on the side of caution) heighten the gap between those clearly unproblematic citizens and those who *might* be supporters of terrorism. For example, an advertisement by the British police in a London newspaper urged the city's residents: 'Terrorism – if you suspect it, report it.'³³ Listing the number of a 'confidential, anti-terrorist hotline', it goes on to list what might be suspect, including: 'Terrorists use computers; do you know someone who visits terrorist-related websites? Terrorists need to travel; Meetings can take place anywhere. Do you know someone who travels but is vague about where they are going? Terrorists need transport: if you work in vehicle hire or sales, has a sale or rental made you suspicious?'³⁴

Thus, whilst proscription might be a legal matter, accusations of supporting or assisting terrorists can easily be levelled in fora *other than* the courts. Indeed, anonymous accusations by anyone (and anywhere) are positively encouraged. The government of Sri Lanka or one of its departments, such as the local embassy, hostile media (local or foreign, including Sri Lankan), political, business or personal rivals, and otherwise disgruntled individuals, etc. can level accusations, no matter how unsubstantiated, against Tamil organizations and individuals. Such dynamics and their consequences have been explored in the extensive literature that comprises surveillance studies³⁵ and in studies of welfare regimes.³⁶ Notably, there is usually little or no risk of penalty to false accusers. It is often impossible to trace the pointing finger that triggers invasive probes into political activities and, indeed, personal lives. Even if accusers are identified, given the opaqueness of the reporting mechanisms, there is no redress save that offered by difficult and probably expensive libel claims. The proscribing state may choose not to or may not have the resources to monitor every broadcast or article by every media outlet, scrutinize every publication by every organization, or listen to every speech. But

32 As mentioned in note 8, Tamil media experience different constraints to mainstream Western media. For example, although UK legislation even forbids publication of the logo of a banned terrorist organization, the LTTE logo appears on the BBC website's reports, for example.

33 Metropolitan Police/British Transport Police advertisement in *London Lite* (23 March 2007) p. 8.

34 Ibid.

35 See for example, D. Bigo, 'Security and Immigration: Toward a Critique of the Governmentality of Unease', *Alternatives* 27 (2002) 63–92.

36 See for example, B. Cruikshank, *The Will to Empower* (New York: Cornell University Press 1999).

anyone who suspects or claims a breach of anti-terrorist legislation can alert the authorities, even anonymously, without fear of repercussion. Expatriate Tamil electronic media, for example, routinely have to cooperate with regulators following up spurious claims filed anonymously that their broadcasts have supported the LTTE or its violence.³⁷

That this ‘surveillance at a distance’ is an integral part of the proscription regime was underlined by Canada’s government in April 2006. Announcing his country’s ban on the LTTE, Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day also unveiled an advertising campaign directed at local Tamils to ‘explain’ the terrorist designation: ‘in one of the ads that we’re putting out there’s a number listed for people who are *emboldened now* by the [ban] and may want to contact authorities for follow up’.³⁸ He added: ‘authorities will be keeping a close eye on *affiliated* organizations that *could* run afoul of the terrorist designation should they continue *allying* themselves with the [LTTE]’.³⁹ The immediate question for Tamil political actors is what constitutes the threatening characterization of an ‘affiliated organization’. More importantly, in the context of taking up political positions in Canada, is what exactly ‘allying’ themselves with the LTTE might mean – although the obvious inference, of course, being support for Tamil Eelam.

At other times, peaceful Tamil political activity characterized in this way has fallen more directly within the ambit of the legal system. Two of the organizers of a Tamil expatriate rally in London’s Hyde Park on 25 July 2006 marking the anniversary of the July 1983 anti-Tamil pogrom in Sri Lanka (an event that was attended by some 15,000 people – see Plate 6.2) were subsequently arrested (exactly a year later) and charged under the Terrorism Act 2006 with organizing an event in support of a banned terrorist organization. Whilst the organizers had been granted permission for the event and police were also in attendance, the investigation into ‘supporting terrorism’ was initiated by complaints from the Sri Lankan High Commission in London.⁴⁰

37 Interviews with staff at the London-based IBC radio and other outlets. Also see British regulator Ofcom’s comments on investigations into allegations against music broadcast on Sangamam (ETBC) radio. Bulletin Issue 47 (11 November 2005) at <http://www.ofcom.org.uk/tv/obb/prog_cb/obb_47/>.

