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FROM NAPOLEON TO NETANYAHU: BLOCKADING THROUGH TWO CENTURIES

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Since the days of the galley ship in ancient times, blockading continues to be a fundamental activity of navies. Over the centuries, its meaning and roles evolved in synchronization with both technological advancement and progressive legal interpretation of both the strategy of blockading and warfare in general. The general American population tends to associate blockading actions with the starvation blockades of the American Civil War and both World Wars, along with the blockade of Cuba during the 1962 missile crisis with the Soviet Union. The majority of blockades are not this large in scope or, in the case of the latter, strategic importance. This does not mean that they were not both necessary and effective. Throughout the history of warfare and into the present, blockading continues to prove itself one of the most effective ways of pressuring an enemy.¹ While the days of the large blockade as a cornerstone of a nation's strategy may be in the past, the modern blockade remains an integral part of warfare. Focused and specialized interdiction activities continue their relevance on today's seas as a means to pressure an enemy into a negotiated solution short of war, help achieve objectives in a limited war, or provide a means to interdict an established high payoff target.

Successful blockades possess four common themes. They are primarily conducted by sea power states, though notable attempts by land power states in both the Napoleonic and post-Cold War eras exist. Second, blockading is most effective against a land power that must rely predominately upon its sea lines of communication without the ability to turn to lines of communication overland or, in more modern times, through the air. The inclusion of air relates to the third theme, the ever changing technology in blockading and counter-blockading operations. It is arguable that technology impacts no other arena of naval warfare as rapidly or consequentially as in the blockade. The final common theme in blockading occurs not on the high seas, but in legislative chambers and courtrooms. Throughout blockading's history, this is

readily visible by the wide variety of names blockading activities receive by those pursuing them, generally corresponding to where the larger operations they support fall within the spectrum of conflict. This is done in order to ensure these operations do not create real or perceived violations of international law or norms.²

While, typically conducted by sea power states, history demonstrates exceptions to this first theme of blockading. Napoleon's Continental System of 1806 attempted to shape activities during the Napoleonic Wars. Established by the Berlin decree and first and second Milan decrees, the Continental system attempted to isolate Britain from European commerce.³ Trade with Britain was prohibited, any British citizens in French occupied Europe declared prisoners of war and their property confiscated. Trade in British goods from either her home islands or her colonies became illegal and the goods themselves subject to seizure. Any ships, regardless of registry, originating from any port in the British Empire were barred from Continental ports.

This action resulted in a "self-blockade" of the Napoleonic Europe. Theoretically, the plan was feasible due to France's status as the major land power and its ability to procure its war material via land lines of communication. France could continue to supply its army via land while the Continental system would restrict the sale of British goods, severely limiting the Economic power of the Crown. Napoleon's plan resulted in a blockade that more closely resembled a stringent tariff and quota system, which in the days of mercantilism would lead to unbalanced trade for Britain, resulting in a net loss of profits for her merchants and an outlay of pounds sterling that was not sustainable. Ultimately this would result in reduced credit for Britain and resource constraints for both the Royal Navy and His Majesty's Troops. It simultaneously benefitted the French industrial sector by encouraging the growth of industries on the continent to produce goods previously imported in Britain.⁴

The success of any blockade depends strongly on the ability of the state imposing it to ensure that the risks of running it are greater than any of the rewards. Poor enforcement, corruption, and existing merchant networks ultimately rendered Napoleon's nontraditional blockade unsuccessful.⁵ Application of the blockade to the majority of the European continent necessitated the hiring of more customs enforcement officers, increasing the number from 23,000 in 1806 to 35,000 in 1813.⁶ The French treasury estimated the number of smugglers to be five times this amount. Low wages for these officers, coupled with their inexperience created conditions ripe for graft, bribery, and corruption. Bribery and graft were rarely punished, as both were exceedingly difficult to prove in the courts. Many smugglers possessed arms superior to those enforcing the continental system, leading many officers who were not corrupt to turn a blind eye to illicit activity in fear of their lives.⁷ French law allowed those arrested for smuggling to pay a fine to the Treasury in lieu of a trial. International merchant networks found routes around the blockade, often using neutral states, such as the United States, as facilitators. These merchants often invited senior French officials to invest in their businesses, increasing the amount of bribery and corruption.⁸ Due to these shortcomings, Napoleon's plan ultimately failed.

