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History Lessons
Sanctions: Neither War nor Peace

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This occasional feature will discuss episodes and events drawn from economic history that have lessons for current topics in policy and research. Responses to this column and suggestions for future columns should be sent to Kenneth Sokoloff, Department of Economics, University of California-Los Angeles, 405 Hilgard Ave., Los Angeles, California 90095-1477.

Introduction

Sanctions are unilateral or "collective action against a state considered to be violating international law" designed "to compel that state to conform [to the law] (Daoudi and Dajani, 1983, pp. 5–8). They represent something between a "diplomatic slap on the wrist" and "more extreme measures such as covert action or military measures" (Hufbauer, Schott and Elliott, 1990, p. 11). Sanctions include the withholding of diplomatic recognition, the boycotting of athletic and cultural events and the sequestering of property of citizens of the targeted country. However, the forms of sanctions that attract the most attention and that are likely have the greatest impact are composed of various restrictions on international trade, financial flows or the movement of people. For sanctions, unlike wars that have long been marked by specific legal codes regarding the behavior of belligerents and "neutral" third parties, rules were late in emerging and were not as clearly defined as those for wartime.

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Sanctions may seem appealing in principle, since compared to war they may provide a lower-cost method of punishing departures from international standards of conduct and of resolving disputes between countries. Indeed, trade sanctions were imposed in 117 cases between 1970 and 1998, with the United States primarily responsible or "part of the sanctions coalition" in over two-thirds of them (Elliott and Hufbauer, 1999, pp. 404–405). However, economic sanctions may either be ineffective, in the sense that they fail to bring about the desired change in behavior, or unfair, in the sense that large and wealthy economies are generally more capable of bearing the costs associated with such constraints, as well as with organizing and enforcing the constraints on others, than are relatively small and poor countries. This essay discusses how economic sanctions have been used and the extent to which they have been successful over the last two centuries.

Pacific Blockades and the Evolution of Sanctions

In the nineteenth century, economic sanctions consisted primarily of *pacific blockades*—blockades that involved the deployment of a naval force by a country or coalition of countries to interrupt commercial intercourse with certain ports or coasts of a state with which these countries were not at war. Although most naval blockades involved wars, pacific blockades (a term originated about 1850 to distinguish those blockades within a declared war from those between nations legally on peaceful terms) evolved gradually over time as a coercive tool, short of war, designed to compel recalcitrant nations to pay their debts (often reparations) and to settle other international disputes. Such blockades were typically initiated by powers that were militarily much stronger that those of the targeted nation and in the exercise of the right to deploy the pacific blockades, "the tendency has been to regard the practice as a measure of international police" (Davis, 1901, pp. 267–269, see also pp. 477–478; Macalister-Smith, 1992, pp. 412–415).

The first recorded pacific blockade dates from 1827, when, during the Greek fight for independence from Turkey, Britain, France and Russia deployed a fleet off the Greek coast to prevent the supply and reinforcement of the Turkish and Egyptian forces fighting in Greece. Although none of the three major powers were at war with Turkey, and although their fleets were ordered not to fire a shot unless they were opposed, the allied admirals were apparently determined to force a battle with the Turkish fleet. Someone opened fire and the blockading force responded, although without any declaration of war. In four hours, in the battle of Navarino, the entire Turkish and Egyptian fleets had been sunk, with loss of somewhere over 7,000 men (Hogan, 1908, pp. 73–76; Brownlie, 1963, pp. 30–31). The "great powers" lost no vessels and fewer than 200 men. Thus did the first pacific blockade end—not quite pacifically.

From 1827 until the outbreak of World War I, 21 pacific blockades were deployed. They were generally mounted by powerful European states against smaller nations in Europe and emerging nations in Latin America and Asia. The list

of targeted states included Turkey in 1827; Portugal in 1831; Holland in 1832–1833; Colombia in 1834; Panama in 1837; Mexico in 1838; Argentina in 1838–1840; San Salvador in 1842; Nicaragua in 1842 and again in 1844; Argentina in 1845–1850; Greece in 1850; Sicily in 1860–1861; Brazil in 1862–1863; Bolivia in 1879; China in 1884–1885; Greece, again, in 1886; Zanzibar in 1888–1889; Siam in 1893; Greece, yet again, in 1897; and Venezuela in 1902–1903. Almost without exception, the targeted countries were small and underdeveloped. In contrast, the list of targeting countries included Britain (twelve times), France (eleven times), Italy and Germany (three times each), Russia and Austria (twice each) and Chile (once). Clearly, the great powers had found a weapon that they thought cost-effective. Indeed, a great power would often act alone, and only seven of the 21 pacific blockades between 1827 and 1903 drew support from more than a single country (Hogan, 1908).

