

**STRATEGY
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**UNILATERAL ECONOMIC SANCTIONS:
A POLICY ASSESSMENT**

BY

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this paper is to assess U.S. policy on economic sanctions and make recommendations as appropriate that will prepare the U.S. for 2010 and beyond. I will describe current national security policy in this area with some necessary background information and attempt to address policy objectives (ends), concepts or methods (ways), and means (resources).

This paper will address U.S. policy as it pertains to unilateral economic sanctions only. For the purpose of this paper the definition of unilateral economic sanctions is: The deliberate, government-inspired, unilateral withdrawal, or threat of withdrawal of customary trade or financial relations.

The first recorded case of trade sanctions occurred in 432 B.C., when the Athenian leader Pericles imposed sanctions on Megara. Megara appealed to Sparta for assistance, resulting in the Peloponnesian War. An early example of U.S. sanctions occurred in 1807, when President Jefferson embargoed all U.S. trade with Europe to protest British attacks on U.S. merchant ships. This effort, like most unilateral sanctions, proved to be a complete failure.

The U.S. use of economic sanctions as an instrument of National Power among the four options (diplomatic, economic, military and informational) has become our weapon of choice for responding to events and situations that threaten our security. Sometimes we use them when there is no threat to our security or interests. Ernest Preeg offers a convincing argument that unilateral sanctions "let us feel good without going much good at all", in his book, Feeling Good or Doing Good with Sanctions. Unilateral sanctions are attractive to our Congressman and President because they respond to frustrations and the demand to take action.

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UNILATERAL ECONOMIC SANCTIONS: A POLICY ASSESSMENT

From the beginning of recorded history, economic sanctions have served as tools of diplomacy. Often sanctions have been vital elements of a country's war arsenal. The first recorded case of trade sanctions occurred in 432 B.C., when the Athenian leader Pericles imposed sanctions on Megara. Megara appealed to Sparta for assistance, resulting in the Peloponnesian War.¹

The purpose of this paper is to assess U.S. policy on economic sanctions and make recommendations as appropriate that will prepare the U.S. for 2010 and beyond. I will describe current national security policy in this area with some necessary background information and attempt to address policy objectives (ends), concepts or methods (ways), and means (resources).

This paper will address U.S. policy as it pertains to unilateral economic sanctions only. For the purpose of this paper the definition of unilateral economic sanctions is: The deliberate, government-inspired, unilateral withdrawal, or threat of withdrawal of customary trade or financial relations.² Sanctions are employed for a wide range of foreign policy purposes and can take many forms. But whatever the purpose the reality is that economic sanctions are unlikely to achieve the desired results if the aims are large or time is short. Sanctions -- even when they were comprehensive and enjoyed universal international backing for nearly six months -- failed to get Saddam Hussein to withdraw from Kuwait. In the end, it took nothing less than Operation Desert Storm. Nor could sanctions dissuade Serbia and Bosnia's Serbs to call off their military aggression for several years.

Before we take a in depth look at where the U.S. is now in regards to economic sanction policy and where it should be going, it would be beneficial to take a short chronological look at the past. Embargoes, blockades and other economic weapons have been used throughout the world ever since Pericles in 432 B.C. Economic sanctions played a prominent role in the birth of the United States. Starting in the mid-1760s, American colonists began boycotting British goods to protest taxes imposed by the crown under the Stamp and Townsend Acts.³ The nine-year boycott culminated in the 1774 Boston Tea Party, setting the stage for the American Revolution. Another early example of U.S. sanctions occurred in 1807, when President Jefferson embargoed all U.S. trade with Europe to protest British attacks on U.S. merchant ships. This effort proved to be a complete failure and lead to the War of 1812.⁴

