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# Power And Humiliation In Foreign Policy: The Effects Of Economic Sanctions

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POWER AND HUMILIATION IN FOREIGN POLICY:  
THE EFFECTS OF ECONOMIC SANCTIONS

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A Thesis

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the Faculty of the Josef Korbel School of International Studies

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Masters of Arts

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by

Rebecca A. G. Liftman

June 2011

Advisor: Dr. Karen Feste

## **Abstract**

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Title: POWER AND HUMILIATION IN FOREIGN POLICY: THE EFFECTS OF ECONOMIC SANCTIONS

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### **ABSTRACT**

This thesis analyzes the use and unintended outcomes of power in international politics through an examination of economic sanctions in selected countries. A theoretical argument is derived from punishment theories and analyzes the effects of punishment on the target, including subjugation, humiliation and resistance. Seven cases of economic sanctions are studied: Cuba, Burma, Pakistan, Syria, Libya, Iraq, and Iran where the United States, either unilaterally or as the leader of a coalition, sought to influence political outcomes in the target state, such as regime change or curbing WMD proliferation. Economic sanctions were generally unsuccessful in achieving the expected outcomes and instead generated unintended results, such as: strengthening existing leadership and forcing negative humanitarian consequences on the population of the target state. Outcomes of punishment lead to humiliation and blowback against the United States, the sender state. The central argument is that power exercised by a strong state against a weaker state often generates resistance to punishment, because unintended outcomes occur.

## Table of Contents

Chapter One: Introduction .....	2
Chapter Two: Punishment.....	9
The Concept of Punishment .....	9
Goals.....	12
Morality .....	17
Coercion .....	18
Punishment in International Relations .....	20
Chapter Three: Humiliation .....	22
The Concept of Humiliation.....	22
Resistance.....	27
Morality .....	29
Subjugation.....	30
Humiliation in International Relations.....	31
Chapter Four: Economic Sanctions: Punishment in Statecraft .....	33
Background .....	33
Economic Sanctions as Punishment.....	42
Economic Sanctions as Humiliation .....	46
Economic Sanctions as Subjugation .....	50
Chapter Five: The Impact of Economic Sanctions: Selected Cases .....	55
Cuba .....	57
Burma .....	63
Pakistan .....	69
Syria .....	74
Libya.....	77
Iraq .....	82
Iran .....	88
Chapter Six: Conclusion .....	96
References.....	103

## **Chapter One: Introduction**

This thesis analyzes the use of power by states through the application of economic sanctions and examines how target states react. Economic sanctions are typically considered a tool of coercive statecraft, not as a form of punishment and subjugation. However, in this framework, I will argue that economic sanctions produce similar outcomes to that of punishment, such as subjugation, negative humanitarian outcomes, humiliation and often armed resistance and therefore must be considered with regard to their impact on the target state and its population.

Punishment, either as exercised, or in the form of a credible threat which succeeds in coercing a target to change its political goals, is only possible when a powerful actor is able to control another. In this case, a target of coercion is forced to choose either an option that it likely does not perceive to be in its strategic interest, because it is being forced to choose, or an alternative that is intended to inflict harm upon it. This perception of punishment, as forced submission to control by others, reflects a perception of subjugation of the target. Subjugation is a necessary condition for the development of humiliation, because it forces the target into a state of helplessness. Linder (2010, 19) argues that "...one of the defining characteristics of humiliation as a process is that the victim is forced into passivity, acted on and made helpless." The sender is interested in controlling the target in order to limit opportunities for resistance.

In general, subjugation refers to a forcible reduction in freedom and personal liberty and can occur on an individual or state level. The factor of outside control is

critical in understanding this concept. Much like those who are coerced, subjects are not in control of their own free will. Loss of control can result from a number of means, including physical control and domination. For instance, on the individual level, in the case of slavery, individuals are controlled by extreme violence and lack of power to change their situation.

This study is concerned with subjugation as a loss of control over personal destiny through the imposition of new rules and norms by an outside power. On the state level, citizens may become subjects of control by another state following a military loss or failed coercive measures by the international community. New rules imposed on citizens limit their capacity to determine their own destiny, often by controlling the leadership of the state, enforcing new economic standards, or imposing policies which seek to destroy the economic system of the state, either as punishment on the citizens or as a means of gain for the sender state. The sender may exploit the resources of the target for their own development, to further enhance their position of power. All of these factors amount to the forcible control of the target state, with limited power to affect any change in their status as subjects.

Considering economic sanctions as punishment allows goals of the sender and impact on the target to be taken into account and assesses the perspective of citizens who experience its impact. When economic sanctions are analyzed as a form of punishment, as experienced from the perspective of the target, it is possible to identify unintended consequences of the policies, which emerge due to the perception of being subject to control. Ultimately, economic sanctions contribute to a feeling to humiliation by disempowering the target state's population.

Since the end of the Cold War and the emergence of the United States as the sole super power in the global community, the United States has utilized economic sanctions as a tool of statecraft frequently. The United States has used this tool more than any other country, in order to influence other states decision making on issues ranging from pressing for regime change to curbing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (Haass, 1997; Hufbauer, 1998). As of 1998, when economic sanctions were the subject of much debate, sparked primarily by their use in Iraq, the United States had imposed economic sanctions more than 110 times, over the course of the twentieth century (Hufbauer, 1998). At that time, the United States had sanctions against more than 20 countries, which accounted for half of the world population. Since that time, the United States continues to rely on sanctions as a means of demonstrating displeasure with the actions of foreign governments. Focus has shifted to *smart sanctions*, as opposed to broad-based economic sanctions, which target the particular industry or leaders engaged in illicit activities. Smart sanctions still demonstrate displeasure, but may not have negative humanitarian impacts in these countries. However, at least five countries remain under comprehensive sanctions programs today from the United States, including: Burma, Cuba, Iran, North Korea, and Syria. Similar programs against Iraq and Libya were dropped in the mid-2000s.

This study examines existing theories of expressions of power in contemporary global politics. The projection or expression of power is a natural outcome of a state's growth and development. Fontana (2006, 29) argues that "politics and political activity are fundamentally centered on attaining and maintaining power." Therefore, once a state amasses attributes of power, such as industrial capacity, economic wealth, and resources,

their desire to demonstrate power increases, which generally occurs through military projection, as it did for the United States in the nineteenth century. Throughout the Cold War and in the post-Cold War period, the United States has projected power across the world in various ways, from military interventions to imposing economic sanctions.

Lentner (2006, 91) discusses the evolution of the definition of power in terms of hegemony in the international political order, noting Keohane provides the first definition of a hegemon, where a hegemon is the state with a preponderance of material resources, especially “control over raw materials, control over sources of capital, control over markets, and competitive advantages in the production of high value goods.” While Mearscheimer (2001, 40), includes domination of all other states as a condition of hegemony. Edkins (2004, 13) frames hegemony in terms of hard power capability and their ability to disseminate destruction on states which cannot be controlled.

The United States uses power to coerce and punish less powerful states. Often, this exercise of power is justified in terms of America’s messianic history of democracy, whereby the United States generally seeks to express power through international consensus and in liberal Wilsonian terms, by leading institutions. The United States also, somewhat uniquely, justifies the exercise of power to support human rights and aspirations of the world’s citizens. Foucault (2003, 136) argues that power is exercised; in contemporary global politics this means that it is not sufficient to project power through a large military, but one must demonstrate power through actions and deeds. Donnelly (1987, 252) argues that “...unilateral intervention, even when ostensibly for humanitarian purposes, is the instrument of the strong against the weak, and that the strong are more likely to be motivated by self-interest than by altruism.”



Moreover, as Foucault (2003, 143) argues: where power is exercised, there is resistance to power. This is a natural relationship between actors and can take a number of forms, not all negative. However, power expressions that limit efficacy can have negative outcomes. In term of relations between states, the exercise of power by strong actors has severe implications. Resistance to power is driven by the outcome of humiliation, which results from power policies which limit efficacy of citizens and their sense of control over their destiny. When resistance occurs in international politics, as an unintended consequence of policies it is called *blowback*, which takes the form of any number of outcomes including political resistance, such as political demonstrations or terrorism, in cases where humiliation is acute. Johnson (2000, 8) defines blowback as “...the unintended consequences of policies that were kept secret from the American people.” More simply, he argues that *a nation reaps what it sows*.

Humiliation is a particularly problematic sentiment in international relations. Telhami (2003, 33) identifies the problematic nature of humiliation in terms of security; he argues that “[t]he true horror of suicide bombings is that they are immensely empowering to many people who no longer believe that their governments can do anything to relieve their humiliation and improve their conditions.” Friedman (2003) argues that there is “an entrenched Arab mind-set, born of years of colonialism and humiliation...” Lindner’s study on humiliation (2006, xiii) pinpoints humiliation and dignity as “...being *the* issue in the Middle East, and the driving force behind Jihad.” Ultimately, it is clear that fostering collective humiliation in a country targeted by economic sanctions is not in the interest of a sender state’s national security and likely

has more consequential implications than the policy which sanctions were being used to correct.

Evidence of humiliation as a prevalent feeling in the Middle East is widely recognized. Telhami (2004, 33) argues this point, based on public opinion surveys conducted throughout the Arab world. He believes that “[t]he most pervasive psychology in the Arab world today is collective rage and feelings of helplessness...” Furthermore, Telhami (2004, 92) sees this a key driver for action in the region. He argues that;

[a]t the outset of the twenty-first century, there is a pervasive sense of humiliation and loss of self-respect and a desperate desire to restore dignity across the Middle East, the consequences of which are especially unpredictable in the uncharted waters of the era of globalization.

Zogby (2010, 90) provides similar evidence, based on personal accounts;

... the general Arab mood [is] ‘not a rejection of America, but a feeling of being rejected by America - not hatred of America, but feeling hated by America. There is a longing to be accepted and respected by America and the clear sense that we are not. You can say we feel like jilted lovers.’

In the Middle East, most visible policies today are exercised by the United States, such as military action, occupation and subjugation, from the perspective of citizens.

Colonialism and occupation, following a long, glorious history have made the region’s population particularly susceptible to humiliation. Autocratic leaders in the region, as elsewhere, enhance their legitimacy by scapegoating, and making the United States a target for revenge.

Economic sanctions, an exemplar of a state’s exercise of power, will serve as the focus of this study. Economic sanctions allow a powerful state to impose punishment on a weaker state. This thesis will discuss the impact of power and its outcomes in two parts. The first section summarizes key theories of punishment and coercion, and

subjugation and humiliation, and how punishment and subjugation lead to resistance against power, rather than compliance. The second section examines selected contemporary cases of U.S. sanctions against several countries, spread across Central America, the Middle East, and Central Asia. By carefully examining these outcomes, and their effect on the citizens of the target state, I will show how subjugation brings about humiliation and resistance to punishment. The conclusion relates collective humiliation to the likelihood of blowback against the sender state, an unintended consequence that has important implications for national security. The most important component of blowback is anti-American sentiment, which is highly concentrated in countries and regions where U.S. policies, including economic sanctions, are most intrusive. Chalmers Johnson (2000) makes this argument in his book entitled *Blowback*, but his argument does not examine how punishment, subjugation and humiliation create this condition.

## **Chapter Two: Punishment**

This chapter will address the key aspects of punishment including, definition and goals. The concept of punishment will be considered in the traditional context, primarily from the perspective of the sender, whether a state or another powerful actor, who has the authority and legitimacy to inflict punishment on a weaker actor. Within this framework, the sender attempts to prevent unacceptable acts, deviant behavior or crime from taking place, by deterring the perpetrators, incapacitating or isolating them, or retributively sanctioning them, as a response to their actions. This chapter will also address the importance of morality in punishment. Finally, the concepts of coercion and punishment will be compared. Coercive policies seek to change the status-quo while punishment seeks to maintain it. Coercion exists as a threat of punish, however, it is only successful if exercised credibly. When coercion is not successful in changing an actor's behavior, it must be considered as punishment. Because coercion in international politics is not typically viewed as a credible threat, coercion reverts to the function of punishment.

### **The Concept of Punishment**

Punishment is a response to crime, instituted by society as a measure to protect collectively against the actions of rogue actors. Punishment is a logical outcome of crime. The common definition of punishment is: “the intentional infliction of pain or other consequences commonly considered unpleasant on an offender” (Newman,

2008, xv). States enforce laws and norms by threatening punishment in order to protect the majority of their citizens who do not engage in crime. The enforcer of punishment is referred to as the *sender* and the offender is the *target*.

Three major components define punishment: harm, intent and legality. Punishment prevents criminals from gaining any advantage by breaking the law. Moreover, "...acts of punishment all, in some way, make the person who is punished worse off than she would otherwise be" (Boonin, 2008, 7). Thus, in order for an action to be considered punishment, it must be intended to cause harm to the criminal or target, by making them worse off than they were prior to committing a crime; it must also meet the legality standard by responding to a specific norm or law which has been broken by the target; and be enforced by a legitimate legal body and must be directed at the individual or group of individuals who have broken the norm. H.L.A. Hart defines punishment with two additional elements: it must be intentionally administered by human beings other than the offender; and it must be imposed and administered by the legal system against which the offense is committed (Shichor, 2006, 25).

Actions outside of this definition, such as mass punishment or sacrificial punishment, do not meet the conditions of punishment, truly. Mass punishment inflicts punitive sanctions on an entire group in response to the negative actions of only a few members. Sacrificial punishment does not meet the harm requirement of punishment because those who are targeted do not perceive their punishment to make them worse off; they willingly undertake actions in order to increase the level of satisfaction of themselves or a group.

Harm is essential to punishment, according to Boonin, (2008, 7), who argues that “...harming someone means making her worse off in some way, which includes inflicting something bad on her or depriving her of something good.” Harm must be inflicted intentionally,

...it must be done with the intent of harming the person being punished. Accepting this requirement is necessary to illuminate fully the difference between punishment, on the one hand, and such practices as charging user fees and requiring pretrial detention, on the other (Boonin, 2008, 15)

For example, although paying fees has the potential to make the payer worse off, by reducing income, fees are paid as compensation for a service rendered, which most likely makes the payer better off. On the contrary, harm makes crime not pay. The harm requirement is morally justified, though, because “...suffering that individuals incur through punishment is less objectionable than the suffering caused by crime” (Hoekema, 1986, 135).

