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Reappraising the role of economic sanctions in international politics

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Abstract
Economic sanctions is one of the most popular tools in international politics. Its use predates modern civilization and interstate relations are still being shaped today by the application of economic sanctions. We have seen a shift from institutionally imposed sanction like the UN imposed sanctions on Iraq in 1991, to unilateral sanctions, a popular foreign policy tool for the United States and the UK. The last two years have witnessed an unprecedented level of multilateral economic sanction and retaliatory sanctions among the major Super Powers as they continue to struggle for asymmetrical territorial expansion. This paper examines the continued relevance of economic sanctions in international politics and its effects on unintended targets. I have also situated the discussion within relevant theoretical framework while specific attention is devoted to the UN sanction on Iraq and the future of economic sanctions. The paper attempts to reappraise the role of economic sanctions in contemporary interstate relations.

Keywords: Economic Sanctions, Statecraft, Cold War, Pericle's Megarian Decree, international politics.

Introduction
The practice of economic sanctions is hardly new in international politics, but the twentieth and twenty first centuries are especially rich in sanction episodes. The use of sanctions increased from two cases in the 1920s to more than 20 in the 1980s and several instances between 2014 and 2015. Despite their widespread use, traditional scholarly perception is that sanctions are remarkably unsuccessful in achieving their stated policy objectives (Joy Gordon, 2012)
Nevertheless, the number of disputes in which they were employed during the first half of the 1990-s contributes to the conclusion about the ever-growing popularity of sanctions. It also demonstrates clear differences from previous decades. While the majority of the sanctions employed previously were unilateral and originated by the United States, today they are predominantly multilateral and imposed by the United Nations, the EU and AU. This reflects a belief that a new, inexpensive and potentially potent weapon against small and medium size troublemakers has been found (Mueller 1994, p. 363). Attempt will be made to situate the paper within the framework of contemporary multilateral shift in sanction as a co-operative weapons employed to force common enemy to a position of compromise. A case in point was the US and the EU sanction on Russia following its decision to annexe Crimean in August 2014. Unsurprisingly, Russia in turn imposed its own sanctions on the US and the EU.

Statement of the Problem
Economic sanctions are rapidly becoming one of the major tools of international governance of the post-Cold War era. The UN Security Council, empowered under Article 16 of the UN Charter to use economic measures to address "threats of aggression" and "breaches of peace," approved partial or comprehensive sanctions on only two occasions from 1945 to 1990. By contrast, since 1990 the Security Council has imposed sanctions on eleven nations, including the former Yugoslavia, Libya, Somalia, Liberia, Haiti, and several other nations. However, the U.S. has imposed sanctions, unilaterally or with other nations, far more frequently than any other nation in the world, or any multinational body in the world, including the United Nations.(Joy Gordon, 2012)
We will examine the continued effectiveness and relevance of economic sanctions in contemporary international politics by providing answers to the following questions

i. Is economic sanction an alternative to an all-out war in post-World War 2 era?
ii. How relevant is economic sanction in today's world?
iii. Is economic sanction a weapon of mass destruction?

Objective of the Study
The objective of this study is to examine the civilian, humanitarian and other unintended effect of economic sanctions on the citizens of the countries suffering either unilateral or multilateral sanctions thus:

i. To examine the impact of economic sanction in preventing an all-out war
ii. To ascertain the continued relevance of economic sanctions in contemporary time
iii. To understand the destructive effect of economic sanction in contemporary politics.