Formal legal discussion of the legitimacy of pacific blockades, or sanctions more generally, did not occur until the twentieth century with the formation of the League of Nations and then later of the United Nations. In the case of the League of Nations, the power to deploy sanctions was primarily embodied in article 16 of the League's Covenant. That article authorized collective economic and military action against a state that resorted to war in disregard of the League's Covenant—a covenant that required states to settle disputes peacefully (Borchard, 1937, p. 528). The League of Nations undertook four cases of collective sanctions: in 1921 (versus Yugoslavia); 1925 (versus Greece); 1932–1935 (versus both Paraguay and Bolivia, to settle the Chaco War); and, most notably and most unsuccessfully, in conjunction with the United Kingdom against Italy in 1935–1936 after the Italian invasion of Ethiopia. In the latter case, sanctions failed because the other European countries refused to follow the restrictions imposed by the League.

In the case of the United Nations, the powers to implement and enforce sanctions, with armed forces if necessary, are rooted in articles 2(4), 39, 41, 42, 43 and 46 of that organization's charter and in the Uniting for Peace Resolution of 1950. Article 2(4), as it has come to be interpreted, imposes no constraint on individual states undertaking coercive measures short of war (Elagab, 1988, pp. 200–201; Whiteman, 1971, p. 361; Ziring, Plano and Olson, 1995, p. 358; and Doxey, 1997, pp. 1–7). The United Nations imposed sanctions only five times between 1946 and 1990: against North Korea, South Africa, Portugal, Rhodesia and Iraq. However, since the 1990s and primarily in Africa, the United Nations has become more active.

Although the international bodies have not led the way, the imposition of economic sanctions has increased dramatically in the aftermath of World War II. Including the eleven cases of sanctions imposed by the United Nations, often with a significant U.S. role, there were 15 cases in the 1950s, 20 in the 1960s, 37 in the 1970s, 23 in the 1980s and at least 50 in the 1990s (Hufbauer, Schott and Elliott, 1990, p. 33; Elliott and Hufbauer, 1999, p. 404). Between 1960 and 1990, the majority of sanctions were imposed unilaterally, most frequently by the United States, but in the 1990s, a large fraction were imposed by intergovernmental coalitions. The countries of western Europe, especially the United Kingdom, are

playing a more active role, but these coalitions usually included, if they were not originated by, the United States.

What Do Sanctions Do?

Accompanying the recent increase in the employment of sanctions has been something of a change in the perception of the types of contexts in which their imposition might be appropriate. Between 1914 and 1945, sanctions were typically deployed to disrupt military adventures (as in the case of U.S. sanctions against Japan in 1917 and 1940–1941 or the sanctions by the United Kingdom and the League of Nations against Italy in 1935–1936) or to complement a broader war effort, as in the case of sanctions by the United Kingdom against Germany from 1914 to 1918 (Davis and Engerman, 2001). However, in recent decades, economic sanctions have been pursued for a much broader range of international goals: forestalling war; hastening the achievement of freedom and democracy; cleaning up the environment; strengthening human rights or labor rights; nuclear nonproliferation; the freeing of captured citizens; and the reversal of captures of land. Sanctions have become a standard and routine policy tool of nations and international organizations for addressing any actions of a targeted nation that the targeting nation or group of nations disagreed with. In large measure, sanctions are meant to influence the behavior of foreign nations, now or in the future, by providing current constraints or promising them for the future. They may also serve some role in meeting domestic political concerns.

Unlike the case of the clearly laid-out rules covering declared wars and wartime blockades, international law places no legal or formal limitations on coercive measures short of war. Thus, the constraints on the imposition, form and magnitude of sanctions come largely from what world public opinion finds acceptable, and acceptability in turn is influenced by technology and the existing power relations among and within nations (Elagab, 1988). These sorts of informal constraints—constraints that led to the limits in the militarily imposed use of sanctions like pacific blockades—meant having sanctions be somewhat proportional to the cause of their institution and have generally been followed, except for extraordinary circumstances, such as the Cuban missile crisis.