Harm is a key component of deterrent and retributive punishments. In deterrence, the threat of harm or unpleasant consequences is intended to dissuade would-be criminals from committing crime. Additionally, dissemination of information about criminals who are punished is intended to encourage others to avoid their similar fate. Intentionally inflicting harm is also an important component of retributive punishment, in that retribution seeks to reciprocally punish offenders, often more severely than may be deserved. As retributive-oriented punishment is less concerned with deterring future crime, publicity of the punishment is less important, so it may be downplayed to avoid criticism over its perceived immoral nature.

## Goals

The goals of punishment reflect the objectives of a sender, with respect to the target. Punishment often has a two-fold purpose; “[p]unishment constitutes not only the important opportunity to affirm the law, but also to issue a serious threat to other would be offenders that dire consequences await them if they break the law” (Newman, 2008, xxvi). Punishment is intended to prevent future crime from taking place by deterring potential criminals, through the punishment of others as example. Hoekema (1986, x) argues that “punishment is justified by the socially useful effects of deterrence and incapacitation of known criminals and potential criminals.” Moreover, because “the elimination of punishment inevitably brings about a higher incidence of crime, the state thereby permit’s a greater amount of suffering to be imposed on crime victims” (Hoekema, 1986, 134). Deterrence-oriented punishment is morally justified because it seeks to protect innocent citizens from the ills of crime, by making examples of those who have engaged in wrongful and illegal acts.

Punishment also prevents future crime by removing criminals from society either through reform or incapacitation. Incapacitation removes offenders from society using a range of means, from imprisonment to capital punishment, or by reforming convicted criminals. Incapacitory punishment is problematic though because it prevents future criminals and society from understanding the full scope of this type of punishment. Prisons serve the function of removing physical images of punishment from the view of society.

*Punishment as Deterrence.* When punishment is carried out as a deterrent, it aims to dissuade future criminals from carrying out crime. Deterrence is the primary function

of the state's execution of punishment and law enforcement. Beccaria (2006, 24) argues that punishment as deterrence should be exemplary; "...punishments, therefore, and such a mode of inflicting them, ought to be chosen, as will make the strongest and most lasting impressions on the minds of others, with the least torment to the body of the criminal." Deterrence is future oriented as well; "[o]ne person's punishment is justified by its effect in deterring others, and also in incapacitating him, for imposing even greater suffering. To forbear to punish offenders would lead only to even greater suffering in the long run" (Hoekema, 1986, 112).

Some regard deterrence as coercive in nature, in that by assigning various punishments to different laws, potential law-breakers would alter their behavior based on a perceived negative outcome. Others see deterrence as the maintenance of the status-quo, and therefore not as coercive. Criminals who are not currently committing crimes will be deterred from doing so, and therefore they will not change their behavior by becoming a criminal.

In order for deterrence to be most successful, the authority responsible for enforcement must be viewed as legitimate and powerful. Members of society must perceive this institution to have the power to enforce punishment. According to Beccaria (2006, 25), credibility is paramount in deterrence, "[c]rimes are more effectually prevented by the *certainty*, than the *severity* of punishment... the certainty of a small punishment will make a stronger impression, than the fear of one more severe, if attended with the hopes of escaping..." A sender's credibility is enhanced when punishment is regularly employed. Deterrence in the international community is typically less



successful because there is no actor or organization with sufficient legitimacy and record of effectively punishing to deter rogue actors.

*Punishment as Incapacitation.* Another goal of punishment is to incapacitate known criminals, which is also future-oriented. This occurs through incarceration or more severe punishment, reform and rehabilitation, or deradicalization. Incapacitation focuses exclusively on preventing crime by sanctioning individuals who are known to be responsible for crime. Incapacitation is less concerned with exemplary aspects of deterrence, because there is no need to deter known criminals; "...there is a reasonable presumption that offenders who are imprisoned would have continued to commit crimes if they had remained free..." (Shichor, 2006, 39).

Incarceration has come under heavy scrutiny, especially in the United States, where it is criticized as an abstraction of punishment because it hides the pain of punishment from society. In this way, it no longer serves a utilitarian deterrent function, either. Newman (2008, xxvii) argues that,

[t]he form of punishment that allows avoidance for responsibility for the punishment is, however, the non-public punishment of prison. One could argue in fact that public punishments are morally superior to prison, because of the public and therefore accountable nature of the punishment.

Reform and rehabilitation of convicted criminals also serve an incapacitation function. These programs aim to reduce the number of criminals by removing their desire, need, or opportunity to commit crimes. These programs are not widely supported in traditional punishment theory, but they have become more popular in the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, following evidence that incarceration leads to increased radicalization of prisoners at an extremely high cost to society. These programs also do not always meet the harm

requirement of punishment, but rather reflect the desire of citizens to limit the amount of crime in their society by any means available.

*Punishment as Retribution.* Retributive punishment does not aim to prevent future crime, but specifically targets offenders to make them pay for the crime that they have committed. Some argue that retributive punishment is more morally just than deterrent punishment because retribution is not concerned with future outcomes and punishment does not have to meet Beccaria's standard of significant severity, for deterrent purposes. Hoekema (1986, 133) argues that all punishment should be retributive for this reason;

...it is never morally permissible to punish a person more severely than his offense would warrant for the sake of deterrence. Punishment must be determined by what the person has done, not by what others will do as a result of his treatment; it must be proportional to the crime, not to the public's need for an example.

Advocates believe retribution is an even-handed punishment as similar crimes are punished in similar ways, without accounting for the criminal's history or likelihood to pursue crime in the future. Supporters believe punishment should be based directly on the crime.

Retribution also meets the satisfaction need that punishment affords to its enforcers, because it targets criminals for known crime. The satisfaction need is described as "...a force that overtakes reciprocity, a force which ensures that the 'payback' will not be purely 'tit for tat' but 'tit for tat plus a little more,' often a lot more. The 'need' - if we can call it that, perhaps 'urge' is a better word - is that of violence" (Newman, 2008, xxv). Satisfaction is not a part of morally justified punishment and should not be considered as punishment within this framework.

Revenge falls within the framework of retribution as another form of punishment which is imposed by individuals or institutions for "...personal reasons to satisfy the requirement of and a corresponding personal need for, retributive justice for wrongs suffered in one's personal sphere of care and concern" (Barton, 1999, 80). Revenge differs significantly from retribution because of the personal nature of the motivation for punishment; Barton (1999, 55) argues that "[t]he presence or absence of a personal or special tie seems to provide the best basis all around for a satisfactory explanation of the highly compelling distinction between revenge and other forms of retribution." In this way, revenge is a more emotional form of punishment.

However, following the traditional meaning of punishment places revenge outside of the core definition of punishment for two reasons.<sup>1</sup> First, it implies that punishment need not respond to an existing law or rule that has been broken; it is not necessary for a person to seek revenge for acts which are against an established law, they may seek revenge only for any perceived wrong done directly to them or a closely connected person. Additionally, based on this definition, revenge is more concerned with meeting the satisfaction need rather than the deterrent function of punishment. Barton (1999, 10) argues that revenge "is a morally motivated desire for *equity* and *justice* retributively conceived as *reciprocity*- hence the expressions 'pay back' and 'getting even'."

The three goals of punishment all seek to prevent crime from occurring, in order to protect a society's broader citizenship. Deterrence attempts to prevent crime from taking place in the future, by imposing sanctions which make the cost of committing a

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<sup>1</sup> See Barton, 1999, 22. Hobbes observes in his definition of punishment that "neither private revenges, nor injuries of private men, can properly be styled punishment; because they proceed not from public authority."

crime higher than any potential benefit. Incapacitation and retribution apply the definition of punishment to a known criminal, in order to prevent such an actor from committing more crimes. Incapacitation denies a criminal opportunities and means to commit crimes, either through incarceration or a more severe form of incapacitation.

Retribution, or revenge, inflicts consequences on a known criminal, in order to return the harm that they have caused, or to make the criminal *pay* for what they have done. Retribution and deterrence differ in their orientation toward the future and also the level of emotion involved. Retributive punishment allows the sender to experience the satisfaction effect of punishment.

## **Morality**

The moral implications for punishment are important to consider. Without moral consideration, punishment is merely aggressive behavior; "...harm inflicted for a fact done before there was a law that forbade it, is not punishment, but an act of hostility" (Barton, 1999, 23). Senders must consider the moral implications of punishment in order to limit blowback, which can result from a perceived lack of justice and fairness.

Boonin (2006, 6) describes another problem of punishment succinctly as "[p]erhaps the most obvious quality that these practices have in common in that they are all in some way bad for the person on whom they are inflicted." Further Boonin (2006, 28) argues that the state does not have the moral authority to punish because the act is inherently unfair because it "...involves drawing a line between two different sets of people and treating the members of one group differently from the members of the other."

## Coercion

Coercion takes place prior to punishment and is often intended to occur independent of punishment. Coercion differs fundamentally from punishment because its goal is to force a change in the behavior of an actor based on credible threats from another;

[t]he paradigm instance of coercion is not the direct use of force or violence. In contrast, punishment, particularly deterrence, seeks to maintain the status quo. It is rather the successful direction of an agent's will or choice through the manipulation of the alternatives she faces (Reidy and Riker, 2010, 3).

The goal of coercive threats is for an actor to successfully change the behavior of another, without having to carry out the punishment that has been threatened. Coercion consists of an actor either an individual, state, or international organization, utilizing a position of power to threaten another less powerful actor to change their behavior, in such a way that is in the interest of the powerful actor. Anderson (2010, 17) highlights the importance of power and defines coercion as;

the sort of power that states possess against their inhabitants, war victors generally hold over the vanquished, or even a church hierarchy holds over priests and laity, and husbands have sometimes wielded over their wives. These uses suggest a sort of irresistible power which can operate through various mechanisms, including physical force and violence, threats, positional authority, and social pressure.

Power and legitimacy are the most important characteristics of coercers. The sender must have both in order for a target to be compelled to change.

Coercion occurs "...when one person threatens to visit some evil or unwanted consequence on another unless that other does or refrains from doing some act in accordance with the coercer's demands" (Leiser, 2010, 31). In order for coercion to be successful, the threat of punishment being imposed must be credible. Powerful actors, in

terms of states, derive their legitimacy from military might, position of authority and leadership, or economic prowess. Previous instances of successful punishment, especially those instituted for deterrent purposes, bolster a sender's credibility and thus improve the chances that future threats will be taken seriously and change will ensue.

In the case where the punishment threatened is severe enough, it will not always be carried out, because the target will choose to act in the preferred manner. The illustration on the individual level is instructive; Person A may threaten to take the life of Person B if Person B refuses to give Person A their wallet; Person A may not intend to exercise punishment, because they believe it is credible and severe enough to alter Person B's behavior. According to Hoekema (1986, 15), coercion is more morally justified when it is successful, because no harm is actually done;

[t]here are circumstances in which the use of coercion appears defensible even though actual use of force would not be justified, since the punishment is not intended to be carried out. The moral grounds for coercion appear to be broader than the use of force.

In the relationship of individuals and the state, Lucas (1966, 60) argues that "imprisonment is the paradigm form of coercion...even if it were not regarded as a penalty; it would still be effective in frustrating the efforts of the recalcitrant to prevent a judicial decision from being implemented."

The state pursues coercive tactics to maintain the rule of law among its citizens and exercise power in the international order. Also, for this reason, some argue that the law, which regulates punishment, is in itself coercive, as "...it attempts to persuade people through the promise of sanctions to do (or refrain from doing) what the legislature commands" (Reidy and Riker, 2010, 5). According to Hoekema (1986, 14), "[t]he state

holds a unique and exclusive authority [and power] to coerce. Characteristic of government is the authority to compel compliance with laws and regulations.”

Furthermore, when viewed through this paradigm, coercion is no longer immoral because it compels citizens to follow the law and it is likely that less crime and injury will take place. Therefore,

...coercion is not intrinsically immoral but, on the contrary, is a necessary part of a just social order. The moral presumption against coercion...which must be overridden by more urgent moral reasons if coercion is to be morally defended in particular circumstances (Hoekema, 1986, 15)

This argument generally outweighs anarchic criticism that coercive tactics are immoral or impose unjust restrictions on citizens.<sup>2</sup>

## **Punishment in International Relations**

States and international regimes use punishment to exercise power over others in the modern era, as the exercise of hard power has become less acceptable. States try to persuade or coerce other states to change behavior by threatening punishment. However, in the case of international regimes acting as coercers to influence the behavior of member states, the practice is not usually successful. This strategy is a form of compellence to induce a target to change behavior, whereas, according to Art and Cronin, (2009, 273) deterrence aims to “...dissuade a target from changing its behavior.”

Compellence is difficult to execute successfully because targets are unlikely to change behavior under duress; the target will be subject to humiliation under such conditions.

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<sup>2</sup> Reidy and Riker (2008, 2) argue that “...it sometimes so offends against freedom, equality, independence, respect or some other value affirmed by those acting within the relevant institutional or political context that it cannot be morally redeemed by utility gains, even if they are significant gains.”

Thus, because actors generally are not successful in compelling target states to change their behavior, they often resort to carrying out the punishment as threatened.

States use punishment to maintain an element of control over their citizens and foster compliance with the law. In a democracy, most citizens consent to be governed willingly and trust the state to represent their collective conscious, in exchange for the perception of security that law and subsequent threat of punishment afford to them. When states also use punishment to induce change in the international order, this same bargain of democracy has not been struck. The element of control that emerges from punishment is not necessarily accepted as a consequence of greater security. Punishment has a number of unintended consequences which have detrimental consequences on the population of the target state, and generally do not increase their own security, instead they do significant harm.