A half-century later, the four year U.S. blockade of the Confederate States during the Civil War contributed greatly to the industrial North's victory by preventing the largely agricultural South from obtaining weapons and other manufactured goods. Naval blockades used to enforce sanctions played a crucial role in other 19th century conflicts. The United States won independence for Cuba during the 1898 Spanish-American War by preventing reinforcements from aiding Spanish troops on the island who were battling native insurgents.⁵ France wrested the territory of Annam -- later Vietnam -- from China in 1883 after blocking rice shipments to China for two years.⁶ Britain added South Africa to its empire after blocking shipments of goods to the country and defeating the Dutch inhabitants during the 1899-1902 Boer War.⁷ Naval blockades have not always proved successful. After trying to cut off shipments of fuel,

rice and cotton to Japan during the 1904-1905 Russo-Japanese War, a defeated Russia was forced to hand over parts of its territory to Japan.⁸

After the unprecedented devastation caused during World War I, sanctions found limited use as alternatives to combat. President Woodrow Wilson, however led the push to substitute the "economic weapon" for warfare to settle disputes. "A nation that is boycotted is a nation that is in sight of surrender," Wilson said in 1919. "Apply this economic, peaceful, silent, deadly remedy, and there will be no need for force. It is a terrible remedy. It does not cost a life outside the nation boycotted, but it brings pressure upon the nation which, in my judgement, no modern nation could resist."⁹

During the 1920s and '30s, the short-lived League of Nations had only limited success in using sanctions. League sanctions did force Greece to withdraw from territory it had occupied in Bulgaria in 1925.¹⁰ But in its last and most important use of the economic weapon, the League failed. After Benito Mussolini invaded Abyssinia (now Ethiopia) in 1935, the League imposed a limited embargo blocking exports to Italy and a boycott of all Italian goods. Italy remained firm and refused to withdraw. Nine months later the sanctions were lifted.¹¹ Some historians believe this lack of resolve paved the way for Imperial Japan and Nazi Germany to continue with their expansionist plans and thus the stage was set for World War II.

During World War II the U.S. and its allies used sanctions somewhat more effectively than they had in peacetime. With the postwar development of nuclear weapons, the potential for hostilities to escalate into a holocaust made economic sanctions a very attractive foreign policy tool. Cold War politics of the 1960s drove sanctions policy in the U.S., which took the lead among western powers in applying sanctions. But because the world was divided into two camps dominated by the United States and the Soviet Union it made it very hard to achieve any meaningful multilateral support for sanctions. The U.S. imposes its trade embargo on Cuba in October 1960; and the United Nations, with the two superpowers holding veto power was able to agree on economic sanctions only once during the Cold War. (In 1965 the U.N. Security Council imposes sanctions to counter white settlers' effort to seize control in Rhodesia).¹²

In the 1970s terrorism becomes a focus of U.S. sanctions. In 1973 sanctions are imposed against Libya to protest Libyan dictator Muammar el-Qaddafi's support of terrorist groups in the Middle East and elsewhere. The Carter administration in 1979 freezes Iranian assets in the United States and later all trade after revolutionary forces take Americans hostage in Teheran.¹³ In the 1980s globalization of trade undermines U.S. unilateral sanctions, however the U.S. continues to use them with varying degrees of success. In the 1990s the United Nations steps up its use of multilateral economic sanctions in the Post Cold War era.

Table 1 below illustrates the exponential growth in the worldwide use of sanctions over the past few decades.¹⁴ The table illustrates how the United States has become an increasingly important sanctioner, relative to the rest of the world.

Incidence of Sanctions by Decade

Decade	Total # of Sanctions	U.S. as Primary Sender	% of Sanctions by U.S.
1920s	2	0	0
1930s	5	1	20
1940s	9	5	56
1950s	13	6	46
1960s	22	12	55
1970s	36	28	78
1980s	25	20	80

Table 1.

The U.S. use of economic sanctions as an instrument of National Power among the four options (diplomatic, economic, military and informational) has become our weapon of choice for responding to events and situations that threaten our security. Sometimes we use them when there is no threat to our security or interests. Ernest Preeg offers a convincing argument that unilateral sanctions “let us feel good without doing much good at all”, in his book, Feeling Good or Doing Good with Sanctions.¹⁵ Unilateral sanctions are attractive to our Congressman and President because they respond to frustrations and the demand to take action.