38 *National Post*, ‘Canada Adds Tamil Tigers to Terrorist List, Urges Tamils to Report on Fund Raising’ (10 April 2006) emphasis added.

39 *Ibid.* Emphasis added.

40 Interviews with organizers, Tamil Youth Organization (TYO–UK) (September 2007).

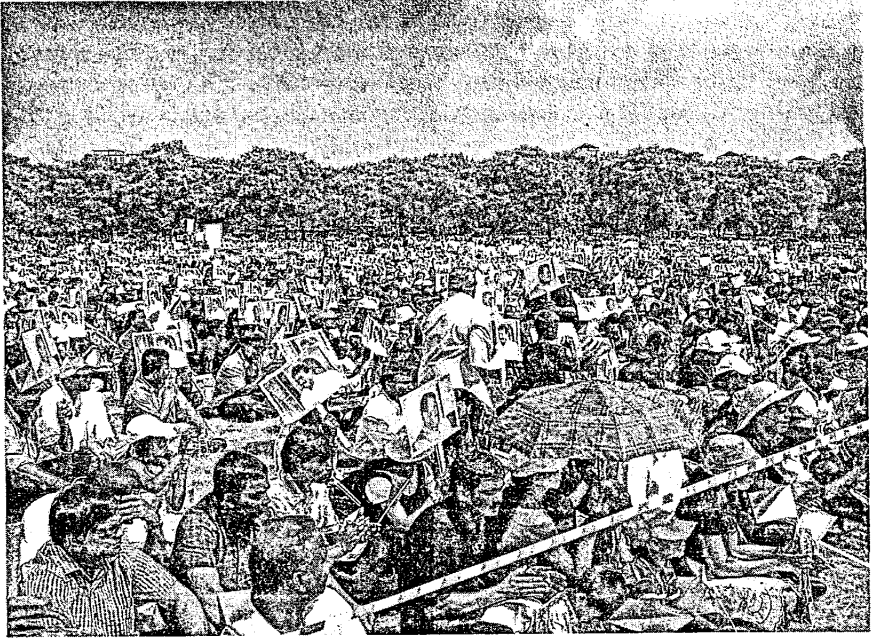


Plate 6.2 Tamil expatriate rally in Hyde Park, London, 25 July 2006

Source: Photograph by Suthaharan Nadarajah.

Moreover, the ambiguity around what constitutes ‘support for terrorism’ and individuals’ fear of the consequences of falling foul of anti-terrorism laws also paves the way for *state action* outside the courts. Proscriptions of the LTTE have enabled state intervention in Tamil expatriate political and social activity even when no crime is being committed. This is exemplified by similar developments in the Canada, UK, and Europe whereby, after proscriptions of the LTTE (and in Australia, where a fundraising ban was imposed in 2002), security forces have sought to discourage and undermine social and political events organized by pro-Eelam Tamils while leaving unfettered those of actors who either oppose or distance themselves from the LTTE and its political project (it is worth noting here how the lobbying against the LTTE cannot be countered without immediately falling foul of laws outlawing ‘support for terrorism’). Police tactics include, for example, privately encouraging, even pressuring, the owners of halls, sports fields and other venues to refuse to hire their sites to pro-independence Tamil organizations.

Such state interventions frequently turn directly on the dissembling logic of the *possibility* of the customer being a ‘terrorist front’ intending to raise funds through the event. In some cases, venues have admitted to long-standing customers they were now turning away, to having been influenced by suggestions by police that they (venues) *might* become complicit in fund raising for the LTTE. Even when

customers point out that their books are audited by the Inland Revenue service and no wrongdoing has been found, many venues are reluctant to take the risk. Indeed, when suggestions of 'supporting' or financing terrorism are raised through such 'unofficial' channels, the event organizers are, inevitably, the least able to reassure venues of their bona fides. The unspecified 'security concerns' that some venues have cited for rejecting Tamil business emerge from the context in which as yet unproven claims of 'links' to terrorism *can* be unproblematically raised – even as a mere possibility – by either the security forces or a range of anti-LTTE campaigners, including the local Sri Lankan embassy, who bombard potential venues with accusations of imminent complicity in 'supporting terrorism'. In some cases, the venues' consequent response has been to urge such problematic customers to bring explicit endorsements from the police – who are, of course, under no obligation to provide these. When approached, police simply advise the event organizers that there are no security concerns about them and that they should appraise the venues thus. Moreover, implicitly and sometimes explicitly, the organizers' *political* positions are acknowledged as the underlying reasons for the difficult situation they find themselves in with the attendant encouragement to retreat from stances that are problematic (see discussion on advocacy below).