Economic sanctions give powerful states an opportunity to exert their influence over others as a form of punishment. Sanctions can meet all of the goals of punishment and also meet the key requirement of harm. However, like punishment theory, they are generally considered from the perspective of the sender in terms of the intended outcomes. Punishment that does not consider the outcomes from the perspective of the target will likely overlook some of the important consequences, such as humiliation. Economic sanctions and other expressions of power in statecraft generally do not consider these important consequences, because they are based on the desired ends. The next chapter will examine the important consequence of humiliation and its implications, which results from punishment, but is often overlooked.



## **Chapter Three: Humiliation**

This chapter will explore the concepts of subjugation and humiliation as they relate to punishment. Humiliation has a detrimental impact on the target state and is an important driver of resistance toward the sender. As punishment is exercised in international relations, it often serves as a form of subjugation, or control of the population of the target state. Humiliation is an emotional response to control through subjugation. This chapter will identify different forms of subjugation, as they relate to the concept of forcible control.

### **The Concept of Humiliation**

Humiliation is an important emotion in conflict, because it contributes to the perpetuation of conflict and motivates actors to seek revenge against their humiliator.

Lindner (2006, xiv) defines humiliation in terms of the sender and the target;

... ‘humiliation’ is enforced lowering of any person or group by a process of subjugation that damages their dignity; ‘to be humiliated’ is to be placed in a situation that is against ones’ interest...in a demeaning and damaging way; and ‘to humiliate’ is to transgress the rightful expectations of every human being and of all humanity that basic human rights will be respected.

Strong actors who control weaker states engage in policies which weaken the target population, in order to limit their ability to fight back. The result, in terms of the experience of the target population, is a collective feeling of humiliation, due to loss of dignity and opportunity. Humiliation occurs when treatment “transgresses established

expectations” (Lindner, 2010, 19). A humiliated person, to a certain degree, is surprised by the negative treatment they receive, because it is outside of expected norms.

Humiliation is closely linked to the concepts of embarrassment and shame. Scheff (1994) argues that shame and humiliation are synonymous and emotional outcomes of conflict. However, others propose more nuanced views of the two concepts, where the differences lie in the relationship with outside forces. Shame results from a sense of having done something wrong, as an internally driven response to an action. Miller (1993, 157) argues that “shaming operates by stripping someone of a status she had some right to before a particular failing...” An individual may also be shamed by another, particularly an authority figure to the shamed person. An individual can also impose a feeling of shame on themselves, when they act outside of accepted norms.

Humiliation differs from shame because it is inflicted upon a person by an enemy; one cannot impose a feeling of humiliation on themselves. The person who experiences humiliation need not necessarily have done something wrong, as the shamed person must, but must be made to feel that they acted outside of standard norms. Lindner (2001, 62) defines humiliation in this context as, “...deprivation that is perceived as an illegitimate violation of ideals of equality and dignity and it is seen as a humiliation...” Miller (1993, 157) argues that, as compared to shame, “...humiliation destroys the illusion of having belonged at all.” Therefore, humiliation depends on a person’s ability “[t]o retain an image of themselves as worthy of respect, because the feeling of humiliation depends on some part of the self’s ability to see things with an undegraded sensibility” (Miller, 1993, 166).

An individual is made to feel shame by an authority figure who is in a position of power over the shamed person. In this way, shame may be an intended outcome of punishment. Humiliation is inflicted upon an individual by their enemy, who must have relative power over the humiliated person in order to induce this emotion. Miller (1993, 158) compares this to teasing, where a lower-status person will still respond to convivial banter, or *teasing*, in the same manner, because the "...style of justice is characterized by the will to do equity..." In contrast, the style of justice of humiliation is characterized by the will to punish. Humiliation can be both a goal of a sender's actions, as it is in torture, or an unintended outcome experienced by a target of the policy which forcibly lowers individuals or groups (Lindner, 2010).

From the perspective of the target, humiliation is a response to intentional or unintentional actions on the part of a sender and reflects key cultural aspects of the target's environment; similar actions may not necessarily engender the response of humiliation in each case, due to certain structural issues. Humiliation is an outcome of punishment. Anger, as a reaction to punishment, is a short-term reaction to an injustice. However, humiliation is deeply held and develops over time, into resentment. Barton (1999, 26) defines this sentiment as "...a kind of settled, lasting anger and what settles in the human heart is perceptions of injustice, unfairness... a feeling of having been demeaned or badly done by." Although he does not mention it by name, it is reasonable to assume that the feeling of humiliation would be included in his assessment.

Individuals or groups directly targeted by a sender can experience the humiliation of punishment. Additionally, kindred groups who share important characteristics with the target group can also experience humiliation in solidarity. Pape (2010, 59) defines

kindred communities as sharing “either...a single characteristic common across multiple nations or by a loyalty to a particular nation different from one’s country of citizenship. Kindred communities can be based on ideology, religion, or latent commitment...” These groups identify with the sense of injustice and unfair treatment that similar groups are subjected to and the lack of power to improve the situation on their own. These groups will behave similarly to the targeted groups and may be willing to sacrifice for the kindred community (Pape, 2010, 43; 59).

A sense of unfairness or injustice in the treatment of the target also contributes to a sense of humiliation. Barton (1999, 13) argues that *retributive emotions* such as, resentment, indignation and anger “...are aroused by perceptions of injustice and unfair treatment.” The perception of unfair treatment is also a driver in anti-American sentiment. Humiliation occurs when certain populations believe that are held to a double-standard for pursuing certain policies and face punishment from the sender, where others are allowed to pursue the same course without cost. In the Muslim world, where the United States has engaged most in recent years, humiliation is an acute collective sentiment.

Collective humiliation has significant implications for the sender state’s national security interests, because it drives humiliated groups to resist through revenge. Linder (2006, xvi) also makes a case for this and argues that “...the force that keeps fueling extremists, silencing moderates, and driving the conflict to spiral out of control is humiliation.” In addition to extremists, humiliation impacts moderates as well; Linder (2010, 19) argues that “...humiliated hearts and minds can translate into weapons of mass destruction.” Further, Lindner (2006) argues that the cycle of humiliation is perpetuated

by fear of further humiliation, especially with regard to many states interactions with the United States.

Chomsky's discussion of the responses to occupation, in terms of the Palestinian experience in Israel, is illustrative on this point. Chomsky (1999, 144) sees the emergence of two responses to humiliation and subjugation: active and passive. He describes three personalities which emerge as a response to long-term occupation, which he compares to incapacitory punishment or imprisonment. He describes freedom fighters and terrorists who are the active respondents, and the passive *Samid*, the one who chooses to stay in his prison and either becomes numb with despair or "crazed by consuming hatred for [the] jailer and [himself]."

Active respondents to humiliation, who engage in resistance against the sender, feel a sense of rage, due to the circumstances that have contributed to their humiliation and lack of efficacy to deal with these circumstances. Miller (2001, 106) differentiates active and passive responses to humiliation;

[w]hether rage rather than despair attends humiliation will depend on who or what is perceived to have caused it, or on who or what can plausibly be blamed for causing it, and on what the possibilities of remedying it may be.

Barton (1999, 13) identifies this as hatred, which is a result of perceived injustice and inability to affect change; he argues "when a seriously offended person is powerless to remedy the injustice in question are serious retributive emotions likely to turn into hatred and bitterness towards those responsible for the unfair treatment." Scheff's (1994, 63) differentiation between *helpless anger*, passive response, or *humiliated fury*, active response, is based on "...emotional arousal [which] leads to vengeful actions only if that arousal is denied." The likelihood of active resistance to humiliation is precisely why

sender states engage in subjugation, so that they might limit the opportunities for the humiliated to exact revenge, however, this ultimately exacerbates tensions.

## **Resistance**

Active resistance to humiliation occurs in the form of retributive punishment on the sender, in order to get even or make the sender pay. As previously discussed, resistance is operationalized when humiliation manifests as rage and powerlessness. When an individual or group experiences these sentiments, they will resist the sender and will subsequently punish the sender by seeking revenge. Miller (2001, 204) argues that the "...the fantasy of getting even, is one of the most predictable consequences of having been humiliated."

The exercise of power always generates resistance to it. Resistance to humiliation does not necessarily take the shape of traditional resistance mechanisms, which can include peaceful demonstrations, such as street demonstrations and hunger strikes or violent means, including actions taken against the powerful actor. However, in the case of subjugation where the sender exercises power in order to control the target, traditional resistance is difficult because of the physical separation between the target and sender.

The imbalance of power between the sender and the target leads to asymmetric resistance. The sender is able to exercise power in many different ways, through military might or other concealed means. Punishment exerted by the target in response to humiliation is an emotional retributive form of punishment. Moreover, the target is limited in its capacity to exercise punishment over the sender and must do so using

asymmetric means. The sender seeks to limit these opportunities by tightly controlling the actions of the target.

From the perspective of the sender, subjugation is a necessary outcome of power and victory, generally associated with military conquest and territorial occupation. Machiavelli argues that subjugation is a necessary pursuit for the Prince, following conquest, in order to maintain control over a new citizenry. Subjugation, in this respect, is comprised of actions which serve as a means of pacification of the indigenous population, in order to suppress potential resistance to the occupying power. Lindner (2010, 63) refers to this as *conquest humiliation* which is defined as the “[subjugation of] formerly equal neighbors into positions of inferiority.”

The sender seeks to make resistance difficult by significantly weakening the population or by gaining popularity with key factions, as Machiavelli suggests. He argues that the Prince should protect himself by gaining the popularity of the masses, however if it is not possible “...since princes cannot avoid being hated by everybody, they must first seek not to be hated by the bulk of the populace; and when they cannot achieve this, they must try with every effort to avoid the hatred of the most powerful group [the army]” (Bondanella and Musa, 1983, 140). In this case, the importance of forming strong, favorable relationships with the powerful elements in the target state assists the sender in suppressing resistance emerging from the population.

Subjugation also occurs through other hidden means, such as economic sanctions, where the sender limits opportunity by controlling “...the ‘everyday actions’ of people; actions which reflect the taken-for-granted order of things” (Ryan, 2006, 191). This is the ultimate expression of the sender’s power, as the state can exercise extreme control

over the target without utilizing military means or physically occupying the territory. The sender may use a variety of means to exercise this control, such as controlling access to consumer goods, limiting political opportunity, and other externalities that emerge from decreased economic activity in the target state, such as those associated with infrastructure and education.

The sender's goal is also different in this case, because the sender is less concerned with limiting resistance on the part of the target's population. Generally, there is a physical separation between the sender and the target, so resistance is inherently difficult to undertake. Additionally, little attention is paid to the outcomes, because the barriers to resistance are assumed to be prohibitively high. However, this subjugation still has a psychological effect on the target population and damages dignity, which has problematic implications for the sender.

## **Morality**

Just as there may be moral justification in punishment, the same can be said for humiliation. In the case of punishment, the moral justification for intentionally harming an individual rests in the deterrent function of punishment whereby the sender seeks to prevent future crime from taking place in order to protect innocents. In humiliation, the moral justification for an enemy, or sender, of inflicting such psychological harm on a target lies in the range of possible sanctions which could be inflicted. Humiliation may be seen as the least worst sanction available to the sender. Miller (2001, 143) argues that "...the humiliator can claim the moral high ground if he goes after either knaves or fools, but only for those things that such humiliation may work to improve or prevent in the



future.” For instance, torture may be justified based on the outcome, even though its goal is to inflict humiliation on the target.

Similar to the concept of morality in punishment, considering the moral implications of making people feel humiliated is important for the sender, because the natural response to humiliation is to resist the sender’s power. However, considering psychological implications of punishment, especially long-term potentialities, may not be in the interest of the sender when it views policies in terms of a realist ends-means perspective for determining policy. Therefore, the sender often takes steps to mitigate the opportunities for resistance by the target, by strictly controlling those who would engage in resistance.

## **Subjugation**

Typically, subjugation is considered an outcome of military victory, where one state can occupy and control the vanquished citizens of another state. Johnson (2000, 20) describes subjugation as the ability of an occupier to impose their own social system on a territory, in this traditional sense, “...as far as the army has the power to do so.”

Although military conquest is less frequently utilized, subjugation is still a relevant concept in contemporary international relations. Economic sanctions, as tools of punishment, create highly similar conditions to military subjugation, with similar results. These conditions include disempowerment or limiting political opportunity and harm, both due to collateral damage and adverse economic conditions. The results of this subjugation of a society create feelings of resentment toward the occupying power.

Powerful states have the benefit of being able to exercise power over weaker states, in order to influence their behavior. A powerful sender state is able to gain this element of control without even having to potentially weaken their own state, through military conflict. Economic sanctions may fill the void of military action in contemporary politics, both in order to influence the behavior of the state and to minimize any chance of resistance.

This element of control creates a dangerous sense of humiliation within the target state. Those who experience the humiliation of subjugation are generally powerless to act against it and because of this powerlessness, humiliation continues and deepens over time. This pervasive feeling has implications for the sender state, which it often ignores when executing policies. There is no more powerful indication of this than Osama bin Laden's Fatwa (1998) declaring jihad against the West, in which he blamed the United States for: "...plundering [the Muslim World's] riches, dictating to its rulers, *humiliating* its people, terrorizing its neighbors, and turning its bases in the Peninsula into a spearhead through which to fight the neighboring Muslim peoples" (emphasis added).

### **Humiliation in International Relations**

In the atmosphere of subjugation and disempowerment where populations feel humiliated because they do not have options to improve their situation, desire for revenge is a natural response. Retributive punishment directed at the sender inspires a similar emotional sequence in the sender. Often, the sender takes steps to avoid this situation at all, which is a major motivation for punishing and subjugating the target population.

However, when victimized by punishment, the sender experiences anger and responds by punishing the target once again.