Reduction of the exports of the targeted nation—a reduction that reduced its income—is meant to reduce that state's financial ability to purchase needed supplies in the world market, while at the same time providing benefits to the targeting nations' businesses similar to those produced by tariff protection. Restrictions on the imports of the target nation can involve a total ban of all commodities or only a more selective set of restrictions on specific military equipment or on certain types of technologically sophisticated materials that are needed to support the state's military and productive capacity. Perhaps because the smaller developing countries that tend to be targeted—countries such as Cuba and Iraq—are often quite specialized in what they export, the countries imposing sanctions tend to

favor export restrictions. Moreover, in the case of the United States, Congress has given the president greater authority to restrict the exports to other nations than to reduce their imports (Hufbauer, Schott and Elliott, 1990, pp. 65–66). Given the growing importance of international financial flows, and modern improvements in the ability to monitor such flows, it should not be surprising that restrictions on flows of capital and money as well as reductions or cessation of foreign aid subsidies are increasingly incorporated in sanction packages.

Sanctions are not costless to implement. The targeting country or countries almost always bear both enforcement costs and economic burdens. In particular, domestic firms of the nation imposing sanctions are likely to lose sales when trade, aid or financial flows are disrupted. Not only do trading partners respond by diversifying sources of supply or structures of production, but sanctions increase long-term uncertainty and may raise the costs of domestic firms doing business abroad. In 1992, for example, Congress and the Clinton administration angered U.S. companies by taking some unilateral embargos a step further (Congressional Budget Office, 1999, p. 10). New laws broadened the sanctions against Cuba and Libya beyond the ban on U.S. companies trading with these countries to punish foreign corporations that continued such trade by preventing them, under certain conditions, from doing business in the United States or with American companies (Uchitelle, 1996).

As theory would suggest, the country or countries imposing sanctions have almost always been both larger and more economically and militarily powerful than the target country. Tables 1 and 2 provide more detailed evidence. Moreover, this asymmetry seems to have grown over time and especially over the last several decades when economic sanctions have been more frequently applied.

In the 115 cases of economic sanctions deployed since 1914 that were investigated by Hufbauer, Schott and Elliott (1990, p. 63), the GNP of the sender (or principal initiator) of sanctions was nearly always over ten times that of the target and in the majority of cases more than 50 times greater. Where "modest policy changes" were at stake, the sender's economy was on average more than 200 times larger than the target's economy, and where "destabilization" of the government was the goal, the average ratio exceeded 400. Only when relatively important goals were at stake were countries willing to pick on someone closer to themselves in size: "For cases involving the disruption of military adventures, military impairment, and other major policy change, the results . . . indicate less of a size differential between sender and target. However, there is still a significant mismatch in economic clout: in seventy-seven percent of the disruption of military adventure cases, thirty percent of the military impairment cases, and sixty percent of the other major change cases, the sender country's GNP was over ten times the size of the target country's GNP" (pp. 98–99). This imbalance in power means that reciprocal sanctions by the targeted state are seldom employed, and when used, they have tended to be ineffective. Moreover, the difference in size and power has also meant that the timing of the imposition and termination of sanctions has been mainly at the option of the imposer.

Table 1
Selected Cases of Economic Sanctions for Foreign Policy Goals (through 1990)