Formerly a cornerstone of collective security, sanctions were believed to be a substantive substitute for war as noted by the previous quote from President Woodrow Wilson. It simply provides a way for our political leaders to show they are “doing something now”. In other words sanctions when properly evaluated under their current use can be seen as the “lazy mans foreign policy”. Sanctions have simply become a remnant, or leftover of the days of U.S. global economic power. In other words, globalization has blunted the United States impact when using unilateral sanctions. A thorough and well thought out plan should be considered and evaluated in today’s globalized world prior to imposing any economic sanction. Although the United States enjoyed near monopoly status in the production of many goods earlier in the century, that is not the case today. Instead, sanctions transfer business from U.S. companies to foreign competitors in the same market.

Chaos may be to kind of a word to describe our sanctions policy. The Clinton administration recently appointed Stuart Eizenstat, the current Undersecretary of State for Economic Affairs, head of a new task force designed to make sense of our sanctions policy.¹⁶ Given the ongoing proliferation of unilateral trade sanctions as the foreign policy tool of choice, it’s a move long overdue.

Currently, the U. S. government (Legislative and Executive Branch combined) has imposed unilateral sanctions on more than 75 countries, encompassing over two-thirds of the world’s population (73% to be

more exact).¹⁷ During 1993-1996, President Clinton's first term, the U.S. imposed unilateral economic sanctions on 35 countries.¹⁸ Economic sanctions have clearly been our national power weapon of choice. Figure 1 graphically illustrates the global impact of U.S. sanctions.¹⁹

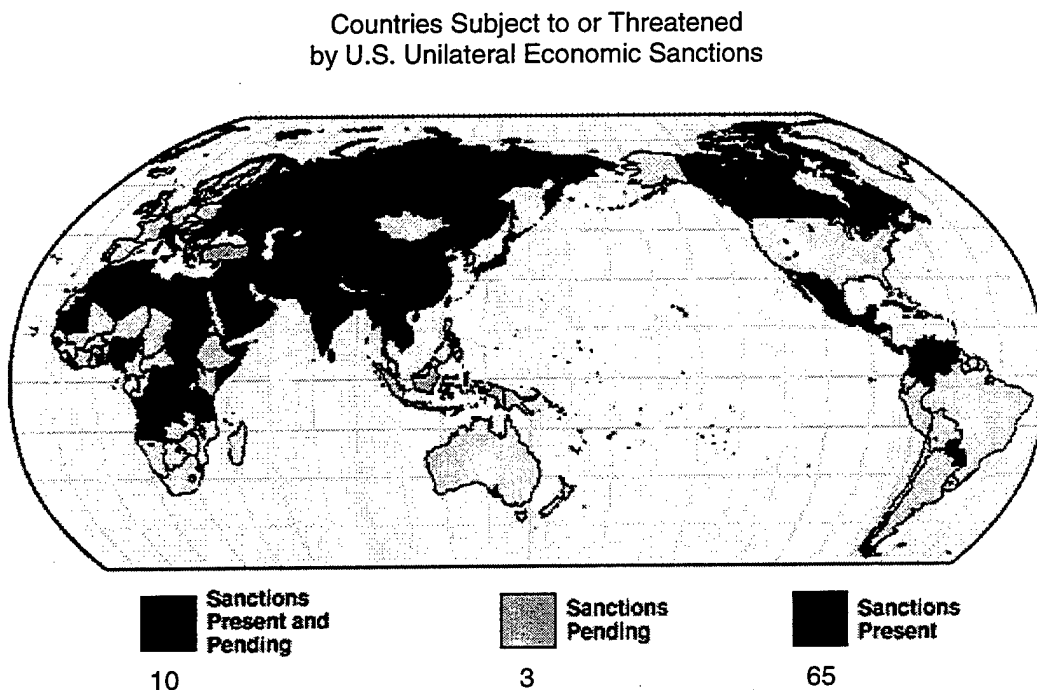


FIGURE 1.