Economic sanctions, as a form of punishment, contribute to this cycle. Targets of economic sanctions generally are not compelled to change their course of decision because of the pressures sanctions bring to bear. The leadership takes steps to avoid this pressure while still pursuing their goals, which offend the sender. Citizens become victims of punishment, as intended and also victims of unintended consequences, such as disempowerment. Resistance undertaken by the target, in order to improve their conditions or express displeasure, will be humiliating to the sender, as they have tried through subjugation, to prevent resistance, by imposing economic sanctions and physically separating their territory from that of the target. This sets off the emotional sequence, in which the sender responds with greater retribution, as an outcome of the action which sparked a more personal sense of humiliation. The next section will examine economic sanctions within the framework of punishment and humiliation.

## **Chapter Four: Economic Sanctions: Punishment in Statecraft**

This chapter will explore the use of economic sanctions as a paradigmatic expression of power by a strong actor in terms of contemporary global politics. In this chapter, economic sanctions will be discussed on multiple levels. First, I will address the general success rate of economic sanctions as a tool in statecraft, and the various impediments to success that they face. Additionally, I will examine how economic sanctions are more appropriately considered as a tool of punishment, rather than coercion, both based on their objectives from the perspective of the sender and their impacts from the perspective of the target. Finally, I will discuss the ways in which economic sanctions go beyond a traditional definition of punishment and create conditions of subjugation, by disempowering the population. Special consideration will be given to the negative humanitarian consequences that emerge as a result of economic sanctions, as they are also representative of the impact of sanctions as punishment on the target state.

### **Background**

Powerful states and international institutions have a range of tools at their disposal in order to exert influence and promote changes in behavior of states whose goals and objectives do not align with their own. Economic sanctions provide an effective model for a powerful state's expression of power. States can use economic sanctions a tool of coercion or punishment. While all policies generally seek to influence a particular state

to change its behavior to a course it does not want to pursue, only those which threaten punishment and therefore harm without action on the part of the target, are considered coercive. Economic sanctions do not have a strong historical record of success in the coercive phase.<sup>3</sup>

President Woodrow Wilson popularized the idea of economic sanctions as a tool of coercive diplomacy in 1919, as a benefit of the collective capacity of the League of Nations (Hufbauer, 1998). At the end of World War I, Wilson saw an opportunity to form a *community of power*, to replace Europe's balance of power system of organization. Article 16 of the League's charter "...authorized collective economic and military action against a state that resorted to war in disregard of the League's covenant that required states' to settle disputes peacefully" (Davis and Engerman, 2003, 189). As economic interdependency among nation-states increased, more powerful actors saw opportunities to exercise influence over targets of coercion through economic channels. To this day, the United States frequently employs punitive economic sanctions over long periods of time to compel foreign governments to change their policies on a range of issues from human rights to nuclear proliferation.

No other country utilizes sanctions as punitive recourse more than the United States (Haass and O'Sullivan, 2000, 2; Hufbauer, 1998). Some figures indicate that in the late 1990s, the United States had imposed economic or political sanctions on over half of the world's population. This figure, as advanced by Hufbauer (1998), includes

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<sup>3</sup> Cortright and Lopez (2002, 13-15) argue that found that "the threat of sanctions is often more powerful than the sanctions themselves..." Few of their examples hold up to scrutiny, which they eventually acknowledge. They go on to say that "a corollary development in many of these cases has been a hardening of positions and a period of diplomatic stalemate following the actual implementation of sanctions."

sanctions that are not necessarily comprehensive economic sanctions, such as arms embargos or restrictions on aid and counted 26 countries as targets of sanctions. (At this time, the United States had imposed sanctions on China, as well). The increased use is likely tied to an increasingly risk-averse international community, seeking to substitute low-intrusion compulsion methods in place of military operations, in order to affect change. United Nations member states have also increasingly opted to employ multilateral sanctions on rogue states, as they have become "...hesitant to shoulder the expense of large peacekeeping operations..." (Cortright and Lopez, 2000, vii). In the 1990s, "...the United Nations imposed sanctions six times as often as in its previous forty-five years" (Cortright and Lopez, 2000, ix).

Economic sanctions are described and discussed as means of coercion, whereby a powerful actor seeks to change the behavior of another state by threatening to impose debilitating economic sanctions on the target. A powerful actor can be either an international organization or state acting unilaterally or as a leader of a coalition of the willing. Davis and Engerman (2003, 191) define the power imbalance in economic terms; noting the Hufbauer, Schott, Elliot database, they found that "...the GNP of the sender (or principle initiator) of sanctions was nearly always over ten times of the target and in the majority of cases more than 50 times greater."

Economic sanctions are thought to be effective if the objective is achieved when both threatened and imposed. Economic sanctions are deemed successful both where the threat or the actual implementation of sanctions leads to a change in course in the target's behavior. However, at the point of implementation, economic sanctions can no longer be viewed as a means of coercion; they are the ends, as a tool for punishing the target for

non-compliance. Since the desired objective is not achieved, the target state is penalized for undertaking the provoking course of action.

Although policy makers tend to discuss economic sanctions as primarily a means of coercion, they do acknowledge that these policies can also be used as tools of punishment, where a state is penalized for not undertaking the change in course desired by the international community or powerful actors. Key rhetoric, including the often used phrase *carrots and sticks*, identifies sanctions as a tool which inflicts pain, or harms the target, in order to force it to change behavior. John McCain's ("Senate bipartisan group urges new strategy," 2003) public comments on foreign policy actions in North Korea are instructive on this point;

The crisis created by North Korea's pursuit of a nuclear weapons arsenal poses a direct threat to the security of the American people. Under the Agreed Framework, *the United States pursued a policy that was all carrot and no stick*. In doing so, it mistook resolving the North Korean crisis with merely postponing its apogee (emphasis added).

Those outside of the political establishment are more likely to address economic sanctions as a form of punishment. Haass and O'Sullivan (2000) specifically link economic sanctions to punishment. Art and Cronin (2009, 274) submit that coercive diplomatic policies, of which sanctions are a tactic, may result in a small amount of punishment if the objectives of the tools are not achieved. Cortright and Lopez (2002) discuss economic sanctions as punishment within the framework of bargaining. Joseph (2009, 16) separates economic sanctions from diplomacy when describing tools available to combat weapons of mass destruction proliferation, thus implying that they are a form of punishment.

Economic sanctions gained notoriety as a tool of choice in international political disputes, although evidence suggests that they are not an effective form of policy. Economic sanctions are regarded as a "...proportional response to challenges in which the interests at stake are less than vital [to the sender]" (Haass, 1997, 75). Another commonly held belief in support of economic sanctions is that they are "...a seemingly cost free way of acting" (Haass, 1997, 76). In addition to this consideration, the range of impacts of sanctions must be examined, in terms of the contributions they make to increasing anti-Americanism across key regions, through their contribution to collective humiliation of the states they target.

Economic sanctions have been found to be generally ineffective tools with regard to changing the course of the target's policies. Pape (1997) has conducted some of the most comprehensive analysis of the effectiveness of economic sanctions. Pape's research concluded that economic sanctions were effective in fewer than 5% of the instances in which they were used. This research analyzes previous work by Hufbauer, Schott and Elliot (1990) which concluded that in 115 instances of economic sanctions employed since 1914, sanctions had the desired effect in just 40 cases.

Pape argues that the Hufbauer, Schott, Elliot database is seriously flawed and challenges the causal logic of the theory of economic sanctions. He concludes that it is the nature of modern nation-states to resist economic pressures inflicted by sanctions. Pape's criticism of Hufbauer, Schott, and Elliot's database applies primarily to their method for coding successes; Pape claims that the authors inappropriately attributed successes to sanctions in many cases where there was another more credible explanation for the success. According to Pape, another problematic error is misjudgment of the



critical nature of sanctions, on the part of Hufbauer, Schott, and Elliot. Pape's benchmark for success is action taken by the target to change their behavior. His conclusions suggest that the Hufbauer, Schott, and Elliot did not apply the definition of sanctions rigorously enough to their findings. (This research has been the subject of much debate.) Since this study's findings in 1997, economic sanctions have not proved to be more successful, although several cases of long term sanctions were resolved, through other means. For example U.S. sanctions against Pakistan, Libya and Iraq have all been terminated, yet either the issues were not resolved (as was the case in Pakistan) or military force was involved in resolving the major dispute and therefore the role of sanctions is indeterminate, as Pape also saw in his work (and as was the case in Libya and Iraq).

It is difficult to determine and evaluate empirically the characteristics that contribute to sanctions effectiveness, given limited cases. Some evidence suggests that sanctions lead to resolution in cases where goals are narrowly limited. Pape's research (1997, 105) finds that of five cases of success in 115 cases of sanctions, three were over *trivial issues*. For example, Pape cites the case of the Arab League's sanctions against Canada in 1979, which deterred the target from moving its Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, where the sender was successful. In spite of even the most likely favorable conditions hypothesized by experts, "there are a number of cases of economic sanctions ending in failure where most of the favorable conditions...by and large prevailed" (Miyagawa, 1992, 40). Many theories have been advanced to explain the lack of effectiveness of sanctions. A discussion of the most powerful theories follows.

*(1) Economic Adjustment Theory.* The time lag between when sanctions are first threatened and actually imposed generally allows a target state to make economic adjustments in order to ameliorate the effect of sanctions. In many cases, "...the target will seek to adjust its economy so as to reduce dependence upon that of the imposer. It will try to find new trade partners..." (Miyagawa, 1992, 86). By doing so, third party states, which do not participate in a sanctions program, fill any vacuum in trade and assistance to prevent serious economic decline in the target state. Although, this may seem to indicate that multilateral sanctions would be more effective, there is little evidence that cooperation makes sanctions more effective, both in bringing about the desired result and offering any sort of protection for the lead-sender state, in terms of collective action. Cooperation in sanctions implies that there will be a higher loss to the target country, which is "...crucial in order for sanctions to send the desired signals" (Cortright and Lopez, 2000, 18). However, higher loss does not significantly correlate to successful outcomes. For example, in the 5 years that heavy economic sanctions were applied, Iraq reportedly lost 48% of its GNP, however the desired U.S. outcome was not achieved (Pape, 1997, 106).

Moreover, multilateral sanctions programs tend to become associated with certain powerful states, which have a stronger interest in their success, especially if the programs persist over time without resolution. Even within international organizations, coercive sanctions programs remain motivated significantly by national interest of key states. Thus, any benefit gained through a multilateral process is likely diminished in favor of promoting special interest (Cortright and Lopez, 2002). This has the unintended consequence of providing little cover to states who utilize the multilateral framework to

enact coercive programs, with the hope of minimizing their direct role and mitigating potential blowback.

In terms of duration, Miyagawa (1992, 87) argues that effectiveness is subject to diminishing returns over time, because economic adjustment becomes more likely over time. If sympathetic trade partners exist, states will become better equipped mitigate damages that sanctions inflict by making economic adjustments, more efficient allocations, or simply finding new trading partners. The counterargument claims that it would be better to implement tough sanctions from the outset, giving the sender an opportunity to employ the carrot and stick approach by scaling back sanctions as benchmarks of success are met. Ratcheting up of sanctions over time does not allow for any positive modification or inducements and this approach risks implementing overly burdensome policies without a clear indication of success.

(2) *Form of Government Theory*. Sanctions are less successful when targeted against non-democratic regimes, especially when their goal is regime change. Jentleson and Whytock (2005/06) cite regime change as a counterproductive factor in achieving actual policy goals targeted by sanctions; if this goal becomes a prerequisite for lifting sanctions based on achievement of other policy goals, opportunities to effect more important changes become limited. The irony of this finding is that sanctions are often used expressly for the goal of pursuing democratization objectives. Non-democratic regimes tend to hold their power and leadership aspirations ahead of the welfare of their population and thus shield themselves from the impact of sanctions. Preeg (1999, 201) argues that in the face of such threats, which challenge regime security "...governments

are consequently not prepared to make this kind of fundamental concession in response to the relatively small impact of unilateral economic sanctions.”

Autocratic leaders are usually able to insulate themselves from any negative consequences of sanctions by pushing the real costs to their citizens through reduction of subsidies, scaling back any existing social welfare programs, delaying public works, or raising commodity and food prices. Since these governments do not derive legitimacy from citizen satisfaction, autocratic leaders are less concerned with public opinion. As will be discussed further, the consequence can be negative humanitarian outcomes for already vulnerable populations, not regime change.

Of course, there is an exception, which must be noted in any discussion of economic sanctions. Multilateral economic sanctions against South Africa, in response to the country’s apartheid government, are generally considered to be the most effective instance in the history of economic sanctions and lend significant credibility to the form of government theory. The international community’s economic sanctions imposed against the Apartheid government were widely supported by the black population of South Africa, and because of the country’s democratic orientation, the government responded to the citizens’ demands, as well as those of the international community. Haass argues that it would be dishonest to attribute the resolution of Apartheid entirely to the success of economic sanctions. According to Haass (2000, 2), “South Africa is the best example of where we know we had sanctions and political change, but even a decade later there is absolutely no consensus over what relationship existed between sanctions and political change in the country.” In reality, sanctions were one component of the

policies that helped end apartheid, but did demonstrate the international community's commitment to political transformation.

Punishment is a successful deterrent only when the fear of punishment is credible. Leaders of the target state are often in the unique position to shield themselves and their key constituencies from punishment. Therefore, leaders are able to protect themselves from receiving punishment and do not see the threat of punishment as inevitable on an individual level. Additionally, because often their legitimacy does not rest in the support of their citizens, decisions are based on their own perceived personal experience.

(3) *Coerced Decision Theory*. Decisions made under duress, by an individual or a state should not be taken at face value, or expected to have a lasting impact on a target's long term political strategy. These types of decisions are made as a reaction to power, which Hoekema argues is "...a particularly ominous kind of power' which 'involves *only* the prospect of great loss'" (Hoekema, 1986, 51). When forced choice is not in the target's long-term interest and is made under the duress of coercion, it may not result in a permanent reform of political aims. Aristotle (Reidy and Riker, 2008, 3) argued that coercion cannot result in change based on internal reflection; he argued, "acts to which an individual contributes nothing, but is instead moved from without, as when someone is carried off by others or by the wind, are paradigm examples of coercion."