Sender and Target	*Active Years*	*Success*[a] *(index)*	*Cost to Target % of GNP*	*Ratio of Sender to Target GNP*	*Type of Sanction*[b]	*Cost to Sender*[c] *(index)*
U.K. v. Germany	1914–18	12	7.1	1	X, M, F	4
U.K. v. Russia	1918–20	1	4.1	1	X, M, F	3
League of Nations v. Paraguay & Bolivia	1932–35	6	3.0	224	X	2
Arab League v. Israel	1946–	4	4.1	2	X, M, F	4
India v. Hyderabad	1948	12	2.0	22	X, F	2
U.K., U.S. v. Iran	1951–53	12	14.3	235	X, M, F	1
U.S., S. Vietnam v. North Vietnam	1954–	1	3.1	358	X, M, F	2
U.K., U.S., France v. Egypt	1956	9	3.4	160	X, F	2
U.S. v. Laos	1956–62	9	4.2	4372	F	1
U.S. v. Cuba	1960–	1	4.4	173	X, M, F	3
U.N. v. South Africa	1962–	6	2.8	130	X, F	3
U.S. v. Indonesia	1963–66	8	2.0	145	F	1
U.K., U.N. v. Rhodesia	1965–79	12	13.0	1388	X, M, F	3
Nigeria v. Biafra	1967–70	12	15.2	3	X, M, F	3
U.K., U.S. v. Uganda	1972–79	12	2.6	860	X, M, F	2
U.S. v. Kampuchea	1975–79	1	6.8	2523	X, M, F	1
China v. Albania	1978–83	1	3.3	249	X, M, F	2
China v. Vietnam	1978–88	3	3.5	41	F	1
U.S. v. Iran	1979–81	12	3.8	28	X, M, F	3
U.S. v. Nicaragua	1981–90	8	3.2	1727	X, M, F	3
Netherlands, U.S. v. Suriname	1982–88	9	7.8	2565	F	1
South Africa v. Lesotho	1982–86	16	5.1	103	X, M	2
U.S. v. Panama	1987–90	4	6.0	854	M, F	3
U.S. v. Haiti	1987–90	6	2.9	2383	F	1
Japan, West Germany, U.S. v. Burma	1988–	6	2.1	803	F	1
U.S., U.K. v. Somalia	1988–	4	2.0	1429	F	1
India v. Nepal	1989–90	9	4.6	94	X, M	2
U.S., U.N. v. Iraq	1990–	nd	48.0	242	X, M, F	4

Sources: The estimates are drawn from Hufbauer, Schott and Elliott (1990, pp. 16–27, 84–90).
Notes: They estimate on an annual basis the estimated losses, both direct and indirect, from sanctions, due to the deprivation of markets and finance. This table includes only those cases of sanctions where the cost to the target nation was estimated as 2 percent or more of GNP. These cases account for only 24 percent of the cases in which sanctions were used. Hufbauer, Schott and Elliott estimate that in 72 percent of the cases, the costs were less than 2 percent of GNP or negligible and that the impact of sanctions on GNP were—perversely—positive in 3 percent of the cases.
[a] The success score is an index of the success of the sender country or countries in securing their foreign policy goal. The index runs from 1 to 16 (with 16 being the most effective) and was computed by Hufbauer, Schott and Elliott (1990) as the product of their index of the outcome and their index of the role of the sanctions in obtaining that outcome.
[b] Types of sanctions include the interruption of commercial financial aid and other official finance (F), the interruption of exports from the sender country to the target country (X) and the interruption of imports by the sender country from the target country (M).
[c] The cost to the sender country is an index number scaled from 1 to 4: (1) net gain to sender; (2) little effect; (3) modest welfare loss to sender; and (4) major loss to sender.

Table 2
Quinquennial Averages of all Cases of Economic Sanctions

Years	Annual Number of Cases of Sanctions	Success (index)	Cost to Target % of GNP	Ratio of Sender to Target GNP	Cost to Sender (index)
1914–1918	0.60	5.67	4.00	5.00	3.00
1919–1923	1.00	16.00	nd	37.00	2.00
1924–1928	1.00	16.00	nd	56.00	2.00
1929–1933	2.00	9.00	1.50	112.50	2.00
1934–1938	2.00	5.00	0.95	40.50	2.50
1939–1943	2.00	6.50	1.25	6.50	3.50
1944–1948	7.00	6.29	0.70	26.06	2.29
1949–1953	3.00	5.00	5.33	208.67	2.00
1954–1958	11.00	6.64	1.31	480.04	1.82
1959–1963	14.00	7.36	1.37	170.14	2.07
1964–1968	8.00	10.00	3.91	251.38	1.88
1969–1973	6.00	7.50	1.18	207.17	1.17
1974–1978	26.00	5.69	0.49	281.27	1.65
1979–1983	17.00	6.53	1.42	2270.43	1.94
1984–1990	1.86	5.58	5.56	610.54	1.85

Sources: See the sources to Table 1.
Notes: In estimating the costs to the target countries, negligible was treated as 0.05 percent of GNP. In those cases where data are missing, the averages pertain to the years for which the data were available.