Technological innovation in naval blockading fleets during this time period was largely unchanged. However, in 1807, Robert Fulton developed the first commercially successful steamboat, foreshadowing technologies to come upon the sea.⁹

Legal implications arose on both sides from this blockade. Britain, a traditional sea power, countered Napoleon with a traditional naval blockade of sailing ships to prevent goods from reaching the continent. Like their French counterparts, the British imposed a series of regulations upon neutral shipping. Greatly affected by both of these legal maneuvers, the United

States passed the Embargo Act of 1807, prohibiting trade with both Britain and France. This act hurt American commerce as badly as its British and French targets, with the Non-Intercourse Act of 1809 replacing it. The Non-Intercourse Act allowing for trade with the two belligerent powers if they revoked their trade restrictions with the US. France and the US began trading again, but British trade with its former colony remained closed.¹⁰

At an impasse, the War of 1812 broke out between Britain and the US. Although many diplomatic disputes arose regarding the rights of neutral powers during numerous conflicts, the Napoleonic Wars represent a rare case in which such an impasse led to a separate war between one of the belligerents and the neutral power.¹¹ This war left many matters regarding blockading unresolved, with no discussion of maritime rights at its conclusion. Britain did, however, express a concession to the needs of neutral opinion regarding blockades in situations less than total war.¹²

By the 1850s, naval blockades were considered a prime tool to aid in coercing an enemy to accept a limited defeat.¹³ During this period, Russian tariffs against British manufactured goods increased while Russia looked to expand its interests in Ottoman Turkey.

Critical to British and French successes in this conflict were simultaneous blockades of both the Baltic and Black Seas. Sea-power Britain took the lead in blockading actions against land-power Russia, an agrarian state with an economy heavily reliant upon imports from her European and Asian neighbors for both war material and manufacturing equipment.¹⁴ Overland trade routes were long and treacherous, which increased the likelihood of a successful blockade. The British blockade in the Baltic Sea served to keep the Russian fleet in port and succeeded in doing so. Without smaller, shallow draft vessels, the forces under the command of Vice Admiral Charles Napier were unable to enter Russian ports. With no French assistance in the Baltic,

Napier did not have the ships necessary for a complete blockade. He resorted to using his cruisers to maintain pressure on Russian ports, while using the remainder of his battle fleet to capture the Aland Islands. His actions reduced Russian blockading running to small boats. Despite their minimal forces, British actions in the Baltic resulted in a major blow to the Russian economy, forced her Navy to remain in port, and prevented a total committal of Russian forces to the land campaign in the Crimea.

While alone in the Baltic, the British fleet in the Black Sea received assistance from its French ally. However, both forces possessed few resources for a blockade. The focus of naval operations in the Black Sea for the duration of the Crimean War remained the support of land forces for both transportation and supply. Though a tight blockade in the Black Sea was not sustainable, geography benefitted the British and French fleets. The allies simply stopped Russian ships coming through the Bosphorus, capturing any vessel containing contraband. The blockade of Russia successfully aided in bringing an end to the Crimean War in Britain's favor.

The Crimean War saw technology change nature of blockading. High explosive shells rendered wooden warships obsolete. Ironclad vessels powered by steam engines and screw propellers enforced the blockade on Russia. This required British and French military planners to ensure an uninterrupted supply of coal to their fleets. Simultaneously, the interdiction of coal destined for Russia ensured its fleet remained in port, unable to break the blockade. This change in technology also allowed Britain to pursue a blockade without some of the objectionable practices, such as the impressment of sailors, that so upset neutral powers in the past. A shift in legal thinking also accompanied this technological revolution.

The Declaration of Paris (1856), abolished privateering, protected enemy goods sailing under neutral flags with the exception of contraband of war, and protected neutral goods sailing

under enemy flags with the same exception. It further required that blockades be maintained by sufficient force to prevent access to an enemy coast in order to be considered binding under international law. The Declaration, however, did not apply to non-signatory states. As anticipated by Britain, the United States did not sign the agreement due to its prohibition of privateering. Thus, the US would not be protected in an Anglo-French war, which in the 1850s, was still considered a possibility. If another signatory used privateers, Britain reserved the right to employ them again (as occurred in both 1914 and 1939). Thus, the Declaration of Paris changed maritime law to reflect the greater efficiency of steam power. Conflict within North America rapidly put these legal and technological evolutions to the test.