## **Economic Sanctions as Punishment**

Economic sanctions serve as both a tool of coercion and punishment, depending on how they are utilized in multiple stages of statecraft. When sanctions are utilized as coercion, they are generally threatened against states pursuing policy objectives that are

not in line with international norms. As previously discussed, policymakers generally refer to sanctions as a tool of coercion. Sometimes the implementation of punishment responds to a political motive, in which politicians are driven to act by their domestic constituencies. But given the record of efficacy of sanctions, policymakers, at a minimum, tacitly recognize their real opportunity for success as a form of punishment. The planning process for economic sanctions is evidence of this attitude. Sanctions are planned to be implemented, which gives credence to the sender's credibility and also reflects the reality of their record of success, which is not strong.

From the perspective of the sender's goals and objectives, economic sanctions fit each objective of punishment, including deterrence, retribution and incapacitation and isolation. Economic sanctions must be considered through the lens of the sender's goals in order to gauge their impact as intended. Miyagawa (1992) terms these as *hidden outcomes* of economic sanctions. Additionally, considering economic sanctions within the context of punishment objectives helps to better understand the ways in which economic sanctions are experienced by the population, which will be discussed in greater depth in the following section.

*Sanctions as Deterrence.* Economic sanctions serve the deterrent function of punishment. They serve as a model for violating international norms and the punitive actions against a target are exemplary to the international community. One of the most commonly acknowledged secondary goals of economic sanctions is to prevent future infractions of norms by deterring other states from undertaking similar policies. Miyagawa (1992, 91) describes this as the *rule making effect* of economic sanctions. In this model, the sender publicly announces "...the reason why the target deserves to be

punished, the imposer can let the world (not just the target) know what principles it considers to be rules...” and other states can observe them, or risk being punished.

*Sanctions as Retribution.* Economic sanctions also serve as a retributive form of punishment, whereby targets are penalized as a consequence for a particular action. Retributive punishment is not concerned with preventing future crime, but specifically targeting criminals for an act that has been committed, in order to make them pay for such an action. Miyagawa (1992, 9) describes *the essence of economic sanctions* which “...is to punish the rule-breaker, to prevent him from attaining his objective, and to change his policy...” Miyagawa (1992, 6) also argues that “sanctions do not constitute a punishment for a breach of law or the rules of conduct within the ‘society’, but retaliation for the unfriendly change in the other state’s policies.” In this framework, the sender’s goal is to inflict punishment for the rogue action that was committed, either against the sender or the international community.

Targeted sanctions that inflict punishment on the leadership of a rogue regime are prime examples of retributive punishment. By seeking to harm these key officials within a state, instead of seeking to engender political change among the population, the sender expresses a clear opinion that the party responsible must absorb the brunt of punitive actions. Another example of sanctions as retributive punishment are industry specific sanctions, such as Libyan airline sanctions which were imposed on the country’s national airline in response to the state’s involvement in the Lockerbie Scotland bombing. Sanctions had a *tit-for-tat* component, which was meant to punish the state directly for their criminal activity.

*Sanctions as Incapacitation.* Economic sanctions incapacitate target states by isolating the state from the international community. Miyagawa (1992, 94) calls this the *demonstration effect* whereby the sender publicly discredits the target “for the purpose of securing the concerted pressure of international public opinion on the target.” Sanctioned states are not permitted to “do business” in certain countries, which effectively makes the target a pariah state within the international community. The demonstration effect is different from the rule making effect and the deterrent function of punishment because it is concerned with demonstrating the legitimacy and power of the sender in order to garner more support for the sanctions regime (or sender) in the international community, which increases the target’s sense of isolation. The emphasis is placed on the wrongful or illegal action undertaken by the target in order to justify punishment which necessitates rhetoric of punishment from the sender. This can induce humiliation in the target population and has a significant implication for citizens of the target country, because it prevents them from engaging with the global population.

In the deterrence function, economic sanctions can also be preventative, although the likelihood of success in this model is low. This consideration of economic sanctions aims to prevent rule-breaking by denying the offending state an opportunity to commit their crime. For example, in the case of using economic sanctions to combat WMD proliferation, access to dual use items will be limited. This is considered a function of deterrence, as pressure of economic sanctions prevents rogue states from committing their intended infraction. This is different from successful coercion because sanctions are imposed, therefore they were not a credible threat.



Targeted sanctions on leaders also serve the isolation function of punishment by preventing their engagement with the international community. For example, in response to the 2010 Nuclear Security Summit, sponsored by the United States, Iran's president Ahmedinejad, who was not invited as a consequence of his country's proliferation status said; "world summits being organized these days are intended to humiliate human beings" ("Iran's Ahmedinejad Says Nuclear Summit 'humiliation,'" 2010).

### **Economic Sanctions as Humiliation**

Economic sanctions often have a much more significant and detrimental impact on the citizens of the target country than on the government, especially when sanctions are "directed against...one-party dictatorships" (Cortright and Lopez, 2000, 22). Moreover, sanctions have significantly higher costs on the populations of target states than elite leadership regardless of whether they ultimately succeed or fail (Pape, 1997, 110). However, contributing to the development of these situations not only leads to negative circumstances for the civilians, but a range of additional unintended negative outcomes with much broader and more dangerous implications for the sender state.

Target populations experience economic sanctions through the lens of punishment because of significantly harmful impacts, such as loss of economic productivity and negative humanitarian outcomes that occur. Economic sanctions are not experienced as an element of coercion whereby the population has an opportunity to change their behavior in order to avoid their impact. The response to punishment is not directed at the party who the sender holds responsible for the negative action, but at the sender itself, since the target holds it responsible.

Specifically, within the goals of punishment, sanctions which take the form of isolating punishment have the most harmful impact on citizens, in terms of generating humiliation. When economic sanctions isolate states from the international community, citizens are prevented from engaging with their contemporaries around the world. They may be prohibited from traveling or engaging in educational programs in foreign countries. The demonstration effect necessitates rhetoric of punishment from the sender, which can induce humiliation in the target population, by making them feel as though they are at fault for issues that are generally beyond their control.

Economic sanctions as isolation and incarceration also hide the true nature of punishment from society, *writ large*. Economic sanctions are generally placed on states that are already somewhat closed to the international community, where access for diplomats and journalists is somewhat limited. This makes it more difficult for the sender to realize the true impact of economic sanctions on the target, in terms of the humanitarian outcome or increased hostility toward the sender. By hiding the effects of punishment, the sender state is able to maintain a level of ambivalence that allows justification of the punishment. However, Newman (2008) argues that this is immoral and that the sender should be aware of all implications of punishment in order to impose the most just punishment possible. Additionally, the impact of sanctions may be latent or accrue over time, as the pressure on the target increases.

In addition to the negative effects of isolating punishment, economic sanctions provoke humiliation by limiting citizens' power to control their own destiny. Through sanctions, the sender to maintain excessive control over the target's economy and society, which can have long-term impacts. When economic sanctions are highly comprehensive,

the sender can even control the goods which a state is allowed to import. Economic sanctions may also control personal economic decisions, when senders have power to dismantle whole industries. Sanctions are implemented in states with non-democratic regimes, which denies citizens recourse to regain control over their states and personal lives.

*Humanitarian Consequences.* Lindner (2006) argues that human rights are the antithesis of humiliation, therefore a loss of human rights will likely result in humiliation, by those who endure the loss. As economic sanctions tend to result in humanitarian suffering, they contribute to a sense of humiliation. The target population bears this unintended outcome more significantly than the leadership and elites. This unintended outcome is not disputed; Miyagawa (1992, 209) argues that “[b]ecause of the difficulty of hitting a specific group of people in the target state, sanctions tend to bring pressure to bear on the whole population of the target state, those most severely hit on occasion being those whom the sanctions are meant to help...” The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs found that “...some damage resulting from sanctions regimes, such as increased humanitarian needs, may even run counter to the objectives of sanctions...” (Brunderlein, 1998)

Humanitarian impacts from economic sanctions have near-immediate impacts on the population. Hufbauer (1998, 2) argues that “[w]hen sanctions are applied broadside—as against Haiti, Cuba and Iraq—the hardest hit are the most vulnerable: the poor, the very young, the very old and the sick...” The overall downturn in an economy, caused by sanctions, makes it more difficult for citizens to survive day-to-day. Prince (1996, 99) likens economic sanctions to siege warfare, and therefore believes they are an

appropriate subject “for moral scrutiny because they are ‘intended to inflict great humanitarian suffering, pain, harm and even death.’”<sup>4</sup>

Economic sanctions also have a long-term effect on the population and state, which can continue following the removal of sanctions. The long-term loss in GDP is difficult for states to recover from, even after sanctions are removed. Limited access to technology can also delay development and modernization. Economic sanctions also make it difficult for citizens to acquire food and medical supplies, due to lack of imports. This tends to impact highly vulnerable populations more significantly, such as children. Those facing adverse conditions may endure long-term effects of illness and malnutrition. They may also lack education, if negative impacts occurring during the sanctions period prevented them from attending school. Ultimately, this could inhibit their ability to participate in the economy in the future.

High profile cases of negative humanitarian consequences can impact kindred populations. Barton (1999, 17) argues that this is caused by increased aggression, whereby “...the sight of the suffering of those who angered us can be explained without reference to any other emotions besides our anger, indignation, and resentment towards them for what they have done.” Increased aggression provokes a reaction on the part of the kindred group, which seeks to avenge the suffering they observe.

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<sup>4</sup> Art and Cronin (2009, 274) disagree that sanctions are comparable to *siege warfare* and argue that coercive diplomacy tactics, including economic sanctions, only administer a small amount of punishment because the force is limited” and that “because of this fact, coercive diplomacy cannot produce as much punishment or pose as great a risk as can larger amounts of force.” However, their assessment of the impact of such political tools does not take into account collateral damage in the form of negative humanitarian outcomes or other negative consequences experienced by the population of the target state.

## **Economic Sanctions as Subjugation**

Economic sanctions create an atmosphere of subjugation by limiting freedom and choice, and by substantially harming the population of the target state, through lost economic opportunity, including the stated objective of loss in GDP, and negative humanitarian consequences, which are unintended by the sender. Under this framework, economic sanctions allow the sender to exercise control over the target's population.

Economic sanctions typically help leaders in the target state maintain their power, and even enhance their popularity. This limits the capacity of the population to exercise democratic aspirations and choose leaders. Economic sanctions also give leaders a platform to establish a collective national sentiment, which may be humiliation, based on the collective experience of suffering that the population undergoes. The leader promotes themselves by painting the sender as a scapegoat for the population's suffering, which often results from mismanagement, rather than the actual impact of economic sanctions.

Economic sanctions erode the democratic capacity of citizens in a country, in spite of the fact that democratization or regime change is often a goal of economic sanctions. The United States frequently imposes economic sanctions with this goal in mind, either formally, as in the case of countries like Burma and Cuba, or as an unspoken goal, as is the case with Libya and Iraq. Economic sanctions may encourage autocratic leaders to consolidate their power, in order to maintain their leadership position in the face of international pressure.

This outcome of more deeply entrenchment autocratic leadership is extremely problematic. Citizens experience U.S. policies as those which result in leaders maintaining power and suppress their democratic aspirations. Without interference from

the United States, in whatever form it takes, autocratic leaders might be less likely to need to pursue policies to guarantee their leadership positions.

When autocratic leaders are desperate to maintain power, they may resort to repressive tactics, or employ loyal elites to carry these acts out on their behalf. As Jentleson and Whytock (2005/06, 54) argue, “[e]ven when costs are to be borne, an external threat can enhance the domestic legitimacy of the target regime, providing a rationale for domestic repression...” Additionally, many internal policies which autocratic leaders must undertake in order to maintain their leadership position result in an increased sense of nationalism.

Increased nationalism has been likened to a form of patriotism, or a *rally-‘round-the-flag* effect (Cortright and Lopez, 2000; 2002). In much the same manner that leaders are able to protect themselves from the economic impact of sanctions, they are also able to insulate themselves from domestic consequences, by using any negative impact resulting from the sanctions as a propaganda tool. Miyagawa (1992, 209) argues that “[t]he political leaders of the target state can...more easily enhance national unity in the face of outside pressure, by for instance, exciting the patriotic or nationalistic, feelings of the entire population.” Cortright and Lopez (2000, 20) also agree that “[r]ather than causing political disintegration, sanctions many enflame nationalist sentiments and generate greater autarky in the targeted country.” As nationalism develops, actors become more willing to sacrifice in support of such goals. Lindner illustrates this concept with the example of the rise of the Third Reich in Germany following the country’s defeat in World War I, and the humiliation the citizens experienced following

the *Treaty of Versailles*. Lindner (2006, xv) argues that “Hitler’s promise to avenge and avert such disgrace...swept him from political obscurity to global domination.”

Not only do economic sanctions allow leaders to enhance their legitimacy and further entrench their regimes, therefore limiting any democratic aspirations of citizens, economic sanctions allows leaders to have scapegoat and attribute responsibility for internal issues onto an external scapegoat, in the sender country. Preeg (1999, 201) argues that;

...the people for the most part, have suffered economic pain caused by the sanctions, the positive influence of the U.S private sector has been diminished or lost, and target country government have made exaggerated claims to good propaganda effect, that the U.S. sanctions were the cause of what were really internal policy failures.

By successfully transferring blame from themselves to the sanctions’ sender, leaders are able to shield themselves from blowback that occurs as a result from the negative impacts of economic sanctions. These actions contribute to the understanding and experience of sanctions as a form of punishment on a target society, as opposed to an action that seeks to influence change in terms of a country’s political goals.

Subjugation also occurs through substantially harming the population of the target state, through lost economic opportunity, including the stated objective of loss in GDP, and negative humanitarian consequences. Experience of suffering due to policies imposed by the sender engenders a feeling of hopelessness, because citizens are generally powerless to change the political system in their country. These policies also place a burden on the citizens for the actions of the government, which they may or may not support.