As for the economic costs incurred by the parties to the sanctions, it has always been rare for countries to impose sanctions when their populations would bear serious costs as a result. The major exceptions to this general rule would include sanctions imposed by the allied forces against Germany during World Wars I and II, by the Arab League against Israel, by the USSR against China between 1960 and 1970 and perhaps by the United States and the United Nations against Iraq since 1990. However, in recent decades, the average burden on the country imposing sanctions has been even lower. Recent examples of cases where the impact of sanctions on the country imposing them have been negligible—even if the effects have been quite large for the targeted country—include the United States versus Bolivia (1979–1982), the Netherlands and the United States versus Suriname (1982–1988), the United States versus Haiti (1987–1990), Japan, West Germany and the United States versus Burma (1988–) and the United States and the United Kingdom versus Somalia (1988–). In recent years, the economic sanctions that were most costly to the country imposing sanctions include those imposed by the United States on the USSR (1980–1982), on Panama (1987–1990) and (with the United Nations) on Iraq (1990–).

In most cases, the economic costs imposed on the target countries by sanctions have been negligible, but in a significant proportion of cases the impact has been substantial. Far and away the most striking application of sanctions has been the United States and the United Nations versus Iraq; in that case, the cost to Iraq has been estimated at 48 percent of GNP, with a particularly heavy burden on the incomes and mortality of the poorer segment of the population (Hufbauer, Schott

and Elliott, 1990, pp. 84–90, 283–298). Since the 1960s, the only other cases where sanctions imposed costs of more than 10 percent of GNP were the United Kingdom and the United Nations versus Rhodesia (1965–1979) and the internal dispute of Nigeria versus Biafra (1967–1970). In other cases, sanctions have imposed costs on the target country in the range of 3 to 8 percent of GNP: the U.S. sanctions on Cuba (1960–), Kampuchea (1975–1979), Iran (1979–1981), Nicaragua (1981–1990) and Panama (1987–1990); the sanctions imposed by China on Albania (1978–1983) and on Vietnam (1978–1988); and the sanctions imposed by South Africa versus Lesotho (1982–1986), the Netherlands and the United States versus Suriname (1982–1988) and India versus Nepal (1989–1990).

As this range of examples make clear, having a superpower involved is neither a sufficient nor necessary condition for economic sanctions to impose serious economic pain on the target nation. The capability of a targeting country or coalition to inflict costs on a target through sanctions is related to both geographic proximity and previous trade patterns, as well as to the relative size of the economies. The international setting also matters. It is easy to understand why targeting nations generally attempt to persuade third countries to go along with the sanctions, even when they were not directly involved at their inception. International cooperation not only reduces the political costs of applying sanctions, but, in a global economy, sanctions will be much more effective if a formal or informal coalition controls enough of the supply of a good to influence the terms of trade significantly (Drezner, 1999). When sanctions are imposed, target countries are seldom entirely cut off from alternative markets or sources of finance, though the costs could be high, the magnitude depending on the values of the relevant elasticities of supply and demand.

Relatively few sanctions have imposed major costs, and even fewer cases have sufficed to induce target countries to change their ways. Systematic studies of the use of economic sanctions over the twentieth century do suggest, consistent with theory, that sanctions are more successful in securing the desired changes when they cost the sender relatively little and the damage to the target is large relative to the cost of complying (Drezner, 1999, p. 308; Eaton and Engers, 1999; Hufbauer, Schott and Elliott, 1990, pp. 101–103). Nevertheless, sanctions have not proven very effective as a tool to secure foreign policy goals (Hufbauer, Schott and Elliott, 1990, pp. 92–93). Many scholars point to the 1980 U.S. embargo on grain exports to the Soviet Union as the classic case of economic sanctions gone awry (Lash, 1999, p. 14). The embargo did raise the price of grain to the Russians by an estimated $225 million, but the Soviets were able to turn to other sources, and the price increases did not dissuade them from their Afghanistan adventure. The direct cost of the sanctions to the United States has been estimated at $2.3 billion, but the total costs were arguably much higher. American farmers lost their dominant market share in grain imports to the USSR, and due in part to Russian fears of becoming dependent on producers subject to the political whims of the U.S. government, they have never recaptured that position.

Overall, Hufbauer, Schott and Elliot (1990, pp. 93–108; also see Elliott and

Hufbauer, 1999, p. 404) estimate a success rate for sanctions of about one-third in achieving desired ends, and it is concluded that sanctions were more successful between 1945 and 1969 than after 1970, particularly so for those unilaterally imposed by the United States. Pape (1997, 1998) critiques these estimates and argues that the estimate of success is too high, and in turn, Elliott (1998) and Elliott and Hufbauer (1999) respond to the criticisms.