Theoretical Issues on Economic Sanctions
In theory, sanctions in general and bilateral sanctions in particular made only a rare success. As is the case between the USA, EU and Russia and as a rule, retaliatory sanctions are detrimental to the welfare of the retaliating country and amount to "shooting oneself in the foot". It is also argued by Breus (2004) [17].that trade wars can only be won by large countries. The existing literature cites a number of reasons why sanctions are often ineffective. First, it is difficult to ensure that sanctions hurt where they are supposed to hurt. For example, when sanctions are imposed unilaterally, the target might reduce their impact by turning to alternative customers or suppliers and by using counterstrategies such as stockpiling, import substitution, rationing, and smuggling. Moreover, the political elite in the target country might be in

able to pass on the costs of sanctions to other segments of the population. Third, sanctions can be costly for the sender, too. In particular, when economic sanctions are being used, the target's neighbours often suffer significantly. Finally, while sanctions might cause protest against the political leadership in the target nation, they might also conversely arouse defiance, patriotism, and popular support for the regime. President Putin approval rating soared to a record high of 95% after the application of multilateral sanction against Russia. (Vtsiom, 2015).

Previous research has documented only a modest success rate for imposed sanctions. After identifying the conditions for effective sanctions, Hufbauer, Schott, and Elliott (1985) conclude that sanctions work best if the following conditions are met: (1) the goals of the sender are limited; (2) the target is already experiencing economic difficulties; (3) there are generally friendly relations between sender and target countries; (4) sanctions are forcefully implemented in a single step; (5) sanctions entail significant costs for the target; (6) the costs for sender countries are modest; (7) the sanctions are not accompanied by covert action or military operations; and (8) few countries are needed to implement the sanctions. While some of these conditions such as (1) to (3) are met, the rest of them may not be that certain to warrantee a success for the current sanction of the western countries on Russia.

As specified by Hovi, Huseby and Sprinz (2005), there are two conditions that must be fulfilled for imposed sanctions to work. First, the target country must initially underestimate the potency of the sanctions, miscalculate the sender’s determination to impose them, or wrongly believe that the sanctions are non-contingent. And second, the target's miscalculation must be corrected after sanctions are imposed. Their theoretical model based on a game theory framework requires several variables including benefits and costs of the sender, target and audience which must be estimated before the effectiveness of the sanctions are assessed. Particularly, with complete information, imposed sanctions cannot work.

Literature Review

In defining relevant terms, this study will mostly rely on Baldwin’s (1985) [1]. Definitions. Baldwin’s takes a more general and theoretical approach, as opposed to focusing on particular cases, that is more conducive to this study. Offering economic rewards or withholding economic advantages in order to make other international actor(s) do what they would not otherwise do means using economics as an instrument of politics and is, according to Baldwin, best labelled as -economic statecraft. The economic techniques of statecraft are defined as governmental influence attempts that have three basic components. Economic policy instrument, as opposed to other means of statecraft relying primarily on negotiation (diplomacy) or force (military statecraft), economic statecraft relies on instruments primarily aimed at affecting other actor’s- production and consumption of wealth, for example, denying or promising aid or trade boycott. A case can be made that, insofar as the -going market price- for such transactions exists, they should be labelled as an economic statecraft. There are, however, borderline cases, such as the sale or gift of military hardware that can be classified either as economic or as military statecraft, depending on the particular case in question.

Secondly, there is the domain of the influence attempt where other international actors upon which influence attempt is targeted and is often referred to as the -target. Finally, the scope of the influence attempt applies to some dimension of target’s behaviour that the sender(s) country (ies) perceives as objectionable and wants to change. It can be named also as -goal. - It is worth noting that any dimension of the target’s behaviour can be selected. Since the political quality of the act is a function of the total influence relation, it is not a function of scope. This implies that attempts at influencing another state’s attitude towards foreign direct investments or tariff levels are no less -political- than attempts at influencing its respect for human rights. Economic statecraft is usually deployed to exercise economic power. It is used to threaten or damage the wealth of the target, leading to compliance by making the objectionable policy more expensive and/or provoking political disintegration. However, the sanctions need not bite in order to work (Baldwin, 1985: 372) implying that they might work through noneconomic power bases. Trade restrictions can successfully convey a threat of invasion even if their economic impact is negligible, while human rights offenders might care more about their moral standing in the international community than the effects of sanctions on their economic welfare. Economic techniques of statecraft are often accused of not working, which raises the question of how their usefulness is measured. This can be done by employing one of two alternative criteria--effectiveness and efficiency. The first step in assessing effectiveness is establishing the intended goals and targets (scope and domain). However, as Baldwin correctly notes, the evaluation of effectiveness can be diluted with the importance of secondary, implicit or unstated goals, as well as third parties. Therefore, instead of considering economic statecraft strictly in terms of securing compliance with explicit and publicly stated demands, the approach which recognizes that there are usually a multitude of targets and goals is likely to bear more fruit. Another problem, as identified by Baldwin, is that some of the best known applications of economic statecraft involve extraordinary levels of difficulty. One example of this is promoting economic development and democracy in countries that have never known either (Baldwin, 1985: 133). Moreover, not all effects of statecraft are easy to observe. Less glamorous than diplomacy and less decisive than war, the effects of economic statecraft tend to be underestimated since they are seldom sudden or dramatic. All this implies the need to be careful when judging influence attempts into simple dichotomies, such as -success- or -failure- because the outcome is much more likely to be mixed or ambiguous.