At the same time, notably, there is no official bar on any of the *events* themselves – except when permission for rallies or marches are refused, often without explanations having to be offered. Neither are the organizers themselves proscribed or officially blacklisted. By simply raising the spectre of 'supporting terrorism', Tamil organizations can be subject (perhaps even unintentionally on the part of venues) to a subtle array of discriminatory practices. Under other, 'normal', circumstances, venues are under no compulsion to reject customers on the basis of third-party allegations of *impending* criminality; indeed for venues to turn away Tamil or other minority customers on such claims is to risk being sued for racial discrimination. However, in the context of 'supporting terrorism', not only are venue owners able to reject custom, they are *expected* to. More generally, the populations affected by these proscription-related difficulties are invariably minorities, including Tamils, Kurds, Muslims and so on. In short, the anti-terrorism discourse can thus be seen to facilitate the wholesale discarding of the anti-racism and anti-discriminatory safeguards normally applicable to minorities in Western states.

Learning to Speak: Political Advocacy

The impossibility of expressing political support for the LTTE has to be considered in the context of many Tamils seeing the viability of their liberation struggle as linked to the 'success', broadly defined, of the LTTE in resisting and challenging the Sri Lankan state. Having emerged in the eighties as the dominant Tamil protagonist in the conflict following a number of early confrontations within the broader Tamil resistance movement, the LTTE has since developed both a conventional

military force and a substantial civil administrative apparatus comprising a *de facto* state in those areas it has established control over.⁴¹ It is the largest and most prominent actor advocating the cause of Tamil self-determination and has been the Sri Lankan government's sole interlocutor in four of the five peace processes (it was part of a coalition in the first round) since the conflict began in the early eighties.⁴² However, Tamils in the West cannot explicitly endorse the proscribed LTTE as *representatives* of the Tamil polity in negotiations or other spaces, both for fear of falling foul of domestic law and, amid the 'implicit yet overwhelming moral illegitimacy' of terrorism,⁴³ to avoid their advocacy efforts being dismissed out of hand as 'extremism' or 'support for terrorism'. It is amid this dynamic of having to avoid political irrelevancy whilst lobbying for the Tamil cause that the *productive* effect of the anti-terrorism regime turns: it is not only a question of self-censorship, but also the specific political positions that come to be *taken up*. This is not to say these constitute deep felt ideological shifts – all too often they do not. Rather, the focus here is how changes in Tamil actors' conduct come to propagate values and positions in keeping with liberal governmentality and write out those linked with national self-determination. There are two separate aspects of this induced shift discussed here: firstly, not positing the LTTE as the Tamil *leadership* that the international community and Sri Lankan state must deal with, and, secondly, reconstituting the specific political terms in which Tamil grievances are framed.

Prior to the proscriptions of the LTTE, a central plank of political activity by pro-independence Tamils in the West has been to endorse and promote the LTTE as the 'sole' or 'authentic' representatives of the Tamil people vis-à-vis resolving Sri Lanka's ethnic question. Especially since the advent of the Norwegian peace process in 2001, Tamil petitions, appeals and messages at mass rallies prior to the proscriptions have reiterated this position, while the Tamil National Alliance (TNA), a coalition of Sri Lanka's four main Tamil parties, put this at the core of its manifesto for the 2004 elections in which it swept the Tamil areas. At the height of the Norwegian-led peace process, in 2003 and 2004, a series of mass rallies – titled 'Pongu Thamil' (Tamil Upsurge) – in every major Tamil population centre in Sri Lanka's Northeast and in diaspora locations endorsed this 'sole representatives' demand. However, the international proscriptions of the LTTE either outlawed further articulation of this stand or where it did not, as in the US (where the right to freedom of speech is, in principle, not trumped by terrorism laws), created a political climate in which it was extremely awkward, if not dangerous, to do

41 K. Stokke, 'Building the Tamil Eelam State: Emerging State Institutions and Forms of Governance in LTTE-controlled Areas in Sri Lanka', *Third World Quarterly* 27/6 (2006) 1021–40.