In the context of the population's experience of economic sanctions, perception is as important as the reality of the experience. Policies which appear to target specific groups or apply double-standards in policy making, contribute to the sense of injustice that Lindner argues is responsible for causing humiliation. Therefore, these also must be addressed, as well as loss in economic opportunity and negative humanitarian cases.

Economic sanctions cause harm to vulnerable populations, which motivates people to act, by taking revenge for the perceived injustice. From the perspective of the Muslim world, many U.S. policies, which are designed to benefit certain countries, actually appear to weaken and harm the Muslim world. Lindner (2006, 116) points to the Abu Ghraib abuse scandal as a useful model for understanding how this feeling contributes to a sense of humiliation; “[t]he torture is not the work of a few American soldiers. It is the result of an official American culture that deliberately insults and humiliates Muslims.” This widely publicized humiliation of a few individuals resulted in a collective feeling of humiliation across the Muslim world. Economic sanctions have the same power when they result in widespread humanitarian consequences.

Much like military occupation and other specific military tactics, which contribute to high levels of anti-Americanism today because of the collateral damage they cause, economic sanctions also have a high likelihood of inflicting collateral damage on unintended populations. The most direct parallel between sanctions and military tactics are drone strikes, as both tools seek to limit negative outcomes on the civilian population by targeting leadership, to change behavior quickly, with minimal loss. On a broad level, collateral damage gives the impression that “...Western forces are willing to impose harm on...civilians to achieve their aims” (Pape, 2010, 134). However, there is an



implication for individual actors as well. Collateral damage often gives individuals a sense of cause and linkage to military occupation. Pape (2010) analyzes the impacts of collateral damage as motivation for suicide bombers. Experiencing collateral damage inspires a personal revenge motive in individuals, as well as motivating sympathetic actors, by inspiring an emotional attachment to the suffering population. Pape (2010, 134) argues: “[c]ollateral damage by Western forces continues to be a powerful and effective recruiting tool for the Taliban and al-Qaeda.”

Economic sanctions also have a negative impact, in the form of loss of life and livelihood on civilian populations and therefore have the capability to generate substantial blowback. Collateral damage impacting civilians also has the capability to incite anti-American sentiment in kindred groups who do not necessarily experience any ill effects, but are connected through media or first-hand accounts from family or friends.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Sanctions may have negative impacts on populations of third-party states, too, which could have an impact on humiliation. For example, in the case of U.S. sanctions against Iraq, it is estimated that Turkey lost between \$10 billion and \$20 billion, as of 1995, which continued throughout the sanctions (Roleau, 1995, 70). Also, Iranian’s avoid the full impact of sanctions through robust smuggling operations and the U.A.E. has developed significant cottage industry of shipping banned good to Iran. If the U.A.E. government cracks down on this business to adhere to the sanctions, it will have a negative financial impact on the Emirati population involved in this trade (Cummins, 2009; Dagher, 2010).

## **Chapter Five: The Impact of Economic Sanctions: Selected Cases**

This chapter studies economic sanctions as an expression of power within contemporary global politics, by examining seven cases of economic sanctions, as imposed by the United States. The cases illustrate how sanctions serve as a form of punishment as an intended goal and subjugation through unintended consequences; they will be analyzed from both perspectives. In each case the target was the recipient of economic sanctions for a long period of time, with no successful resolution of the specific problem that caused the United States to impose or continue economic sanctions, initially.

The cases include: Cuba, Burma, Pakistan, Libya, Syria, Iraq and Iran. In these countries economic sanctions were imposed against the target for at least twenty years. In Cuba, Burma, Syria and Iran, sanctions remain in place in 2011. In Pakistan, Libya and Iraq, they had been lifted by that time, although the role of sanctions in achieving U.S. policy goals is disputed. Sanctions were implemented during various Presidential administrations; in three cases they were initiated in Democratic administrations and in four cases while Republicans were in office. These cases represent instances where the United States was the major driving force using economic sanctions against these states. The issue of dispute between the target and sender was often related to nuclear power development or the nature of the regime. In some instances, the United States was able to encourage the international community to implement sanctions through the United

Nations Security Council process. However, in other cases, a strong coalition of sender states did not emerge. The sanctions policy against Cuba is the best representation of unilateral efforts by the United States. In Iraq, the international community was initially supportive, but recommended lifting sanctions long before the United States acceded. In Pakistan and Burma, a small coalition of states implemented sanctions, and in Libya, there was a great deal of debate between the United States and allies prior to implementing the sanctions. The high levels of debate in the summer of 2009 regarding sanctions against Iran, demonstrate the efforts of the United States to act with a coalition of support, but the difficulty in doing so.

The cases of Iraq and Burma demonstrate the effects of the negative impact of economic sanctions on society. In addition to contributing to leadership entrenchment in these countries, economic sanctions in Burma have detrimentally affected vulnerable citizens through loss of employment opportunities. In Iraq, the deaths of children during the sanctions period presented an image to local citizens and the broader Arab world of the West's unsympathetic regard for Muslim lives.

In the cases of Syria and Libya, leaders in these countries have enhanced their base of support and effectively limited their citizens' opportunities for political efficacy. In the case of Pakistan, the United States was perceived to hold the country to a different standard than its rival, India, in terms of their nuclear programs. Similarly, in the case of Iran, the United States appears to impose sanctions in response to Iran's nuclear program and observers question the fairness and possible infringement on sovereignty.

Humiliation can be observed through the presence of specific conditions, including political disempowerment and negative humanitarian consequences.

Additionally, attitudes towards the sender and political rhetoric contribute to the overall picture of humiliation in a country. In these cases, humiliation is best observed through political and humanitarian conditions. All seven countries targeted for long-term U.S. sanctions are rated by Freedom House as *not free*, in terms of the political atmosphere. In these countries, citizens generally do not have the right to vote, compete for public office or elect representatives to be their voice in government. Regime stability, an unintended consequence of sanctions, contributes to disempowerment. All countries which have or still face long-term sanctions have had many negative economic outcomes and experienced humanitarian suffering. Moreover, leaders have been able to exploit these issues for their own gain by scapegoating blame onto the sender state or fostering nationalist sentiment to overcome economic obstacles and therefore can use sanctions to help maintain the longevity of their regime.

## **Cuba**

*Background.* The American unilateral economic sanctions against Cuba are the longest running in U.S. history. The sanctions started in 1960 in response Cuban nationalization of American held property, after Fidel Castro came to power. The program began with a reduction in the Cuban sugar quota, the country's major export, and grew into a significant blockade as the Cuban government nationalized more U.S. companies and property. Throughout the Cold War, the goals evolved into regime change and dismantling the Communist system and Castro regime. While the sanctions have had some negative effect on the Cuban economy, mostly resulting from a loss in tourism revenue, overall effects have been limited because the government made

economic adjustments; the void left by U.S. companies and subsidiaries was “simply replaced by French, Swiss and other European company exports at little extra cost to Cuba” (Preeg, 1999, 15).

In March, 1982, Cuba was added to the U.S. Department of State, State Sponsor of Terrorism list, and remains on the list as of 2011. This designation placed additional sanctions on Cuba, including: “restrictions on U.S. foreign assistance; a ban on defense exports and sales; certain controls over exports of dual use items; and miscellaneous financial and other restrictions” (“State Sponsors of Terrorism,” 2011). Although it was not widely publicized by the Reagan administration, the rationale for Cuba’s addition to the list was based on support for armed revolution in Latin America (Sullivan, 2005). Cuban leaders have denounced terrorism and signed United Nations conventions against terrorism, but Cuba remains on the list, and is subject to these sanctions in addition to the full embargo that remains in place.

Economic sanctions and the embargo against Cuba have always been a unilateral policy. The United States attempted to induce other states to comply with sanctions by applying secondary sanctions to companies which conduct business in Cuba. However, these sanctions contributed to tension between the United States and allies, and were not successful in compelling greater compliance. Over the long-term, economic sanctions have not significantly contributed to accomplishing U.S. goals; regime change and political liberalization have yet to be achieved. The United States has generally been unable to implement sanctions harshly enough to weaken Cuba’s economy, based on the country’s ability to make economic adjustments. Moreover, the continued U.S. reliance on sanctions and punishment against Cuba, and an unwillingness to pursue any change in

policy, represents how the cycle of humiliation can prolong policies. The target is not compelled to make the desired changes to their political system based on external pressure; because humiliation is a potential outcome of coerced decision making. The sender is not willing to signal defeat by revising their political goals, as it too could risk humiliation and loss in credibility, in future attempts at coercion.

*Intended Outcomes.* Economic sanctions were primarily intended to isolate the communist government in Cuba from the international community. This form of punishment is geared toward preventing a known criminal, in this case Cuba's Communist government, from committing more crimes and having the opportunity to engage with the international community. Within this context, the ultimate goal of the U.S. policy was to engender regime change in the country. According to Barry (1998, 125), the U.S. State Department recommended that "every possible means be undertaken promptly to weaken the economic life of Cuba..." The agency's goal was to "...engender public discomfort and discontent' by reducing Cuba's access to foreign exchange..."

Outside observers attribute the economic hardships to the U.S. embargo. Following his visit to Cuba in 1998, Pope John Paul II criticized U.S. sanctions for their negative impact on the Cuban population ("Pope attacks," 1998a; "Pope calls," 1998b). Additionally, "U.S. economic sanctions, along with Fidel Castro's own mismanagement, have helped close the income gap between Haiti and Cuba – by driving Cuban living standards downward toward the desperate Haitian level" (Hufbauer, 1998, 3). When Cuba's economy took a downward turn in the 1990s, following collapse of its sugar industry, Castro maintained power by implementing extreme austerity measures and

scapegoating. Castro has used propaganda to blame Cuba's economic problems on the United States embargo. Cuban leaders continue to exploit "enmity" with the United States to maintain their power and legitimacy (Lopez-Levy, 2011). Preeg (1999, 43) argues that there is an ironic component to the official U.S. coercive policy stance toward Cuba;

Some embargo proponents claim that lifting the embargo will prolong the Castro communist dictatorship, but this claim is contradicted by the near unanimous view of Cuba experts that Fidel Castro, under current embargo circumstances, can maintain power as long as he is physically able and willing to do so.

In spite of the aforementioned economic losses, which have been minimal, sanctions have not had a profoundly negative impact on Cuba's population, as compared to other cases. During the Cold War, the Soviet Union provided a great deal of financial support to the Cuban government, which allowed Castro to build and maintain his power-base. Cuba's healthcare system is renowned as a model of state-run healthcare and the country's education system is also well-respected. Personal economic security, such as salary and cost of living, tops citizens' list of problems facing Cuban society. But, apart from these concerns, Cubans attribute the lack of political freedom to the communist system, as one of the country's top problems. According to a 2009 public opinion poll by the International Republican Institute, one in ten citizens say this is the biggest problem in Cuba. Almost as many say that the embargo and resulting isolation is the biggest problem (8.8%). The plurality of Cuban citizens believes that the best ways to improve the economy would be to change the political system (20.4%) or stop the embargo (7.9%).

*Unintended Outcome: Regime Stability.* In Cuba, the Castro family has dominated the political system for over 50 years, and has been helped in doing so by U.S. sanctions, which have given the regime a scapegoat to blame for some of the country's economic decline instead of the regime's policies. Citizens lack political power to improve their situation without a change in the political system. Also, economic sanctions against Cuba never caught on in the Western world. In fact, European companies have benefited significantly from the United States' refusal to do business in Cuba.

*Blowback.* Although sanctions against Cuba have been the longest running for the United States, they have not generated violent blowback, as seen other cases. At least two possible anomalies in the Cuban case may bear on this reaction. First, although there is a significant dissident population in Cuba, the group directs its distaste for the government's policies at the Communist system; the population has not widely held the United States responsible. The Cuban population sees the embargo as only partially responsible for many of the economic and political problems plaguing Cuba. Frustration is directed mainly at the political system, not the embargo. In the early part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Cuban government began to undertake reforms to open the economy, in response to the population's demands, in a small way.

Another possible explanation for the reaction to sanctions could be based on the Cuban American community in the United States. The Cuban American population represents a significant kindred group and is sympathetic views to Cuba's citizens. As of 2006, there were 1.5 million Cuban Americans residing in the United States, and the group is politically empowered in the United States. Blowback is more likely on the part of Cuban Americans, who might engage in revenge to protest political disempowerment



or negative treatment of the Cuban population. However this revenge is likely to be passive and work within the framework of American legal and constitutional systems, in which Cuban Americans are deeply involved.

Within the Cuban American community, there is a distinct, relatively even split on the issue of the embargo. Those who have been in the U.S. the least amount of time are most in favor of ending the embargo; 65% of those who arrived in the United States since 2000 favor ending the embargo, compared to 30% of those who arrived in the 1970s or earlier (“Public Opinion Poll Results,” 2009). Those who are more connected to Cuba feel that the embargo should be lifted. This group is also significantly more likely to support lifting the travel ban for Cuban Americans.

The key lesson with respect to Cuba’s experience is that, when political access is not eliminated or obfuscated, resistance to power, or blowback, may be less likely to occur. Cuban Americans represent one of the most important political constituencies in the political system and have one of the highest political participation rates among Latin American voters (“Cubans in the United States,” 2006). Because they are likely to work within the political process to express their political opinion, by forming civic organizations and through the electoral process, violent blowback is not likely to occur. Cuban Americans also have access to the United States, as the sender, to engage in the political process. In other cases, where the target is severely limited in political access to address the factors of humiliation, actors would be more likely to actively resist punishment and humiliation from the sender, using violent means.

## **Burma**

*Background.* The United States imposed unilateral economic sanctions against Burma (also known as Myanmar, by its ruling regime) in 1988, by suspending all aid to the country to punish the military dictatorship. In 1997, the Clinton administration increased sanctions to include new U.S. investments, as a direct response to the ruling military Junta's refusal to allow the National League for Democracy to participate in the government. Sanctions were imposed following elections in which the National League for Democracy won 60% of the seats, and other negative factors, such as the violent repression of human rights in the country, including the house arrest of opposition leader Aung Sang Suu Kyi (Preeg, 1999, 114). The sanctions followed diplomatic pressure and discontinuation of foreign aid that the U.S. and European governments had placed on the military government prior to 1997. As of 2011, sanctions include "... visa bans, restrictions on financial services, prohibitions of Burmese imported goods, a ban on new investments in Burma, and constraints on U.S. assistance..." (Martin, 2011, i).