Of the 115 times the U.S. has employed economic sanctions for foreign policy purposes since World War I, 61 of those sanctions have occurred since 1993. The track record for these unilateral sanctions is not very impressive (Table 2 below).²⁰

Sanctions Scorecard		
Policy Goal	Success	Failure
Modest policy change	17	34
Destabilization	11	10
Disruption of military adventures	6	12
Military impairment	2	8
Other major policy changes	5	15
All cases	41	79

Table 2.

The following table depicts the rapid decline of the success of U.S. imposed sanctions by two specific periods.²¹ As previously noted the U.S. has turned increasingly to sanctions, particularly since 1990. The U.S. has applied sanctions for foreign policy purposes a total of 115 times since World War I, 104 times since World War II, and according to the count of the President's Export Council, 61 times since 1993 alone. Thus, more than half the sanctions imposed in the past 80 years have been imposed in only the past four years. Despite the significant decline in the success rate, there have been examples of unilateral sanctions that have been effective or which have encouraged others to take action. The sanctions the U.S. imposed on Burma called increased international attention to human rights abuses by the ruling regime²². In other areas such as the effort to combat the source of drugs, the use of or threat of unilateral sanctions has proven to be an effective tool. Some have said that drug producing countries, e.g., Columbia, Bolivia, tolerate U.S. counterdrug efforts as a cost of doing business (part of that could be to avoid sanctions). However, if the U.S. was ever successful in interdicting more than 25% of the drug production, they (Columbia, Bolivia, etc) would shut down U.S. counterdrug efforts.

Another Sanctions Scorecard

Policy Goal	<u>Pre-1973</u>		<u>1973-1989</u>	
	Success/Failure		Success/Failure	
Modest policy change	9	3	8	31
Destabilization	9	6	2	4
Disruption of military adventures	5	8	1	4
Military impairment	2	6	0	2
Other major policy changes	2	11	3	4
All cases	27	34	14	45

Table 3.

So the question is why do we continue to utilize unilateral economic sanctions in today's interdependent, interconnected, global environment when the results appear to be less than satisfactory? The motives for the use of sanctions take on many forms: to influence a particular issue on a global scale; to demonstrate U.S. resolve; to deter country X from something (human rights violations as an example); when a diplomatic "slap on the wrist" won't work; and as mentioned before to serve some domestic political purpose from either our President or Congress. In the latter case, sanctions are sometimes never intended to succeed, in the sense of providing a real change in a country's behavior - especially when used primarily for domestic political purposes.

We have failed with economic sanctions in our recent history simply because our ends have been elusive, our means too gentle or ineffective, and our ways not clearly defined. Simply put there has been a history of ends-ways-means mismatch. One major reason why the foreign policy objectives (Ends) associated with the imposition of economic sanctions are often imprecise and mismatched with ways and means is the principal goal of a sanction is to respond to domestic pressures in the U.S. calling for

national disapproval of a targeted country's actions.²³ According to Hufbauer in his book, Economic Sanctions Reconsidered, parallels between motives for sanctions and the three basic purposes (Ends) of criminal law – to punish, to deter, and to rehabilitate are unmistakable. Even if hopes of rehabilitation (to get country X to do or stop doing something, i.e., change its behavior) are unrealized we are satisfied with punishment or deterrence as a favorable outcome.²⁴

Another key problem is there currently is no accepted framework or stated policy on when, how, where and with what the U.S. will impose sanctions. In our 1998 National Security Strategy economic sanctions are mentioned once and only then in a nebulous comment stating we will use them to speak out on human rights abuses.²⁵ John Scharfen, in his book, The Dismal Battlefield says:

“Imagine a nation using military force without a battle plan, without exercising, training or educating its armed forces; without adhering to or even knowing the basic principles of military warfare. Or imagine a nation committing its political assets without embarking thorough planning or clearly defined objectives; without organizing and preparing its political and diplomatic forces. Absurd, you say? Of course it is absurd. Yet that is exactly how we are managing and employing our economic power today.”²⁶