42 S. Nadarajah and L. Vimalarajah, *The Politics of Transformation: The LTTE and the 2002–2006 Peace Process in Sri Lanka*, Transitions No. 4 (Berlin: Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management 2008).

43 Hocking (note 3) p. 359.

so. This is a crucial constraint in the Tamil liberation project: it is not simply a question of not being able to advocate armed struggle ('terrorism') against state repression, but also of not being able to promote the LTTE as the Tamils' political leadership *even when negotiating a political solution*. The point here is not whether the 'sole representative' claim is reasonable or not on its own terms, but whether it is legally possible to endorse it. This separation of 'Tamil grievances' from the LTTE is a key axiom of the global liberal order's approach to Sri Lanka's conflict. Despite the previous years of mass rallies, petitions and other articulations by European Tamils endorsing the LTTE as the Tamils' political representatives, the EU insisted, whilst banning the LTTE in 2006: '[this] decision is directed at the LTTE, and not at the Tamil people'.⁴⁴ Getting the *Tamils* to reject the LTTE as their political leadership and distance their political project from its armed struggle has long been an international objective, illustrated by the Australian government's declaration in November 1996 that it would only meet with Tamil groups 'provided they *condemn* in writing the terrorist activities of the LTTE'.⁴⁵ The proscriptions of the LTTE simply turn this preference into a legally enforceable requirement.

The (West-led) international community has thus, whilst demanding that Tamils reject the LTTE, assumed for itself the role of championing Tamils' rights vis-à-vis the Sri Lankan state (which it is also supporting against the LTTE). This self-nomination is also integral to the global liberal project, exemplified today by the logics of 'humanitarian intervention', 'responsibility to protect' and 'human security'.⁴⁶ The appropriate response for persecuted peoples is therefore not to take up arms against their state oppressors, but to call on the cavalry of the global liberal order for rescue. Thus, it is *global liberalism's* characterization of what constitutes the failings of the Sri Lanka state, rather than the Tamils' own, that comes to define the political terrain in which Tamil political activity can take place. Global liberalism defines the problem in Sri Lanka as 'a crisis of the state', of failures to meet international standards of governance, of institutional weakness, and so on.⁴⁷ Tamils also point to these, but argue, crucially, that these stem from the Sinhala-dominated state's institutional (constitutional, procedural and ideological) and thus insurmountable racism. Moreover, the Tamil *solution* is to exercise their right to self-determination; i.e. not to pursue *reform* of the majoritarian state, but to form a state of their own.⁴⁸ The foundation for the latter is a narrative that posits Tamils and Sinhalese as distinct nations, entitled to self-rule in their respective

44 Council of the European Union, 'Declaration by the Presidency on Behalf of the European Union Concerning Listing of the LTTE as a Terrorist Organisation' (Brussels 31 May 2006).

45 Comments by Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer to Parliament (5 November 1996), cited in an Australian Foreign Ministry letter dated 10 December 1996 to the Australian Federation of Tamil Associations. Emphasis added.

46 See for example Duffield (note 16); Richmond (note 13).

47 Goodhand (note 12) p. 30.

48 See Bose, Krishna (note 12).

homelands in the Northeast and South of the island. Thus, even when the 'solution' is framed in terms of 'autonomy' (rather than independence), the Tamil vision is very different to that of liberal peace. The former is based on recognition of the two nations and homelands and thus on sharing of power between them. However, the latter envisages a transformation of the present Sri Lankan state into a better governance structure, one explicitly privileging liberal and neoliberal values, rather than 'particularist' ones. Tamils may have 'legitimate grievances', but these must be addressed within a single, democratic, multiethnic space with no room for ethnic homelands. The individual (Sri Lankan citizen), rather than the (Tamil or Sinhala) nation, must thus be the unit and object of governance. With individual ('human') rights, rather than collective rights, thus coming to the fore, resolution of Sri Lanka's crisis is seen to turn primarily on ensuring of rule of law and equitable development (i.e. on ensuring economic opportunities for all individuals) rather than on recognizing the Tamils, as they demand, as a nation – that is, with collective and territorially grounded political rights – that requires protection from state repression. The need for 'autonomy' (say federalism) or 'devolution' is accepted, but only because it furthers the economic and political decentralization of the state required by liberal peace; there is, however, no room for recognition of 'ethnic homelands'.⁴⁹