Given that the concept of effectiveness involves only the achieved benefits while ignoring the cost sustained by the sender, a more appropriate criterion would be efficiency, in Baldwin’s view. Efficiency implies that economic statecraft is always chosen among alternative courses of action, such as negotiations or military action, depending on the basis of their cost and benefits. However, this concept is not without its problems, for Baldwin warns that analytical pitfalls frequently occur, such as completely ignoring cost or misleading cost comparisons. Economic statecraft, as defined here, is intentionally broad, since it has to include all economic forms of influence. However, the distinction can be made between negative sanctions (withholding economic advantages) and positive sanctions (offering economic benefits), as well as trade and financial sanctions. For the purposes of this study, using the case of Yugoslavia, economic sanctions will be used to describe the technique of economic statecraft that withholds economic advantages through either trade or financial restrictions.

Post Cold War Sanctions

This section will analyse different patterns in the use of sanctions during the 1990s, focusing on factors that gave rise to the recent proliferation of multilateral economic sanctions. Since the first documented sanctions episode, Pericle's Megarian decree enacted in 432 BC (John V. A Fine, 1983) Sanctions have remained an important foreign policy tool, especially for great powers. However, only after World War I was extensive attention given to the opinion that economic sanctions might substitute for armed hostilities as a stand-alone policy (Hufbauer, Schott and Elliott, 1990:5) [15].

President Wilson viewed economic means as suitable for pursuing foreign policy goals, as he was the leading advocate for building a capacity to use the "economic weapon" in the League of Nations. Out of the eight cases Hufbauer, Schott and Elliott identified between 1918 and 1940, four involved League of Nations attempts to apply economic sanctions to settle disputes. Sanctions were usually imposed to disrupt military adventures or to complement a broader war effort (League of Nations vs. Yugoslavia, League of Nations vs. Greece). In the period after World War II, the imposition of sanctions occurred against the background of the rivalry between the superpower, thus making other policy motives increasingly prevalent. The sanctions were used for strategic reasons –to deny strategic materials and/or impair military potential (COCOM), destabilize foreign governments in the context of containment (Cuba, Chile), or overthrow a rebellious government inside the block (Yugoslavia, Albania). Apart from the episodes with the dominant Cold War flavor, sanctions were still occasionally used to force a target country to withdraw its troops from border conflicts, to abandon plans of territorial acquisition, or to cease other military adventures (as was the case of Egypt that was forced to withdraw from Yemen and the Congo as a result of withholding development and food aid) (Hufbauer, Schott and Elliott, 1990:5) [15]. Finally, sanctions were also used on behalf of efforts to protect human rights (as was the case of Chile, where the United States imposed sanctions after General Pinochet was charged with widespread violations of human rights), to halt nuclear proliferation (evidenced by sanctions imposed on Pakistan in 1979 by the United States), to settle expropriation claims (as demonstrated by sanctions imposed on Ceylon 1961-65 by the United States after expropriating assets of US and UK oil companies), and to combat international terrorism (as in the case of Syria, where sanctions were imposed in 1976 after Syria, among others, was listed by the Carter administration as a country supporting international terrorism). '