The military regime has been in power since a major uprising in 1988, which put it at odds with the United States, Europe and some neighboring states. This uprising was violently put down by the military regime. Although the European Union, Japan and Australia also imposed sanctions against Burma, "[t]he US sanctions are by far the most significant foreign policy intervention in the domestic affairs of [Burma]" (Rarick, 2006, 61). The U.S. sanctions against Burma are fractured and compartmentalized across different levels of government; however sanctions have still had an impact on the country.

Although economic sanctions against Burma were implemented by a coalition of willing states, support is not widespread, especially in the East. Burma's neighbors, primarily China, India, and Thailand, opposed sanctions against Burma and have maintained economic cooperation with the country, especially in the energy sector. In the mid-1990s, when the U.S. considered increasing sanctions, "[t]he Association of Southeast Asian Nations refused to impose sanctions on Burma..." (Barber, 1996).

One unique aspect of sanctions against Burma is secondary sanctions, orchestrated by American citizens, through boycotts and public awareness campaigns. Through what Preeg (1992) terms sanctions synergy, American citizens reacted to the lack of democracy, Suu Kyi's imprisonment, and negative treatment of the population by forming boycott campaigns directed at Burma's primary export industry: textiles. This was an ancillary outcome of U.S. unilateral sanctions through which private citizens engaged in protest against clothing manufacturers, such as Wal-Mart, Liz Claiborne, Eddie Bauer, and Levi Strauss to limit support for the Burmese government (Preeg, 1999, 129). Companies responded to the negative attacks by closing factories and limiting their operations in Burma. However, the fractured nature of the policies has left little room for resolution; none of the sanctions programs provide benchmarks for which sanctions might be lifted.

Economic sanctions against Burma remain in place as of 2011. The U.S. sanctions policy weakened the position of the United States, while giving leverage to the anti-democratic, pro-Chinese ruling party. Suu Kyi has called for sanctions to be reviewed, in order to determine their effectiveness, but she is not necessarily of the opinion that they should be dropped (Sen, 2010). Economic sanctions have not

effectively addressed human rights and democratization goals in Burma. However, sanctions have reduced the ability of the U.S. government to effect any sort of pro-democracy movement in the country. Sanctions also have constrained the United States from engaging with Burma's regime in terms of other important policy goals and potential areas for cooperation, such as human rights and drug enforcement issues.

*Intended Outcomes.* The coalition of sender states, including the United States, had a singular goal in punishing Burma's ruling Junta: isolation. These sanctions were intended to punish the regime by denying it income, which would hopefully inspire citizens to bring about its downfall. Additional sanctions, such as the citizen-driven sanctions, were more reactionary and tactical; they do not fit into the overall framework of punishment as a symbol of power, although they had a significant impact on the population.

Throughout the period of sanctions, Burma's economy has weakened, and sanctions are one of the contributing factors. Burma's economic system faced challenges in addition to the economic sanctions; Burma's heavy reliance on key regional partners, the country suffered during the Asian economic crisis in late 1990s. Economic sanctions may have exacerbated the downturn, as Burma did not have diverse trade partners. Burmese citizens experience the impact of economic sanctions more acutely than the government. The population does not gain any benefit from the proceeds of the country's vast resources: energy, minerals or timber. The ruling regime controls the bulk of revenue from these sales, and uses revenue to consolidate its power by increasing its military power and supporting the elites in the country. A U.S. Institute for Peace report criticizes the ruling regime for "...failing to ensure all citizens enjoy benefits accrued

from natural resources, endemic corruption, a flourishing illicit economy...” (Rieffel and Gilpin, 2010).

The economic sanctions also have had a deep impact on specific key sectors of the Burmese economy. Citizen driven sanctions eliminated 40,000 jobs in the textile industry of Burma’s economy. The U.S. Department of State estimated that a total of 100,000 jobs would ultimately be eliminated from this sector of the economy because of sanctions (“Textile staff driven to sex trade: official,” 2003). By targeting this specific industry, women’s economic access was unequally limited, which contributed to the negative humanitarian situation in the country.

*Unintended Consequences: Regime Stability and Humanitarian Suffering.* The military regime in Burma has maintained power and increased its regional alliances during the period of sanctions, by making economic adjustments and engaging new trading partners. The regime has survived because other countries have filled the void of loss of U.S. businesses. In recent years, “China, India, and Thailand and other countries have engaged [Burma’s] military rulers with an eye on the county’s vast natural resources” (Sen, 2010). In particular, Thailand has been an important consumer of Burmese natural gas. In 2008, Thailand paid at least \$3.5 billion to the Burmese military government for natural gas imports. China has also developed strong ties with the country, as a result of its own population growth, which has led to a high number of Chinese expatriates living in Burma (Sen, 2010).

Economic hardships that have plagued the population of Burma have not hit the country’s ruling regime. By consolidating its power in the state and forming trade relationships with regional partners, the ruling regime maintains its stability and limits

the democratic aspirations of the citizens. Many of Burma's new partners do not support Western styles of diplomacy, such as coercive policies, which use punishment as a form of humiliation rather than engagement. These countries will likely support alternative strategies to coercion and punishment in international bodies, which could also help the military Junta maintain its status-quo.

Negative humanitarian consequences have impacted vulnerable populations, including women and children. One key example of unintended consequence was sanctions impact on Burma's garment industry, which impacted women more significantly than men. In this case, women were the collateral damage of economic sanctions, as they lost employment opportunities; as a result some have turned to illicit markets in order to earn an income. Additionally, the rising influence of China, partially as a consequence of U.S. disengagement, in the country has presented another opportunity to exploit these women as sex workers, leading to one of the highest AIDS rates in the world (Khanna, 2008, 294). The Burmese leadership has focused on securing their stability, instead of improving the quality of life and social services to citizens. As healthcare systems become less pervasive and effective, "[d]iseases such as tuberculosis, malaria and HIV are rising..." (Rarick, 2006, 63).

Children have also been significantly more affected than other groups in the population, because of the high levels of poverty and lack of social services. International non-governmental organizations, which continue to work in the country reported "...discovering severe malnutrition among children in urban centers, a true anomaly in a lush country that was once the world's biggest exporter of rice" (Perlez,

2006). In Burma, “[c]onsequences of sanctions...have been to lower the economic, educational and healthcare systems of the country” (Rarick, 2006, 63).

*Blowback.* Sanctions in Burma have contributed to the negative humanitarian consequences, particularly through the loss of income to women in the garment industry. Also, the ruling party’s leadership is fairly well entrenched and there is little opportunity to affect change or respond to grievances through a political process. Even though elections were held in 2009, they were reported to be a sham. However, the response has been less violent than in other cases. Political disempowerment and negative humanitarian consequences do not seem to have engendered the conditions necessary to encourage revenge, namely a feeling of collective humiliation.

There are several key differences which may explain the response to economic sanctions in Burma. Primarily the cultural differences between Burma and other countries examined herein should not be discounted. Burma’s opposition is largely dominated by Buddhist groups which have been repressed by the ruling regime. However, their cultural norms make it much less likely that they will engage in violence as a means of achieving any goals, or exacting revenge. There is no outside kindred group acting on behalf of the Burmese population either, although U.S. policies are meant to aid the Burmese population’s democratic aspirations.

Additionally, humiliation may not have emerged from economic sanctions because the opposition leaders believe the economic sanctions are altruistic in nature and will help move the country forward. The opposition groups to the regime in Burma, including Suu Kyi, rely on the support of the United States, and other Western partners to help in gaining political access. Suu Kyi has advocated for keeping sanctions in place,

until more significant steps toward democratization have taken place, such as release of political prisoners.

## **Pakistan**

*Background.* The United States has a long history of imposing economic sanctions against Pakistan, in response to the country's leadership, military and nuclear programs. Sanctions were first imposed on Pakistan in 1979, in response to the country's nuclear program. The sanctions, which consisted of a ban on assistance and loans, were waived almost immediately, in 1980, during the Soviet incursion in Afghanistan, to curry favor with Pakistan as an ally against the Soviets. Following that war, the United States expanded sanctions several times. In 1990, the Pressler amendment applied sanctions to Pakistan. This legislation prohibits the United States from providing aid and military equipment to Pakistan until the U.S. President certifies that the country does not possess a nuclear explosive device.

Again, in 1994, the United States imposed expanded economic sanctions against Pakistan in response to their testing nuclear weapons, through the Glenn Amendment, which is mandatory for countries developing nuclear weapons under U.S. law and bars economic and military aid. Until this point, the United States cooperated primarily with only Japan in implementing sanctions, but following the 1998 weapons test, the G-8 countries imposed sanctions against Pakistan. Sanctions were also imposed against Pakistan following military coup in 1999, when Musharraf came to power. In 2000, through the Browback Amendment, some sanctions were reduced, including those which barred aid.



In 2001, as a key component of U.S. counterterrorism strategy, sanctions were lifted in the aftermath of September 11, in order to persuade the Pakistani government to work with the United States in the War on Terror; the United States also provided significant economic aid at this point. Although sanctions were removed from Pakistan fully, the original goals were not achieved. Pakistan did not sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty or the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, which had been major goals of the Clinton Administration. In terms of the ultimate goal of coercing Pakistan's government to rollback its WMD program, the sanctions were not successful. Pakistan never renounced its nuclear weapons program, which is a strong source of national pride.

Pakistan faced an existential threat from India and would not reduce its nuclear or military capability unilaterally. Most of the leadership's decision making calculus results from this threat. For example, following the tests in 1998, Pakistan's Minister of Information said that the weapons test had been in self-defense, after India's test ("Pakistan may overlook U.S. sanctions," 1998d). Pakistan's leadership was not willing to change their decision making calculus; while India's program existed, Pakistan's would not dismantle their own.

Ultimately, Haass (1997, 79) argues that years of sanctions "...may have actually increased Islamabad's reliance on a nuclear option because [sanctions] cut off its access to U.S. weaponry and dramatically weakened Pakistan's confidence in Washington." Various sanctions programs made it difficult for Pakistan to obtain military equipment from the United States. In the 1990s, the issue took center stage over a Pakistani purchase of U.S. F-16 aircraft. The purchase was initiated prior to sanctions implementation, but upon increased sanctions, the United States blocked the delivery of

the aircraft, leading to a high degree of tension between the two states (“Pakistan’s Big Bang,” 1998). Pakistan began to rely more heavily on China in order to access military technology.

*Intended Outcomes.* Economic sanctions against Pakistan were aimed at deterring its nuclear weapons program by denying it access to material. Military sanctions also contributed to this effort. Additionally, during the late 1990s, sanctions were aimed at compelling the Pakistani government to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty. The United States always recognized the economic challenges that Pakistan faced due to sanctions, and the country’s viability. In the earliest periods of sanctions, wheat and other food exports were exempted from the embargo, so that Pakistan would not face a severe crisis. (This action was not viewed as completely altruistic. U.S. wheat farmers also benefitted; as of 1998, Pakistan was the third largest overseas buyer of U.S. wheat (Lippman, 1998).) During the sanctions implemented in the 1990s, loans from the International Monetary Fund continued, at the request of the United States, in order to stabilize Pakistan’s economy. The Pakistani government also made adjustments and sought new trading partners in order to avoid total economic disaster. The Islamic Development Bank also provided Pakistan with loans, in order to prevent defaults on existing loan repayments. Overall though, these actions indicate the high degree of power that the United States had in this case, to control the situation in Pakistan.

*Unintended Outcomes: Regime Stability and Humanitarian Suffering.* Economic sanctions against Pakistan provided leaders with an opportunity to enhance nationalism in Pakistan. President Nawaz Sharif increased nationalism in the face of sanctions. In a

speech to Pakistan in 1998, he said: “Sanctions will be imposed. Hard and difficult times will come. Hardships will increase. But if you keep your morale high and accept the challenge boldly, there is no reason that we will not be successful in this test” (“World: Monitoring Nawaz Sharif’s Speech,” 1998c). His leadership was challenged in a military coup in 1999, but this was not related to the disagreement over the status of the nuclear program or damage to the economy from economic sanctions.

Musharraf continued to support the nuclear program, as a source of national pride for his country. The U.S. decision to lift all sanctions and work with Musharraf, in spite of his unwillingness to quickly return the country to democracy, undermined the political empowerment of Pakistani citizens. From this point, it appears as though the United States welcomed Musharraf’s long tenure, because of his leadership and cooperation in the War on Terror in Afghanistan. This move disappointed opposition groups within the country, and contributed to existing anti-American sentiment.

Economic sanctions contributed to the negative humanitarian situation in Pakistan, including high levels of poverty and lack of access to certain food commodities in the 1990s. Pakistan’s leadership prioritized nuclear weapons and security over the humanitarian needs of its citizens, early on. In 1974, President Bhutto famously stated that the citizens would “eat grass” if necessary to achieve nuclear weaponization (“Timeline,” 2004). Pakistanis suffered more than their counterparts in India, who faced the same sanctions because, “since Pakistan was more dependent on foreign aid, international sanctions had a significantly greater impact on its economy” (Mistry, 1999, 757). The leadership’s strategy of framing the issue as one of national pride helped to keep the population from reacting strongly to the government’s priorities. Additionally,

following the 1999 coup, the population became powerless to seek political change, even if it had been desired.

*Blowback.* Pakistan's population is one of the most anti-American publics in the world. In 2010, only 17% of the country's citizens had a favorable view of the United States ("America's Image Remains Poor," 2010). The citizens' long history of negative interaction with the United States, beginning with economic sanctions, which were seen as unjust, contributes to this view. Kindred individuals, expatriates in the United States, have sought revenge for the suffering Pakistanis and have become homegrown terrorists. These individuals have attempted to exact revenge for Pakistanis' suffering asymmetrically.