The Crimean War broke technological ground in the realm of blockading by ushering in steam power, improved armaments, and protective armor for ships. However, this technology was used in a limited war. The American Civil War marked the first time these technologies contributed to a blockade as a strategic option during the course of a total war.

The United States led the world in the development of steam power for naval vessels, becoming the first country to launch a propeller driven steam warship, the *USS Princeton*, in 1843.¹⁵ Despite winning the race in innovation, the US technological lead on the high seas did not last. British and French engineers successfully copied and improved upon the *Princeton's* design. The geographical position of the United States and the accompanying logistics realities resulted in many of her ships maintaining power only by sail. Situated 3,000 miles from Europe, the United States encountered no maritime competitors in the Western Hemisphere. With a range of only 2,500 miles per load of coal, steam powered ships could not reach Europe without refueling. Blockading actions at Vera Cruz during the Mexican War proved difficult with the nearest coaling station 900 miles away in Pensacola, Florida. The United States possessed only

6 steam powered ships in 1850, compared to 150 for the British and 70 for the French. The American “auxiliary steamers” maintained a full set of masts and spars, with naval regulations requiring their crews to maneuver under sail and steam equally.¹⁶ The sidewheel steamers possessed severe limitations, as their massive drive wheels eliminated space for armament. Additionally, they moved slowly and cost the US government about \$1.35 per mile. As a result, the screw frigate became the preferred steam ship on the eve of the Civil War.¹⁷ The late 1850s saw a flurry of shipbuilding, with the US possessing 24 steam powered ships in 1861, rendering it better prepared, from a naval standpoint, than any war in US History at the time.¹⁸ The tactical draw at Hampton Roads between the *USS Monitor* and *CSS Virginia* ushered in the ironclad era in 1862.¹⁹

By contrast, the Confederacy began the Civil War with no Navy at all. By seizing vessels upon secession, the South managed to acquire an obsolete sidewheel steamer, 4 revenue cutters, and 5 small tenders and tugs, for a total of 10 vessels.²⁰ Given this lack of assets, the Confederacy determined that their strategy must focus on a land campaign. As the stronger sea power, a blockade of the Confederacy was a predicted cornerstone of the Union sea strategy. The Union blockade deviated from tradition in its goals. Rather than attempt to restrict the movement of the miniscule Confederate navy, President Lincoln’s goal was to seal off the entire Confederate coast to trade. With a distance of over 3,500 miles and 189 harbors, this was the longest blockade attempted by any naval force in history. Based upon accepted international law from the Declaration of Paris, European powers would not consider the Union’s blockade legally binding on neutral parties unless a “competent force” presented itself outside every harbor of the blockaded coast.²¹ This requirement required the United States to expand its navy between 10 and 20 times its size on the eve of the war, while simultaneously raising the largest army in its

history to date. Another legal challenge presented itself to the Lincoln administration. The ordering of the blockade risked the interpretation that Washington granted de facto recognition to the Confederate government, while simultaneously declaring the southern states to be merely rebels.²²

While the long term legal complications were a concern, the more immediate issue was the execution of the blockade itself. The Union quickly produced 23 new *Unadilla* class gun boats, which, with only a 10 foot draw, were well suited to the task of patrolling the shallow waters of the Southern coastline. By converting merchant vessels to warships, the United States Navy saved both time and money instead of building its entire fleet of ships from the keel up. The converted merchant vessels did not carry the offensive firepower of their purpose-built counterparts, but sufficed for the duty required of them. After all, they were not tasked for battle on the open ocean against another country's main battle fleet, but to interdict blockade runners, most of which operated without armament.²³