Of the 116 cases documented by Hufbauer, Schott and Elliott, the United States, either alone or in cooperation with its allies, have deployed sanctions 77 times (1990:7) [13]. This reflected the US role as an economic hegemon and a political and military superpower. However, both the economic and political situation have changed. Beginning with the 1970, trade and financial patterns have become far more diversified, new technology has spread faster, and new competitive economic superpowers have emerged. These trends resulted in the declining average trade linkage between the United States and its targets -- from 24% of GNP prior to 1973 to 17% since, as well as lower costs imposed on targets – 1.7% of GNP vs. 0.9% of GNP (1990:107). The overall outcome was a diminishing effectiveness of US sanctions due to the reduced vulnerability of the potential targets to unilateral economic coercion.

As the Cold War came to an end, the strategic reasons for imposing sanctions, which existed due to superpower rivalry, disappeared. Coupled with severe economic problems at home, Russia became far less likely to assist the countries hit by the US sanctions as it used to do with Cuba. Not less important, the termination of the Cold War seemed to have opened the door for an unprecedented degree of international cooperation. As far as the United Nations was concerned, this cooperation raised the expectations that it would finally be able to act in the true spirit of the UN Charter and that the broad use of veto that had made the Security Council impotent to act during the Cold War, would be abandoned (Higgins, 1994:174). This was apparent in the use of multilateral economic sanctions that were, in fact, collective enforcement measures (Article 41, Chapter VII of the UN Charter). Article 41 was applied for the first time in the UN history in December 1966, when comprehensive economic, financial, and diplomatic measures were adopted against the racist regime of Southern Rhodesia. In the absence of a similar consensus in the Council, only a mandatory arms embargo could be decreed against South Africa in 1977. Since the invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990, however, sanctions have been instituted against Iraq (1990), the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1992, lifted in 1960), and Libya (1992). They were also imposed on Somalia in 1992 and Haitian 1993, but were abolished after unsuccessful military intervention (Somalia) and when the democratically elected president came back to power (Haiti).

Nonetheless, as expectations rose to new heights, disappointments lurked just around the corner, for the improved East-West climate was only one of the preconditions for the improved prospects of the United Nations. Additional concerns included the need for reform that would address shortcomings in forms of inefficiency and too much bureaucracy, as well as the financial problems due to failure of the member states to pay budgetary dues (Higgins, 1994:180)

However, the euphoria that followed the enforcement measures authorized by the United Nations against Iraq in 1990-1991 gave way to a new and disturbing reality (Ibid, 180). After the relatively straightforward two-alliance confrontation of the cold war, the world has turned back to the riskier manoeuvring of a multi-power system (The International Order, 1994: 17). The world's chief powers remembered how different they were from each other and started acting accordingly (Ibid, 20). This came to a head in the case of Yugoslavia.

Purposes of Economic Sanctions

The term "economic sanctions" encompasses the deliberate, government-inspired withdrawal, or threat of withdrawal, of customary trade or financial relations. ("Customary" refers to the levels of trade or financial activity that would probably have occurred in the absence of sanctions.) In this paper, we discuss the use of economic sanctions to achieve political goals; in other words, we exclude cases of economic sanctions used to achieve commercial goals, such as the withdrawal of tariff protection.