Richard N. Haass, Director of Foreign Policy Studies, in a statement before Congress, drew a number of conclusions from recent American use of economic sanctions:

- Sanctions alone are unlikely to achieve desired results if the aims are large or time is short. Case in point is the comprehensive, international support of sanctions against Saddam Hussein prior to Operation Desert Storm.
- Nevertheless, sanctions can on occasion achieve (or help to achieve) various foreign policy goals ranging from the modest to the fairly significant. China appears to have shown some restraint in exporting nuclear and ballistic missile parts.
- Unilateral sanctions are rarely effective. In a global economy, unilateral sanctions tend to impose greater costs on American firms than on the target, which can usually find alternate sources elsewhere.
- Sanctions are blunt instruments that often produce unintended and desirable consequences. Sanctions increased the economic distress on Haiti, triggering a dangerous and expensive exodus of people from Haiti to the United States. Sanctions can have the effect of bolstering authoritarian governments or societies by creating scarcity and enabling governments to better control distribution of goods. The danger is both moral, in that innocents are affected, as well as practical, in that sanctions that harm the population at large can bring about undesired effects that include bolstering the targeted regime or state.
- Sanctions can be expensive for American business, farmers and workers. There is a tendency to overlook or underestimate the direct costs of sanctions. These costs are very difficult to measure

because it needs to reflect not simply lost sales , but also forfeited opportunities. Sanctions cost U.S. companies billions of dollars a year and cost many of thousands of workers their jobs.

- Sanctions tend to be easier to introduce than to lift. It is almost always more difficult to change the status quo than to continue with it. It is often difficult to build a consensus for rescinding a sanction, if the sanction has been shown to be counterproductive, or if either interest can be shown to suffer as a result. This is likely to become the case with India and Pakistan, where U.S. sanctions introduced in the wake of the May 1998 nuclear tests will frustrate attempts to influence their behavior in this or other areas.
- Sanction fatigue tends to settle in over time and international compliance tends to diminish. Inevitably, the issue that led to sanctions being introduced loses its emotional impact. Concerns over the humanitarian impact of sanctions also weaken resolve. At the same time, the target country has time to adjust, to work around the sanction. All of these factors have eroded the impact of sanctions against Iraq, Libya and Cuba.

Recently several attempts have been aimed at trying to derive a comprehensive policy on unilateral economic sanctions. The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), a private institution that focuses on international policy issues recently completed a detailed report on unilateral economic sanctions.²⁷ Members of the project included bipartisan representation from Congress; their recommendations on policy and a framework have yet to be acted on. The Senate also initiated its own study in 1998 with the Senate Task Force on Economic Sanctions; again no action has been taken.²⁸

Another major effort to reform the use of unilateral economic sanctions again came in 1998 when Senator Lugar (R-IN) unsuccessfully submitted a bill to enhance trade, security, and human rights through sanctions reform.²⁹ The Lugar Sanctions Process Reform Bill seeks a more deliberate and disciplined approach to U.S. sanctions policy. The bill's primary goal is to ensure Congress and the Administration has better information for more informed decision-making on sanction bills and initiatives. Although unsuccessful to date, his effort is the genesis of what could be an effective comprehensive framework for the consideration of unilateral economic sanctions. All attempts have had a common theme of circumstances under which economic sanctions in concert with other forms of national power can have positive effects:

- The target country is small, weak, unstable and highly dependent on the sanctioner
- The target has good relations and communications with the sanctioner
- The target suffers high costs from the sanctions while the sanctioner endure low and sustainable costs
- The change demanded of the target state is a modest one
- The sanctions, where possible, are financial
- The sanctions are roughly proportional to the offense
- The sanctions, where appropriate, are targeted against specific people, activities, and policies, thus minimizing the suffering and the damage to more important aspects of the U.S. relationship

- The sanctions are imposed reasonably quick and given time to work
- The sanctions exclude humanitarian provisions such as food and medicine
- The sanctions are flexible, avoids secondary sanctions that can anger friendly states, and can be modified or terminated when appropriate