As the proscriptions of the LTTE have gradually extended across Western states, Tamil political activity in these countries has gradually come to focus less on endorsement of the LTTE as the Tamil *leadership* and more on abstract demands for 'peace talks' or 'a negotiated solution' involving the LTTE – a stance, on the face of it, not dissimilar to that of the international community. Similarly, Tamil advocacy increasingly turns less on the concepts of homeland, nationhood and self-determination, although these continue to inform Tamil politics, and more on specific *failings* – in liberal governmental terms, that is – of the Sri Lankan state's governance, including human rights abuses, inequitable allocation of state resources, crushing of media freedom, etc. For example, the killings in recent years by suspected security forces personnel or Army-backed paramilitaries of Tamil parliamentarians, journalists and political activists are constituted not as part of the state's efforts to crush the Tamil liberation project, but of the government's silencing of 'critics'. The Sri Lankan state's privileging of the Sinhala-dominated South and its exclusion of the Tamil-dominated Northeast in the allocation of international post-tsunami assistance⁵⁰ to Sri Lanka becomes 'inequitable'

49 For example, whilst many Tamil advocates of federalism envisage two federal states within Sri Lanka, recognizing the Northeast as the Tamil homeland, some Western officials see up to ten states. Interviews 2006.

50 *TamilNet*, 'Tamil MP Slams Colombo for Ignoring Northeast Plight' (27 December 2004) at <<http://www.tamilnet.com/art.html?catid=13&artid=13743>>; *TamilNet*, 'Muslims demonstrate against Tsunami aid discrimination' (4 February 2005) at <<http://www.tamilnet.com/art.html?catid=13&artid=14166>>.

distribution, of inefficiency with ethnic overtones, rather than the wilful neglect of the non-Sinhala regions.⁵¹

Moreover, Tamil advocacy has increasingly come to demand the international community address these failings of liberal governance *rather* than to recognize state racism and the Tamil claim to self-determination. These elements are exemplified by the conduct of the Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC), a prominent diaspora lobby group known earlier for its advocacy for international recognition of the Tamil struggle for self-determination and of the LTTE.⁵² Three months after Canada's 2006 ban on the LTTE, the CTC petitioned the government to 'appoint a *neutral* human-rights observer ... to document abuses *on all sides* [and] *throughout Sri Lanka*'.⁵³ The CTC also called on the Canadian government to 'appoint an *impartial* body to track aid flow into Sri Lanka *to ensure it is equitably distributed*'.⁵⁴ The CTC's efforts to avoid its earlier 'Tamil liberation' position hinges on its calls now for 'neutral' and 'impartial' intervention by Canada, rather than *in support* of the Tamils' struggle against oppression. Human rights abuses, rather than persecution of the Tamil nation, are posited as the problem for the Canadian government to address. The concern with abuses 'on all sides' and 'throughout Sri Lanka' fits with commonly stated international characterizations of the Sri Lankan crisis (that is, not of state persecution and consequent liberation struggle, but of a lack of rule of law and good governance) and of the international community (as concerned primarily with the welfare of Sri Lanka's residents, rather than self-interested support for the state).

The point here is the CTC is still seeking to promote the Tamil cause, but feels it cannot *only* argue, as it has done in the past, that in the context of the Sri Lankan state repression, Canada must support Tamil independence. To be seen as 'reasonable' or 'moderate' and not be dismissed (or worse, investigated) as 'LTTE-supporters', the CTC situates itself some distance from its earlier position of categorically demanding Tamil Eelam alongside the LTTE (which it now refers to as the present 'governing authority' – rather than 'representatives' – of the Tamils of Sri Lanka).⁵⁵ The CTC thus comes to echo the international discourse that posits both the LTTE and the Sri Lanka state as problematic. The CTC also seeks an agreeably reasonable 'impartial monitoring' of aid flow as opposed to an earlier stance by Tamil expatriates that the international community must support

51 For example, the report by the of the UN Special Envoy for Tsunami Reconstruction notes: 'What is particularly striking is the overprovision of house reconstruction in the south, which clearly indicates an inequitable allocation of resources from a national perspective' (November 2006) at <<http://www.tsunami-evaluation.org/NR/rdonlyres/06B7033C-446F-407F-BF58-7D4A71425BFF/0/ApproachestoEquity.pdf>> p. 21.