In executing its blockade of the South, the Union divided its assets into two squadrons in the Atlantic Ocean and two in the Gulf of Mexico. The Blockade Board determined that only steam powered vessels were to perform blockade duty. Sailing ships lacked both the maneuverability to operate so close to the shores and the speed to close with the Confederacy's lightweight, steam powered blockade runners.²⁴ Key to this strategy was the seizure of Port Royal, South Carolina as a coaling station, base of operations, and repair facility. The quick capture of Port Royal by the Union also achieved the effect of convincing the Confederacy that it should concentrate its coastal defenses only at key points where terrain gave its shore based defenders the advantage.²⁵

Though porous at first, the Union's efforts grew in effectiveness with time. The Confederacy's assumption that the Royal Navy would break the blockade in order to satisfy Britain's hunger for Southern cotton was invalidated by British utilization of alternate sources of this cash crop. However, profits from blockade running skyrocketed, making it a lucrative business. To counter the increasingly effective blockade, its runners were built for speed and shallow drafted, making them both fast and maneuverable. Their low profile aided them in avoiding detection by sitting low in the water. The use of cleaner and hotter burning anthracite coal increased the efficiency of blockade runners while simultaneously making them less detectable. The blockade runners operated out of the neutral ports Havana, Nassau, and Bermuda, neutral ports, which in accordance with the Paris Declaration, could not be subjected to blockading.²⁶

The success rates of blockade running dropped from 90 percent in 1861 to 50 percent in 1865.²⁷ Even a 50 percent success rate could not save the Confederacy. Inadequate land lines of communication, the effective splitting of the region into two areas with the Union capture of the Mississippi River, and lack of industry combined to make the Union blockade an effective strategy for winning the American Civil War.²⁸

The Union's blockade of the Confederacy showed the integration of new technologies into the strategy during a total war for the first time. World War I brought with it a blockade in a total war with multiple actors conducting both a blockade and a counter-blockade. Though not brand new technologies, both the submarine and the mine played a key role in sea warfare, and thus blockading, for the first time. Once again, a dominant sea power leveled a blockade against a dominant land power, with the latter power turning toward alternate lines of communication over, and extensively relying upon the submarine to counter the blockade.

The British Army on the eve of World War I paled in size to its ally in the Triple Entente, France. Conversely, France's Navy was significantly smaller, while Britain's remained the dominant maritime force in the world. Therefore, for the Allied Powers, the preponderance of the blockading duties fell on Britain, who also possessed the world's largest merchant marine.²⁹ British activity in the Irish Sea fell to the older vessels of the 11th Cruiser Squadron, with four old *Talbot* class cruisers under control of the French second cruiser squadron in the English Channel.³⁰

In the North Sea, Britain's blockade sealed off the North Sea from Scapa Flow to the Norwegian coast. The merchant marine also provided additional ships for the blockade, when the older *Edgar* class cruisers showed difficulty in handling the autumn and winter storms while on duty in the North Sea. As First Lord of the Admiralty, Winston Churchill saw the need for submarines in order to blockade German ports and ordered the construction of 20.³¹ Despite the large number of British ships and advances in undersea technology, a problem still remained. Visibility was restricted just as in the age of sail, to what an observer could see from the crow's nest. With hundreds of square miles and poor weather that often reduced visibility, sealing the entire North Sea proved a daunting task.

Blockading Austria-Hungary proved far easier. The French blocked the entrance to the Adriatic Sea at the Strait of Otranto, while the British continued to control the entire Mediterranean via the Strait of Gibraltar and the Suez Canal. A blockade against the Ottoman Empire, which did not present itself as a great industrial power, became secondary to offensive operations. Without the forces to spare for a blockade, the Allies assumed risk. The German defeat of Serbia and Bulgaria's alliance with the Central Powers presented Germany an alternate land line of communication with the Ottomans, rendering any blockade ineffective.³²

The Admiralty declared a blockade in effect on 5 November 1914 in response to German minelaying activities. Initially, all inspections occurred at Downs in the Straights of Dover. A second inspection station opened in Kirkwall to satisfy Scandinavian mariners who preferred the shorter route to the north of Scotland. These inspection stations soon expanded to sites in Halifax, Dakar, Gibraltar, and Alexandria to ensure a smoother flow of commerce. The German submarine threat extended patrols into the Atlantic by 1915.³³