The proliferation of unilateral economic sanctions is causing lasting damage to America's reputation as a reliable supplier. It is estimated that U.S. sanctions cost \$15 to \$19 billion annually in lost exports and over 200,000 high-wage U.S. jobs.³⁰ Last year's Glenn Amendment sanctions on India and Pakistan showed the weakness of relying on unilateral sanctions as an all-purpose foreign policy tool. The sanctions failed to deter India or Pakistan from nuclear testing and could have cost the U.S. a major wheat sale if Congress had not intervened by granting waiver authority to the President.

Table 4 below was Senator Lugar's attempt at a framework of objectives, tools, and policy for considering sanctions.³¹

Economic Sanctions Framework

It is the policy of the United States:

- (1) to pursue United States interests through vigorous and effective diplomatic, political, commercial, charitable, educational, cultural, and strategic engagement with other countries, while recognizing that the national security interests of the U.S. may sometimes require the imposition of economic sanctions on other countries.
- (2) to foster multilateral cooperation on vital matters of U.S. foreign policy, including promoting human rights and democracy, combating international terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and international narcotics trafficking, and ensuring adequate environmental protection.
- (3) to promote U.S. economic growth and job creation expanding exports of goods, services, and agricultural commodities, and by encouraging investment that supports the sale abroad of products and services of the U.S.
- (4) to maintain the reputation of U.S. businesses and farmers as reliable suppliers to international customers of quality products and services, including U.S. manufacturers, technology products, financial services, and agricultural commodities.
- (5) to avoid the use of restrictions on exports of agricultural commodities as a foreign policy weapon.
- (6) to oppose policies other countries design to discourage economic interaction with countries friendly to the U.S. or with any U.S. national, and to avoid use of such measures as instruments of the U.S. foreign policy.
- (7) when economic sanctions are necessary:
 - (a) to target them as narrowly as possible on those foreign governments, entities, and officials that are responsible for the conduct being targeted, thereby minimizing unnecessary or disproportionate harm to individuals who are not responsible for such conduct; and
 - (b) to the extent feasible, to avoid any adverse impact on economic sanctions on the humanitarian activities of U.S. and foreign non-governmental organizations in a country against which sanctions are imposed.

Table 4.

Thus, the U.S. currently has access to a framework for economic sanctions that get at the problem of what to consider prior to imposing sanctions. In fact, CSIS, as mentioned earlier, has made similar recommendations, that along with the above proposal get at the decision making process and analysis that should be undertaken prior to imposing unilateral sanctions. Granted there will be some sanctions imposed that will be demanded by the people, that do not necessarily threaten U.S. vital or even important national interests – namely sanctions imposed as a statement of principle. The CNN effect can increase the visibility of problems in another country and stimulate a desire on the part of Americans or our political leaders to respond. It appears, based on our track record, that the U.S. employs sanctions in many cases without clearly thinking them through, and we fail to define clear and obtainable objectives. A framework and process is badly needed if we are to get control of this instrument of economic power. Another recommended “test” that can be used prior to consideration of imposing a unilateral economic sanction is described in Table 5.³²

Proposed Test for Successful Unilateral Economic Sanctions

Test	Question
Achievability	Is the objective narrow enough to achieve the objective?
Integrity	Is the sanction powerful enough to minimize or eliminate external assistance to the target?
Productivity	Is the target expected to change policies?
Acceptability	Is the impact on U.S. business, workers, and jobs acceptable?

Table 5.