52 <<http://www.caniantamilcongress.ca/>>.

53 Canadian Tamil Congress, 'Canadian Tamils Urge Three Actions for Peace' (Toronto, 25 July 2006). Emphasis added.

54 Ibid. Emphasis added.

55 Ibid. Emphasis added.

a joint aid-sharing mechanism between the LTTE and the Sri Lankan government. The inadvertent shift here accepts that the LTTE, like the Sri Lankan government, cannot be trusted with international aid – whereas a joint mechanism equates the legitimacy of both sides, impartial monitoring equates their illegitimacy. Furthermore the CTC's appeal now posits the Canadian government and the international community as the custodians of Tamil interests, rather than the LTTE or the Tamils themselves.

Conclusion

The central claim of this chapter has been that, by coercively shutting down specific political spaces and by providing alternative 'safe' spaces, the international anti-terrorism regime seeks to shape the Tamil diaspora's political activity in their hostlands towards realizing a liberal governmental vision for Sri Lanka. The point here is not that Tamil self-imagination as a persecuted people or an oppressed nation will be abandoned simply because the global liberal order wills it so. Rather, it is to argue that Tamils' political agitations increasingly come to take place in ways that reinforce the liberal order's problem-definition of Sri Lanka (i.e. a failure of governance requiring state reform), rather than reflect the Tamils' own sense of an oppressed nation seeking to exercise their right to self-determination.

The global liberal order has reconstituted the core issues confronting Sri Lanka's Tamils – such as institutionalized discrimination, embedding of Sinhala majoritarianism within the state bureaucracy and military, absence of physical security and rule of law, lack of media freedom, etc. – from being justifying elements of a demand for independence into targets of reform of the Sri Lankan state. These behavioural shifts are pursued on the basis of an asserted and implied conflation between the articulation of certain political positions (such as the demand for Tamil independence) and support for 'terrorist' violence (the LTTE's armed struggle). By setting out what are 'moderate' and 'extreme' views and simultaneously wielding the punitive apparatuses enabled by terrorism proscription, the global liberal order seeks to set the terms of what does and does not constitute acceptable advocacy.

This is not to say this sought after transformation of the Tamil liberation project has been achieved. Indeed, despite the increasing deployment of coercive anti-terrorism measures within Western states, expatriate Tamils continue to pursue their cause of national liberation from Sri Lankan state oppression in a variety of ways. However, amid the global liberal order's robust backing for the Sri Lankan state in confronting the LTTE, they are compelled to do so with considerable care and guile to avoid the terrifying apparatuses of domestic security enabled by anti-terrorism legislation. Interestingly, in recent years, the Tamil liberation project has been increasingly reinforced by the Sri Lankan state's own deepening resistance to the global liberal order. The strident Sinhala nationalism and chauvinism that has engulfed the Sri Lankan state and polity since 2004, particularly as the

internationally-backed military campaign against the LTTE has gained ground,⁵⁶ has made international assertions of the reformability of the Sri Lankan state along liberal lines increasingly untenable. Indeed, it is amid a manifest inability or unwillingness of the global liberal order to discipline and transform the Sri Lankan state that the call for an independent Tamil Eelam has emerged forcefully again at the centre of Tamil expatriate agitation. Notably, however, even this long-standing goal of independence is now pursued by mobilizing the referential terms of liberal governmentality alongside, if not ahead of, the foundations of nation, homeland and self-determination that formed the basis for it before. To say that terrorism proscription has thus far failed to transform the Tamil liberation project into one of liberal state-building in Sri Lanka is not, therefore, to deny the potency of the securitization of politics that the terrorism discourse constitutes.

56 D. Rampton with A. Welikala, 'Colliding Worlds: Sinhala Nationalism and Populist Resistance to the Liberal Peace', in J. Goodhand, J.B. Korf and J. Spencer (eds), *Caught in the Peace Trap? Conflict, Aid and Peacebuilding in Sri Lanka* (Routledge, forthcoming).