It is not clear what might have accounted for the decline in the effectiveness of U.S.-originated sanctions, but certain patterns emerge from a close examination of the record. First, the success rates were higher when more nations were involved in imposing the sanctions—more nations in the sanctioning coalition meant fewer nations were outside to circumvent the sanctions. Second, the greater the income disparity between the nation imposing sanctions and the target, the greater the chance of success. Perhaps the most straightforward hypothesis for explaining why sanctions have become less effective over time, however, is that the world has become more of a single and fluid marketplace, and as the relative position of the United States in the global economy has declined, the United States and its allies have lost some of their economic leverage in international trade in commodities and services. Globalization has two possible conflicting effects: it makes more potential sources of supply available, but the wider dependence on foreign trade may make interference with the acquisition of goods easier. This conflict may not only help to explain why trade sanctions are less successful than they once were, but also why there has been a growing tendency to include financial controls as a component in sanctions. The inclusion of such controls does seem to be associated with a greater likelihood of success.

Perhaps the more fundamental question is why sanctions were imposed so often if they have not been as successful in achieving the initiator's apparent desired ends of forcing other nations to change their behavior. One aspect of the puzzle over the ineffectiveness of sanctions involves the difficulties of enforcing severe limitations on trade in a modern global economy. Surely another crucial element of the story, however, is that the impact of sanctions on the decision makers and elites may not necessarily reflect the impact on the society overall. A difficulty in evaluating the overall effects of trade sanctions is that such actions are often introduced as part of a number of related measures designed to achieve the same goal; and, as in the case of South Africa, it is difficult to determine exactly which of the measures has or has not been the basis to success. Even where sanctions do seem to have had substantial impacts on average welfare, such as in Iraq, Kampuchea, Cuba and Iran, governments may not be responsive to the desires of the outsiders that are responsible for imposing sanctions.

Another factor that is important in evaluating the efficiency of sanctions is the so-called "sanctions paradox," that is, sanctions are imposed more often on adversaries than on allies, but are often more effective when directed against allies rather than adversaries (Drezner, 1999, pp. 4–6). An explanation for this paradox can be found in the fact that "adversaries are less likely to back down, because they are more likely to be threatened again in the future" (Williams, 1999, p. 33). On the

other side, sanctions directed against targets that have little trade with the sender country (as adversaries generally do) are generally less effective at imposing high costs on the target nation and, thus, are less likely to be successful than those directed at allied countries that already have close economic relations with the sender (Hufbauer, Schott and Elliott, 1990, p. 99).

Conclusion

The sharp rise over the last few decades in the frequency with which economic sanctions are imposed seems to indicate that an important institutional change in international relations has occurred. This change has not yet been fully explained, but many of the elements of such an explanation seem to be in place.

Globalization has increased the number of international trade contacts—an increase that has both made sanctions a more attractive alternative but has also weakened their potential power by increasing the number of ways that sanctions can be circumvented. New technology has made it easier to enforce sanctions by tracking trade and financial transactions. There may be an element of policy innovation or fad, although that hypothesis is hard either to prove or disprove. Governments of nations imposing sanctions may also have become more politically sensitive about only imposing sanctions that have minimal domestic political impact. In the case of the United States, for example, the 1985 amendments to the Export Administration Act require that the president dismantle national security and foreign policy controls and lift sanctions involving domestic export of commodities available from other foreign sources. Such actions almost never eliminate entirely the costs imposed on the sender country, but by lowering costs, such steps may serve to dissipate domestic opposition to imposing sanctions, and it will no doubt be cheaper to continue to seek goals by imposing sanctions than by warfare.

Has the increased employment of sanctions been a good thing for the world? The argument in favor of sanctions is that it is a preferable means to attempt to coerce the weak by applying international pressure through withholding full access to markets (or other fruits of cooperative behavior) than to induce change by force of arms. However, sanctions are a tool that can be much more effectively wielded by rich countries than by poor—although it is not clear they are very different in this regard from other instruments of international relations. Sanctions may also be similar to other instruments, as regards to their efficiency in securing changes in policy by the targeted sovereign nations and in their being awkward to wield effectively, even by the relatively powerful. That sanctions have generally not been so successful over the last few decades suggests that the enhanced legitimacy of their application may not be having a fundamental impact on the actual state of the world.

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