Yet because some of the criteria we use to measure success of sanctions is often subjective and imprecise, a clear definition of success can be difficult to obtain. While recognizing the uncertainties in assessment of sanctions there are some empirical findings about sanctions that shed some light on options that must be scrutinized in a post-Cold War environment. Historically, sanctions achieve their economic goals (i.e., they have an impact that damages the target country, but not necessarily changes the target country's behavior) when:³³

- the cost of the sanctions to the target economy exceeds 2 percent of the GNP
- there is a large economic size differential between the sender and the target (a GNP ratio of 10 to 1)
- there exists a high total trade concentration for the target with the sender (greater than 25 percent of target's total trade)

Despite these empirical generalizations, recent experience shows that even when economic

sanctions devastate a target economy, this does not guarantee that the desired political changes will result. Compliance and changed behavior is difficult to achieve through the exclusive use of sanctions, particularly if it is assumed that the leaders of the targeted state will behave "rationally" as defined by the state that imposes the sanction.

Richard Haas succinctly summarized basic lessons learned from the late 20th century use of economic sanctions as an instrument of American foreign policy:³⁴ Sanctions alone are unlikely to achieve desired results if the aims are large and the time is short. Under the right circumstances, sanctions can achieve (or help to achieve) various foreign policy goals ranging from the modest to the significant. Unilateral sanctions are rarely effective (vice multilateral sanctions, and when not thoroughly analyzed). Sanctions often produce unintended and undesirable consequences (when not thoroughly analyzed). Sanctions can be expensive for American business, farmers, and workers. Authoritarian societies are often able to hunker down and withstand the effects of the sanctions (Cuba, Iraq). Military enforcement can increase the economic impact of a given sanction. Sanctions can increase pressures to intervene with military force when they are unable to resolve the crisis at hand. Sanctions tend to be easier to introduce than to lift. And "Sanction Fatigue" tends to set in over time, and as it does compliance tends to diminish.

"As a rule, unilateral sanctions tend to be little more than statements of expressions of opposition, except in those instances in which the tie between the United States and the target is so extensive that the latter cannot adjust to an American cut-off. Over time, the economic sanctions tend to lose their bite. In a global economy, unilateral sanctions tend to impose greater costs on American firms than on the target who can usually find substitute sources of supply and financing."

--Richard N. Haass, testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives (5/27/99)³⁵

In conclusion it is apparent that unilateral economic sanctions are here to stay. In today's world of information technology and an emerging global economy, information and economics could be the greatest elements of national power in the 21st century. It behooves us then to develop a process and framework for economic sanctions policy in the U.S. The following points are offered as a viable U.S. policy for the imposition of economic sanctions. These are a conglomerate of thoughts taken from Senator Lugar's economic framework; Mr. Richard Haass' Economic Sanctions and American Diplomacy; and The Center for Strategic and International Studies final report on unilateral sanctions, "Altering U.S. Sanctions Policy":³⁶ All too often, the economic, humanitarian, and foreign policy costs of U.S. sanctions far outweigh any benefits. What, then, could and should be done? The following are some (mostly common-sense) guidelines for better-informed U.S. policy:

- Economic sanctions are a serious instrument of foreign policy and it should be employed only after consideration no less vigorous than what would precede any other form of intervention, including the use of military force. The likely benefits of a particular sanction to U.S. foreign policy should be greater than

the anticipated costs to the government and the American economy. Favorable circumstances and empirical data should be thoroughly analyzed prior to the imposition of any sanction, unilateral or otherwise.