The motives behind the use of sanctions parallel the three basic purposes of national criminal law: to punish, to deter, and to rehabilitate. Individual countries, as well as various ad hoc coalitions, frequently impose sanctions to achieve a wide variety of foreign policy goals, even when the probability of forcing a change in the target country's policy is small. In addition to demonstrating resolve and signalling displeasure to the immediate transgressor, politicians may also want to posture for their domestic constituencies. It is quite clear, for example, that U.S., European, and British Commonwealth sanctions against South Africa (1985–1991), as well as U.S., European, and Japanese sanctions against Burma (1988–), were designed principally to assuage domestic constituencies, to make moral and historical statements, and to send a warning to future offenders of the international order. The effect on the specific target country was almost secondary. Sanctions played only a moderate role in ending South Africa's apartheid. Economic and political conditions inside South Africa were the most important factors influencing the outcome. Sanctions did not cause the National Party to abandon apartheid, but by adding to the already mounting costs of maintaining apartheid they accelerated the inevitable.

World leaders often decide that the obvious alternatives to economic sanctions are unsatisfactory; military action would be too massive, and diplomatic protest too meager. Sanctions can provide a satisfying theatrical display, yet avoid the high costs of war. This is not to say that sanctions are costless, just that they are often less costly than the alternatives.

Prior to the 1990s, institutionally endorsed sanctions were rare. The League of Nations imposed or threatened to impose economic sanctions only four times in the 1920s and 1930s, twice successfully. But the league faded from history when its ineffectual response failed to deter Benito Mussolini's conquest of Ethiopia in 1935 and 1936. Freed from the restraints of superpower rivalry, the United Nations played a much bigger role in international affairs in the (1990) s [5]. The new activism of the United Nations is reflected in the fact that the Security Council imposed mandatory sanctions thirteen times in response to instances of civil strife, regional aggression, or grave violations of human rights—compared with just twice (against South Africa and Rhodesia) in previous decades.1 In many instances, however, the new threats were not of paramount concern for the major powers, and only weakly enforced arms embargoes were imposed. As a result, U.N. sanctions enjoyed limited success. With the exception of those imposed against Libya in response to Pan Am 103 terrorist attacks and, possibly, those imposed against Yugoslavia over the civil war in Bosnia, U.N. sanctions have failed to achieve their objectives. In fact, the decade-long comprehensive sanctions regime against Iraq generated considerable political backlash.

Types of Sanctions

A "sender" country tries to inflict costs on its target in two main ways: (1) with trade sanctions that limit the target country's exports or restrict its imports, and (2) with financial sanctions that impede finance (including reducing aid). Governments that impose limits on target countries' exports intend to reduce its foreign sales and deprive it of foreign exchange. Governments impose limits on their own exports to deny critical goods to the target country. If the sender country exports a large percentage of world output, this may also cause the target to pay higher prices for substitute imports, but only if the sender country also reduces its overall output. When governments impose financial sanctions by interrupting commercial finance or by slashing government loans to the target country's government, they intend to cause the target country to pay higher interest rates and to scare away alternative creditors. When a poor country is the target, the government imposing the sanction can use the subsidy component of official financing or other development assistance to gain further leverage.

Total embargoes are rare. Most trade sanctions are selective, affecting only one or a few goods. Thus, the economy-wide impact of the sanction may be quite limited. Because sanctions are often unilateral, the trade may be only diverted rather than cut off. Whether import prices paid by (or export prices received by) the target country increase (or decrease) after the sanctions are applied depends on the market in question. If there are many alternative markets and suppliers, the effects on prices may be very modest, and the economic impact of the sanctions will be negligible.

For example, Australia cut off shipments of uranium to France from 1983 to 1986 because of France's refusal to halt testing of nuclear weapons in the South Pacific. In 1984, however, the price of uranium oxide dropped nearly 50 percent. France was able to replace the lost supply, and at a cost lower than its contract price with the Australian mine. Because Australia was unable to find alternative buyers for all the uranium intended for France, the Australian government ultimately paid Queensland Mines $26 million in 1985 and 1986 for uranium it had contracted to sell to France.