The German response to the close blockade called for attrition via mines and submarines. Eventually, these two new technologies would wear reduce the Allied Fleet to a point where the German fleet felt confident enough to engage it in a major decisive battle. This strategy did not come to fruition, and on 4 February 1815, the Kaiser's government declared open submarine warfare. Any merchant ship discovered in British or Irish waters faced destruction without regard for crew or passengers. Because hostile ships previously hoisted the flags of neutral states, neutral ships now found themselves in the crosshairs of German torpedoes.³⁴

Although blockading actions occurred, the British never technically declared a formal blockade in line with the Paris Declaration of 1856. By contrast, a series of Orders-in-Council authorized blockading activities. The first of these orders allowed for a ship's cargo to be seized, if the preponderance of evidence on board indicated that any cargo on board was destined for an enemy port, despite its papers stating the contrary. A second Order-in-Council authorized the seizure of conditional contraband destined for an enemy via a neutral port.³⁵ A third order, issued subsequently to the German declaration of the waters surrounding the British Isles a combat zone to justify unrestricted submarine warfare, prohibited any vessel destined for or originating from a German port from proceeding. Any ship delivering goods to the Central Powers through a neutral port also became subject to this rule. Any ship entering a German port

after clearing a neutral or Allied port faced stoppage and seizure of its cargo.³⁶ The definition of contraband evolved over the course of the war, with almost every single article of commerce qualifying for this label prior to the Armistice in 1918.³⁷ Neutral powers protested the new restrictions imposed by the third Order-in-Council, with the United States at the forefront of these objections.³⁸

The effectiveness of this blockade took time to affect the Central Powers. Rationing in Germany commenced in January 1915 with bread and flour, extending to general rationing in 1916. The capture of Rumania allowed Germany access to its grain and oil, as well as the lower Danube. This did not fully compensate for being denied access to the goods in the rest of the world. Coupled with a weak potato harvest in the autumn of 1916, this lack of resources resulted in the “turnip winter” of 1916-17.³⁹ The blockade itself failed to shape the war in a way that prevented the massive loss of life in the trenches of the Western Front. Instead, the unrestricted use of German submarines to break the blockade likely brought about its demise in World War I. Though frustrated with the Allied Powers over the rights of neutral mariners, the United States never lost passengers or crew to Allied torpedoes. The sinking of neutral vessels by the Central Powers tilted the United States toward entering World War I on the side of the Allies, providing the final push of men and material needed to break the stalemate on the Continent.

The previous blockades examined pitted a dominant sea-power state against a weaker sea-power state. The American submarine and aerial mine blockade of Japan’s home islands during World War II involved two peer sea-powers. Japan, however, required the raw materials from her conquered territories in the Pacific to sustain her wartime economy. This blockade began to succeed in 1942 and in full effect by the end of 1943 once again because of a change in technology that presented the Americans with a new strategic opportunity.⁴⁰ The technology

now available to the Americans included advances in submarine craft and also in air power. Carrier and land based aircraft preyed upon surface vessels or dropped mines, while submarines silently tracked their targets to strike them with ever more reliable torpedoes. American submarines sunk over one third of Japan's combat ships and over 55 percent of her merchant marine, effectively severing Japan's sea lines of communication. Despite the addition of over 4 million tons of commercial shipping to Japan's fleet from 1941-1945 the island nation's total merchant tonnage fell from 6 million tons to 1.5 million tons during the same period.⁴¹ As an island nation, Japan possessed no alternate lines of communication. Once the sea lines of communication were closed, her fate became inevitable.

The situation with Japan forced the United States to rethink its use of the submarine. Prior to 1941, it was used solely for coastal defense and in a minor support role for offensive operations. Moreover, the failure of the German submarine campaign in World War I further convinced American naval leaders that submarines should not be used as commerce raiders. The change in this strategy occurred on December 7, 1941, with Admiral Harold R. Stark obtaining permission from President Roosevelt to commence unrestricted submarine warfare against Japan before the smoke cleared at Pearl Harbor.⁴² Once again, legal interpretations of blockading were interpreted in the context of a total war with national survival at stake.