- Multilateral support for economic sanctions normally should constitute a prerequisite for their imposition by the U.S. Such support need not be simultaneous, but should be all but certain and likely to follow without delay. Unilateral sanctions should be avoided except in those circumstances in which the U.S. is in a unique situation to derive leverage based on the relationship with the target. There are times, however, when the stakes are high, when important national interests or core values are at issue, then the U.S. must be prepared to act unilaterally. One example of such an action could be sanctions imposed unilaterally on Mexico for failure to enforce immigration laws. Clearly, this would not be in the interest of other states.
- Economic sanctions should focus to the extent possible on those responsible for the offending behavior or on penalizing countries in the realm that stimulated sanctions in the first place. A focused response helps avoid jeopardizing other interests and the entire bilateral relationship with the target over one area of disagreement; causes less collateral damage to innocents; and makes it less difficult to garner support.
- Humanitarian exceptions should be included/considered as part of any comprehensive sanctions. Innocents should not be made to suffer any more than is absolutely necessary. Including an exception that allows a targeted state to import food and medicines should also make it easier to garner domestic and international support.
- Any use of sanctions should be as swift and as purposeful as possible. Focused sanctions, unilateral or otherwise, stand a far better chance of success when quickly and succinctly applied.
- Policymakers should prepare and send to Congress a policy statement not unlike the reports forwarded under the War Powers Act before or soon after a sanction is put in place. (This principle is the lynchpin to requiring well thought out U.S. sanctions, whether they be unilateral or not) Such statements should be clear as to the purpose of the sanction; the required legal and political authority; the expected impact on the target, including its possible retaliation; the probable humanitarian consequences and steps to minimize them; the expected costs to the U.S.; the prospects for enforcing the sanction; and the anticipated degree of international support or opposition. In addition policymakers should explain why a particular sanction, as opposed to other policy tools, was selected. The proposed Sanctions Reform Act, sponsored by Senator Richard Lugar (R-Ind) and Representatives Lee Hamilton (D-Ind) and Phil Crane (R-ILL) takes many of these steps, but has yet to be passed.
- Any sanction should be the subject of an annual impact statement detailing the status of the sanction. The authority that instituted the sanction should submit a report to Congress that should include an assessment of the extent to which the sanction has served its purpose; the economic, political and/or military impact on the target; any humanitarian effect; the reactions of the target country; the degree of compliance and non-compliance; and the costs to the U.S.

- U.S. intelligence capabilities must reorient to meet the demands created by sanctions policy and the emerging global economy. The demand for better intelligence support of sanctions policy involves analysis. A specific unit or agency should be established to prepare assessments and predictions on sanction impacts.
- A rapid, but careful continuing assessment should be made of any adverse political, diplomatic, or strategic consequences on U.S. relations with allies, as well as a detailed analysis of the prospective economic damage to U.S. companies and the economy.
- Finally, an "Exit Strategy" should be included with every sanction plan. The criteria for lifting the sanction should also be clearly spelled out. Current sanctions lack this entirely. The legislation that led to sanctions against India and Pakistan lacks any road map for how the sanctions might be reduced or lifted.

Economic sanctions are a serious instrument of foreign policy. They demand consideration as rigorous as that which precedes military intervention. Foreign policy is not therapy and its purpose is to do something good, not to just feel good. America's leaders should keep this in mind whenever they consider the imposition of sanctions. There is no quick fix to the sanctions problem. Passing legislation as discussed here would introduce greater scrutiny of sanctions before and after their introduction.

We are clearly now in a globalized world, and in this post-Cold War period multi-lateral sanctions are becoming commonplace. The end of the Cold War has created significant new possibilities for cooperative security arrangements. The threat of the great power veto has diminished and the prospect for concerted action to affirm shared international norms has increased. The United Nations has recently turned to multi-lateral sanctions and there is a growing awareness that sanctions can provide a medium for promoting the commonwealth of the international community through peaceful means. Multi-lateral sanctions are clearly much more likely to be effective, however there are times when important national interests or values may be at issue and the U.S. must be prepared to act unilaterally.

Applied as part of a coherent strategy, economic sanctions are a useful tool for enforcing international behavior and protecting our interests. A common sense procedural framework for consideration of future U.S. unilateral sanctions is a must. A procedural framework as discussed here is the first step in assisting our Congressional and Executive branches in more effective sanctions policy. Unilateral economic sanctions must be used as a component of a particular foreign policy, not in isolation. The U.S. government needs to improve coordination, decision-making and understanding of coercive policies. If carefully analyzed, judiciously applied and connected with other elements of national power, we may find more satisfactory results.

word count: 5295

ENDNOTES

¹ Bruce Bartlett, "What's Wrong with Trade Sanctions," Policy Analysis 64 (December 1985): 1.

² Gary Hufbauer, Economic Sanctions Reconsidered: History and Current Policy, (Washington, DC: Institute for International Economics, 1990), 2.

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