Financial sanctions, in contrast, are usually more difficult to evade. Because sanctions are typically intended to foster or exacerbate political or economic instability, alternative financing may be hard to find and is likely to carry a higher interest rate. Private Banks and investors are easily scared off by the prospect that the target country will face a credit squeeze in the future. Moreover, many sanctions involve the suspension or termination of government subsidies to poor countries—large grants of money or concessionary loans from one government to another—which may be irreplaceable. Another important difference between trade sanctions and financial sanctions lies in the parties that are hurt by each. The pain from trade sanctions, especially export controls, usually is diffused throughout the target country's population. Indeed, political elites in the target country may benefit from trade sanctions by controlling lucrative black markets. Financial sanctions, on the other hand, are more likely to hit the pet projects or personal pockets of government officials who shape local policy. On the sender's side of the equation, an interruption of official aid or credit is unlikely to create the same political backlash from domestic business firms and allies abroad as an interruption of private trade. Finally, financial sanctions, especially those involving trade finance, may interrupt trade even without the imposition of explicit trade sanctions. In practice, however, financial and trade sanctions are usually used in some combination with one another.

The ultimate form of financial and trade control is a freeze of the target country's foreign assets, such as bank accounts held in the sender country. In addition to imposing a cost on the target country, a key goal of an assets freeze is to deny an invading country the full fruits of its aggression. In the (1990) [18]. Middle East crisis, the U.S. government and its allies froze Kuwait's assets to prevent Saddam Hussein from plundering them.

Such measures were also used against Japan just before and during World War II. Increasingly concerned with Japanese military aggression in Southeast Asia, the United States gradually tightened economic sanctions imposed against Japan from July 1940 to July 1941. Initial licensing requirements for the export of arms, ammunition, and aviation fuel were followed by a total ban on exports of iron and steel scrap a few months later, and finally, in July 1941, by a freezing of Japanese assets and a tightening of the licensing requirements that de facto ended all trade with Japan, including oil exports. Despite considerable costs to its economy, Japan did not abandon its policy of expansionism but rather intensified the war efforts in the Pacific and in the end attacked Pearl Harbor in December 1941. While economic sanctions did not deter Japan, they denied vital resources to a potential enemy.

Effectiveness of Sanctions

Senders usually have multiple goals and targets in mind when they impose sanctions, and simple punishment is rarely at the top of the list. Judging the effectiveness of sanctions requires sorting out the various goals sought, analysing whether the type and scope of the chosen sanction were appropriate to the occasion, and determining the economic and political impacts on the target country.

If governments that impose sanctions embrace contradictory goals, sanctions will usually be weak and, ultimately, ineffective. In such cases, the country or group imposing sanctions will not exert much influence on the target country. Thus, it may be the policy—not the instrument (sanctions)—that fails. For example, the Reagan and Bush administrations began economic sanctions against Panama in 1987 in an effort to destabilize the Noriega regime. But because they wanted to avoid destroying their political allies in the Panamanian business and financial sectors, they imposed sanctions incrementally and then gradually weakened them with exemptions. In the end, the sanctions proved inadequate, and the U.S. military invaded Panama and took Noriega by force (Gandasegui, 1993) [12].

In many cases, sanctions are imposed primarily for "signaling" purposes—for the benefit of allies, other third parties, or a domestic audience. The intended signal is not always received. Instead, it may be overwhelmed by a cacophony of protests from injured domestic parties, which may force a premature reversal of the policy. For example, American farmers howled with outrage when President Jimmy Carter embargoed grain sales to the Soviet Union following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (Robert L. Paarl berg, 1980) [20]. The protests, buttressed by candidate Ronald Reagan's promise to lift the embargo if elected (which he did within three months of his inauguration) undermined the seriousness of intent that Carter wanted to convey. Efforts to extend sanctions extraterritorially may produce similar effects abroad. The extraterritorial features of the U.S. Helms-Burton sanctions against Cuba provoked enormous resentment in Europe and Canada, and these features were effectively waived by Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. Sanctions imposed for symbolic purposes must be carefully crafted if they are to convey the intended signal.