While the long term blockade successfully shaped the Pacific theater for the US, in the short term, the Americans never attacked the Japanese as long or as frequently as necessary, often because American forces were diverted to pursue more tempting, but ultimately less useful targets.⁴³ The Japanese failed to stop these truncated attacks, while simultaneously declining to use their highly accurate "Long Lance" torpedo against American commerce in the Pacific. This oversight allowed merchant ships sailing from the Western US to sail by themselves and without

any armed escort, freeing up naval assets for combat operations.⁴⁴ Finally, Japan never developed an anti-submarine strategy, with the exception of a general convoy system in late 1943. By this time however, the American blockade effectively cut Japan's lines of communication.⁴⁵

Large scale blockading operations effectively ended with the Japanese surrender in World War II. Smaller operations continue to play key roles in limited war, colonial policing prior to the end of that era, diplomatic sanctions enforcement, and a form of modern reverse blockade aimed at protecting a state's homeland. Additionally, maritime interdiction against non-state actors such as violent extremist organizations, drug traffickers, and pirates continue to apply the principles of blockading in increasingly globalized waterways. With these, new technological advances and legal challenges present themselves.

Two sea interdiction operations to counter oil smuggling in the enforcement of economic sanctions provide insight into modern blockading techniques. The first of these was Beira Patrol conducted by Great Britain against Southern Rhodesia (present day Zimbabwe), from 1966 to 1975. The second required the United States to counter oil smuggling operations out of Iraq from 1990 to 2003.

Southern Rhodesia declared its independence from Britain and installed a government controlled by the white minority in the breakaway state. Hoping to avoid a situation similar to the one that led to apartheid in South Africa, the United Nations and the British Parliament passed sanctions against Southern Rhodesia, to include limiting oil imports to the territory. Britain hoped to use this limited blockade as a means to enforce the sanctions without invading its colony, and keep control of it, a course of action desired by many African and Asian states.⁴⁶ This operation only focused on the Port of Beira in Portuguese controlled Mozambique

(Rhodesia itself is landlocked), allowing about 220,000 gallons of oil to slip into Rhodesia per day. Under strict rationing, the population could survive on 200,000 gallons of oil per day. Placing vessels at all possible ports in Mozambique required more resources than the Royal Navy possessed in its entire fleet.⁴⁷ The British attempt to unilaterally enforce sanctions without the help of regional and UN partners led to 4 major changes in the rules of engagement and the scaling back of the Beira Patrol during its 9 year duration. Ultimately, the operation was rendered ineffective due to lack of enforcement and the self-imposed limitations placed upon the Royal Navy and Air Force by Parliament for the Beira Patrol. A coalition effort likely would have rendered this operation successful by giving it international legitimacy and providing it with additional resources.⁴⁸

The enforcement of maritime sanctions against Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein from 1990 to 2003, in contrast to the ill-fated Beira patrol, succeeded by all measures. Geography, technology and legal considerations again played key roles. Since Iraq is a landlocked country with the exception of Shaat-al-Arab waterway (itself a disputed area with Iran), it depends on overland pipelines shared with Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria, and Turkey to distribute crude oil from its fields. Jordan's refusal to cooperate with sanctions enforcement expanded the maritime operations for this embargo to the Red Sea. Four major areas were initially assigned to the enforcement zone. A coalition of 14 countries unified to prevent the smuggling of oil out of Iraq or any material other than food or medical supplies into the country.⁴⁹ The UN issued the initial sanctions on 10 August 1990 in response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. After these were defied one week later, the UN strengthened the sanctions.

In the realm of operations, the three areas needed immediate attention from the coalition partners. The enforcement operation switched from metal-hulled ships to rigid hull inflatable

boats. Easier to launch and recover, faster in the water, and more flexible in their employment, these water craft became well suited to the task. The US Coast Guard assisted in standardizing procedures for boarding parties. The coalition also utilized helicopters for rapid insertion of forces.⁵⁰ The partnered nations developed methods to force compliance without directly engaging the ships. Avoiding direct engagement prevented unarmed passenger and merchant crew casualties. It also prevented a vessel violating the sanction to becoming a hazard to other vessels or oil platforms in the Persian Gulf. If warnings sounded by radio, voice calls, or warning fire went unheeded, assault forces in helicopters seized the suspect ship via helicopter for boarding party to inspect. This coalition continued to effectively enforce maritime sanctions against Iraq until Operation Desert Storm began on 17 January 1991 when forces were diverted for combat operations.⁵¹ These actions continued to isolate Iraq after the end of hostilities in Operation Desert Storm until the US returned to invade in Iraq 2003. In preparing for the 2003 war, the enforcement of oil embargo further degraded Iraqi combat power by depriving Saddam Hussein of his chief source of income and allowed for freedom of movement for US equipment transiting into Kuwait during force build up.⁵²