Sanctions intended to change the government of a target country are even more difficult to design. In such cases, sanctions must be imposed as quickly and comprehensively as possible. A strategy of "turning the screws" gives the target leaders time to adjust by finding alternative suppliers or markets, by building new alliances, and by mobilizing domestic opinion in support of its policies. Great Britain, followed by the United Nations, adopted a slow and deliberate strategy in response to Ian Smith's "unilateral declaration of independence" in Rhodesia in 1965. Aided by hesitation and delays, the Smith regime was able to use import substitution, smuggling, and other circumvention techniques to fend off black majority rule for more than a decade.

Our assessment of nearly two hundred observations of economic sanctions imposed since World War I indicates that economic sanctions tend to be most effective at modifying the target country's behaviour under the following conditions:

- The goal is relatively modest: winning the release of a political prisoner versus overthrowing the regime of Saddam Hussein, for example. Less ambitious goals may be achieved with more modest sanctions; this also lessens the importance of multilateral cooperation, which is often difficult to obtain. Finally, if the stakes are small, there is less chance that a rival power will step in with offsetting assistance.
- The target is much smaller than the country imposing sanctions, economically weak, and politically unstable. The average sender's economy in the 198 episodes studied was 245 times as large as the economy of the average target. (Moreover, this calculation excludes 21 instances in which a major power targeted a microstate, and the GDP ratio exceeded 2000.)
- The sanctions are imposed quickly and decisively to maximize impact. The average cost to the target as a percentage of GNP in successful cases was 2.6 percent and in failures was only 1.5 percent (excluding Iraq), while successful sanctions lasted an average of only three years, versus eight years for failures. The sender avoids high economic or political costs to itself.

It is obvious from these prescriptions that effective sanctions, in the sense of coercing a change in target country policy, are achieved infrequently. Economic sanctions were relatively effective tools of foreign policy in the first two decades after World War II: they achieved their stated goals in nearly half the cases (twenty-seven successes out of sixty-one cases). The evolution of the world economy, however, has narrowed the circumstances in which unilateral economic leverage can be effectively applied, and only one in five unilateral U.S. sanctions after 1970 scored as a success (ten successes out of fifty-two cases). For multilateral sanctions, increasing economic interdependence acts as a double-edged sword. It increases the latent power of economic sanctions because countries are more dependent on international trade and financial flows. But it also means wider sources of supply and greater access to markets and, thus, the possibility that a greater number of neutral countries can undermine the economic impact of a sanctions effort should they choose to do so. Since 1970, over a third of multilateral sanctions in which the United States participated scored as a success (twenty successes out of fifty-three cases).

Conclusion

The belief that the new, credible, inexpensive and potentially potent weapon against small and medium size troublemakers has been discovered (Mueller, 1994: 363), reflected by the recent proliferation of the multilateral economic sanctions, certainly calls for critical review. Sanctions are mostly imposed on the countries with little or no democratic tradition (Yugoslavia, Iraq, Libya, Somalia), and that strengthens rather than weakens the existing authoritarian regimes. As a State is less democratic, the punishment is more unfair, since there is no possibility for the majority to influence the acts of government (Dimitri jevic, 1993: 12) [8]. Moreover, even if this possibility existed, it is unlikely that the citizens of those states would translate the economic signals in their electoral behaviour. Misperceptions of this kind can be compared only with the US action in Somalia, when an extremely powerful TV signal transmitter was installed to inform the people what was really going on. Only afterwards was it realized that a number of privately owned TV sets was very small, thus necessitating the instalment of a radio-signal transmitter. The same can be said about the economic sanctions applied against undemocratic countries - their population is not used to judge and change governments according to their economic performance. Finally, the poverty that inevitably increases due to sanctions, makes the citizens of the state in question ever more dependent on the state and hence receptive to totalitarian regimes. This invites the conclusion that, even if the stated policy objectives are achieved, the solution of the problem is temporary at best. Therefore, the international community should address the cause rather than cure the consequences - helping democratization in those countries can be of greater use to foreign policy goals than the imposition of economic sanctions.

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