As non-state actors continue to proliferate, the ability of a limited blockade to counter any of these entities posing a threat requires examination. In early 2009, Israel initiated a blockade against the Gaza Strip to interdict any material or fighters linked to Hamas.⁵³ Hamas militants used the Gaza Strip as a base of operations for rocket attacks against Israel. By interdicting supplies heading for Gaza, Israel hoped to reduce the rocket attacks against its soil. Its blockade of Gaza is not without incident. In attempting to seize a Turkish passenger vessel, the Israeli Navy faced resistance from about 40 of the 590 passengers, 10 of whom were killed during the raid and boarding operation. This action prompted widespread condemnation of

Israel's actions, both for the deaths of the passengers and the greater issue of suffering by those in the Gaza Strip due to blockade's effectiveness. This action is ongoing, with its overall effectiveness against Hamas still in question.⁵⁴

The role of blockading since the turn of the 19th century rapidly changed in synchronization with technological developments and advancements in legal theories. As a cornerstone strategy of major power war, blockading as studied for most of the time period follows in lockstep with it, usually initiated by a sea-power state against a land power state. Since the end of World War II, blockading, known by other names (interdiction, sanctions enforcement) with similar principles is used to enforce sanctions, colonial policing, and to shape operations against non-state actors such as violent extremist organizations. As a strategy in warfare, it is still employed against high payoff targets, such as oil, to degrade an enemy's combat power. Though the role blockading once played no longer occupies large parts of grand strategy, it continues to enable strategic objectives in the 21st century battle space.

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- ³¹ *Ibid.*, 95.
- ³² *Ibid.*, 95.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, 94.
- ³⁴ Louis Guichard, *The Naval Blockade 1914-1918*. New York, NY, D. Appleton and Company, 1930, 41.
- ³⁵ Halpern, "World War I: The Blockade," 95.
- ³⁶ Guichard, *The Naval Blockade 1914-1918*, 42.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, 51.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, 56.
- ³⁹ Halpern, "World War I: The Blockade," 103.
- ⁴⁰ Alan S. Milward, *War, Economy and Society, 1939-1945*. Berkley, CA, University of California Press, 1977, 320-321.
- ⁴¹ Samuel Elliot Morrison, *The Two Ocean War: A Short History of the United States Navy in the Second World War*. Boston, MA, Little and Brown, 1963, 493-494.
- ⁴² Davis and Engerman, *Naval Blockades in Peace and War*, 323.
- ⁴³ Milward, *War, Economy and Society, 1939-1945*, 299.
- ⁴⁴ Williamson Murray, "Innovation Past and Present," in Williamson Murray and Allan R. Millett, eds., *Military Innovation in the Interwar Period*. New York, NY, Cambridge University Press, 321-322
- ⁴⁵ Davis and Engerman, *Naval Blockades in Peace and War*, 325.
- ⁴⁶ Richard Mobley, "The Beira Patrol: Britain's Broken Blockade Against Rhodesia," in *Naval War College Review*, Winter 2002, Vol LV, No. 1, Newport, RI, Naval War College Press, 5.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.* 13.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁴⁹ James Goldrick, "Maritime Sanctions Enforcement Against Iraq, 1990-2003," in Bruce A. Elleman and S.C.M. Paine, ed. *Naval Blockades and Seapower: Strategies and Counterstrategies, 1805-2005*. New York, NY, Routledge, 2006, 203.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 204.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 205.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 213.

⁵³ Geoffrey Palmer, "Report of the Secretary-General's Panel of Inquiry on the 31 May 2010 Flotilla Incident," New York, NY, United Nations Printing Office, 2010, 3

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 14.