Economic sanctions against Pakistan in the 1980s and 1990s targeted extremely vulnerable populations. This contributed to the negative perception of the United States in Pakistan. According to a New American Foundation/Terror Free Tomorrow Poll ("Public Opinion in Pakistan's Tribal Regions," 2010), of Pakistan's FATA region 51% believe that the goal of U.S. policy in the region is to weaken and divide the Muslim world, as compared to 10% who believe the goal of the United States is to defeat al-Qaida. Economic sanctions in Pakistan contribute to the perception of subjugation because they reflect a larger issue in the Muslim world, which is that the United States targets Muslim populations more so than others in order to control these populations and systematically weaken Muslim states.

Humiliation also results from the perception of the United States using Pakistan in a relationship of convenience at their expense. Sanctions factor into this perception, as they were relieved during times of need in the United States, but reapplied when the

period of cooperation abruptly ended. The humiliation here results from Pakistanis perception of being treated without consideration given to the effect of U.S. policies on the citizens, and citizens, in turn, lacking power to address these issues.

## **Syria**

*Background.* Sanctions were imposed on Syria by the United States in 1986 in the form of a ban on U.S. assistance and limited trade restrictions, due to Syria's support for terrorism, specifically the attacks on the U.S. Marine Barracks in Beirut, Lebanon. At this time, Syria was added to the U.S. Department of State's State Sponsor of Terrorism list, which triggered terrorism-related sanctions be applied, including "...restrictions on U.S. foreign assistance; a ban on defense exports and sales; certain controls over exports of dual use items; and miscellaneous financial and other restrictions..." ("State Sponsors of Terrorism," 2011) As early as 1987, the United Kingdom and other European states enforced a terrorism-related arms embargo against Syria, following its involvement with the bombing of an El-Al flight at London's Heathrow airport (Usborne, 1991). The Europeans revised their policy in favor of engagement in the early 1990s.

Sanctions were imposed by President George W. Bush in 2004 following Syria's continued support for the militant, political group, Hizbullah, which was suspected in the death of Lebanon's Prime Minister Hariri in 2005. President Obama reauthorized sanctions in response to Israel's accusation that Syria continued to supply arms to Hizbullah. As of 2011, sanctions restrict most U.S. exports on Syria, excluding food and medicine. These sanctions have been unilateral on the part of the United States, with the goal of ending state involvement in terrorism through isolation, whereas European states,

including France, expressed criticism of U.S. policy in favor of engagement. Russia and China have spoken out against U.S. sanctions policy during this period (Lynch and Wright, 2005).

*Intended Outcomes.* Economic sanctions against Syria are intended to be a retributive form of punishment for the government's support of the terrorist group Hizbullah. The economic impact on Syria has not been particularly significant, both due to the general lack of trade between the U.S. and Syria prior to the imposition of sanctions and Syria's ability to avoid impact by forming trade relationships with emerging powers, like China, which is now the "[t]he largest investor in Syria's oil and gas exploration projects..." (Khanna, 2008, 219) For the duration of the sanctions program, there has been little movement towards achieving U.S. political goals.

*Unintended Outcomes: Enhanced Regime Stability: Domestic & Regional.* Syrian leadership has utilized U.S. policies as a scapegoat to enhance their legitimacy domestically and within the region. The leadership is undeterred by the threat of continued U.S. sanctions. The current president, Bashar al-Assad has been in power since 2000, following immediately after his father, who held power for approximately 30 years. Khanna (2008, 219) argues that U.S. policies focused on regime change have backfired; "America's emphasis on toppling Assad has entrenched him further, inspiring an external survival strategy that has included stronger ties with Turkey and Iran while returning to its days as a Soviet client..." In a 2010 survey of public opinion among Syrians, when asked about the most critical issue facing their country, 22.9% stated that political freedom is the biggest freedom. This response received the plurality of responses, even above personal economic issues, such as standard of living and cost of

living, issues which typically rank as the highest areas of concern for citizens in any country (Hawken, 2010).

Economic sanctions against Syria have also provoked the country to oppose staunchly sanctions against other countries and have given leaders an opportunity to gain greater legitimacy in the Middle East region. In doing so, Syrian leadership has made the case that western led policies against Arab states, such as Syria, Libya and Iraq, are hypocritical, because they are not applied to Israel (Mouat, 1992). Syria also helped a number of other states evade U.S. sanctions, including Libya and Iraq, previously an enemy (Penketh, 2000). Through their position as an outspoken critic of Western policies, Syria put itself forth as a leader in the region.

*Blowback.* According to a 2009 Gallup Poll, 64% of Syrians had a negative view of the United States, which amounts to one of the most unfavorable ratings in the Middle East. The level of anti-American sentiment is likely exacerbated by disapproval for punishment from the United States, but also must be considered in terms of the country's strategic priorities, which are its relationship with Iran and its conflict with Israel.

Johnson (2000) argues that the desire to seek revenge or blowback will be superseded by the presence of an existential enemy, or more colloquially, that a nation may have *bigger fish to fry* in terms of its strategic priorities. This applies to Syria's ambitions with regard to the United States. Syria's security paradigm is dominated by Israel as an existential and realistic threat and devotes resources to confronting this relationship, through resistance. This also obviates the country's relationship with Iran, which funds Hizbullah, the leader in Syria's fight against Israel. Syria is highly dependent on its alliance with Iran. In the unlikely event that Syria's relationship with

Israel improves, there might be a greater likelihood of blowback occurring against U.S. sanctions policy in the country, since the threat of the existential enemy which occupies Syria's resources and priorities would be gone. It is also likely that even in the absence of Israel as an existential enemy, the Syrian leadership would continue to use the U.S. policies to galvanize support for their regime. In a country like Syria, where levels of anti-American public opinion are so high already, citizens would be sympathetic to this argument.

## **Libya**

*Background.* The United States initially imposed diplomatic sanctions and an arms embargo against Libya in 1978, in response to Libya's involvement in a number of terrorist activities. Libya was added to the U.S. State Department State Sponsor of Terrorism list in 1979. Over time, without change in regime, rhetoric, or activities, the United States ratcheted up sanctions against Libya to comprehensive economic sanctions, including import embargos on crude and refined oil, by the 1980s. U.S. allies including Italy and West Germany were opposed to these unilateral sanctions in the 1980s due to their trade and economic ties to Libya and expressed doubt over U.S. claims regarding Libya's ties to terrorism, as well ("US Policy of 'Neoglobalism' and Sanctions," 1986).

Following the bombing of Pan-Am flight 103 over Lockerbie Scotland in 1988 and subsequent airline bombings, for which Libyan citizens were implicated, the UN Security Council imposed multilateral sanctions against Libya with the goal of extradition of suspected terrorists in 1992. There was little debate over this decision. It was widely supported by the U.S. and allies, although Syria and other Arab states did not



favor the policy. The UN sanctions targeted the aviation industry: prohibiting the sale of tickets on Libyan Arab Airlines, banning sale of equipment and services related to the aviation industry and training Libyan personnel (Cortright and Lopez, 2002, 138).

Aviation industry sanctions may have contributed somewhat to the goal of extradition of the bombing suspects, which occurred in 1999. The UN sanctions were suspended and officially terminated by a vote of the UN Security Council in 2003.

The unilateral U.S. sanctions were geared toward curbing Libya's WMD program, and remained in place until 2004, following the end of the UN sanctions. The U.S. policy included comprehensive trade sanctions, including unique aviation sanctions and secondary sanctions against foreign firms doing business in Libya, in addition to those associated with the State Sponsor of Terrorism designation. These sanctions were not the determining factor in resolving U.S. goals in Libya; although Libya did agree to end its WMD program in 2003 and fully dismantle the program under the supervision of the international community, this is largely attributed to the U.S. invasion of Iraq, not economic sanctions. Qaddafi feared that Libya would be the next U.S. target, following the U.S. invasion of Iraq and removal of Saddam Hussein from power; his fear of losing power likely motivated his decision making process (Joseph, 1999). The United States removed sanctions in 2004, once Libya agreed to dismantle its program and in 2006, the country was removed from the State Sponsor of Terrorism list.

*Intended Outcomes.* In the case of economic sanctions against Libya, the United States sought to achieve all three goals of punishment: isolation, retribution and deterrence. Sanctions were imposed for two reasons, as a retributive response to the government's involvement with the Lockerbie Bombing, through the UN sanctions, and

as a means of deterring the development of the nuclear weapons program, through U.S. sanctions. Overall, the results of sanctions are mixed in this case. The UN sanctions achieved the specific goal of compelling Libya to extradite citizens suspected of terrorism, whereas the U.S. sanctions, at best, made a contribution to the overall resolution of their broader goals.

UN sanctions targeted the aviation industry in Libya, and played a role in isolating the country, with the goal of extradition of suspected terrorists; these sanctions ultimately resulted in a successful outcome. These sanctions were the most retributive punishment of any sanctions program because they targeted the industry in Libya which its terrorism had targeted in other countries. However, these were not smart sanctions because they did not target the industry as a participant in terrorist activities; they targeted the leadership and population through this specific industry. Sanctions led to a loss in revenue for the airline industry. They also isolated the population by making it extremely difficult to leave the country. Special dispensation was given to citizens traveling for the hajj. The sanctions were especially challenging for Qaddafi himself, because he saw a role for himself as a regional leader.

Throughout this period, Libya was able to make economic adjustments in order to mitigate the effects of sanctions. The aviation sanctions were intended to increase difficulty for multinational corporations doing business in Libya, however, only Royal Dutch Shell stopped doing business in the country (Cortright and Lopez, 2002, 139). Libya continued exporting oil through the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries. Following the loss of the United States as a trade partner, Libya shifted its

exports. For example, Italy increased its imports from Libya from 19 percent in 1980 to 33 percent in 1987 (Jentleson and Whytock, 2005/06, 61).

*Unintended Outcomes: Regime Stability.* Both sanctions and the prospect of removing sanction were decisions that Qaddafi considered in terms of regime stability and self-perpetuation. Qaddafi came to power in 1969 in a coup against King Idris, who was known for his pro-U.S. stance in foreign policy. In the early period of sanctions policy, particularly when Libya faced only unilateral U.S. sanctions, the government was easily able to consolidate power and maintain both its leadership role and its international role as an instigator of terrorism, through "...repressive rule at home and confrontation rhetoric, if not action, abroad" (Jentleson and Whytock, 2005/06, 54).

In the 1980s, oil prices remained high and Libya shifted its exports to new markets in Europe in order to avoid economic pressures, the regime remained unthreatened. Qaddafi formed revolutionary committees throughout Libya to mobilize the population in support of his goals and short-circuit "...U.S. coercive efforts not only by controlling domestic opposition, but also by institutionalizing the same radical foreign policies that the Reagan administration was seeking to change" (Jentleson and Whytock, 2005/06, 61). Qaddafi's efforts generally were successful and his leadership was not threatened in these early years.

As economic conditions worsened because of declining oil prices in the 1990s, Qaddafi's government began to face serious challenges and made the calculated decision, following the U.S.-Iraq War and fall of Saddam Hussein, to end sanctions in order to maintain stability. Qaddafi's regime exploited the timing and poor economic conditions

in order to make a transition in his ruling strategy to continue to maintain power, by improving the economic situation for his citizens.

At this point in time, Qaddafi did not face a backlash from citizens for caving into foreign demands because the issue was framed in terms of positive economic impact, which he exploited to bolster his position. For instance, as late as 2006, when sanctions were almost completely lifted, he still utilized negative rhetoric to rally his citizens; he said: “[t]he United States is a damned country that deserves only to be cursed. It declares its own occupation of our lands legitimate, but brands our resistance as terrorists” (“Re-engagement rings,” 2006).

*Blowback.* In Libya, Qaddafi responded to the U.S. imposition of sanctions through passive and active revenge-motivated resistance. Qaddafi used rhetoric as passive resistance to garner support for his cause among his people, and among potential kindred populations who would be sympathetic to Libya’s punishment, under pressure from the West. His goal in attacking the West for punishing his people was to enhance his own legitimacy in the country in order to preserve power. He was able to demonstrate to citizens that he was a champion for their cause, by supporting terrorist groups and activities which sought to exact revenge on the United States. For example, during the sanctions period, Libya’s government reported increased traffic accidents, which they attributed to increased road use, due to limited ability to travel by air (Cortright and Lopez, 2000, 116).

The Libyan government also pursued active resistance tactics by supporting terrorism organizations and activities. Following the closure of the U.S. Embassy in Tripoli in 1981, a form of diplomatic sanction and punishment as isolation, Libya was

involved in a number of terrorist attacks and supported the terrorist group Abu Nidal. Following Libya's terrorist activities, the United States responded by increasing sanctions against Libya. This punishment not only served as retribution for the acts committed, but also sought to isolate Libya further from the international community, and limit their opportunities to respond to pressure through asymmetric means. However, disempowerment increases the likelihood of active revenge and following this new punishment, Qaddafi increased his rhetoric, and passive revenge, and continued to pursue a WMD program, until he ultimately changed his position, in order to enhance his political legitimacy and strategically avoid humiliation.

## **Iraq**

*Background.* At the close of the first Gulf War in 1990, as an attempt to contain Iraq, end its WMD program and induce regime change, economic sanctions were imposed on Iraq by the United Nations. The United States took a major role in garnering support within the UN Security Council to implement sanctions against Iraq. (The goal of regime change was not a core goal of the UN Security Council, but of the United States.) The United States also imposed unique sanctions on Iraq, in addition to the Security Council sanctions. The U.S. placed Iraq on the State Sponsor of Terrorism list from 1979-1982 and again from 1990-2003, which added additional sanctions to the existing economic sanctions.

The UN sanctions banned all trade with Iraq and imposed an oil embargo as well as an arms embargo, asset freezes on leadership and air travel sanctions. These sanctions were some of the most ambitious undertaken by the international community and

significantly harmed the population of Iraq. National Security Adviser Sandy Berger praised them in this way as “unprecedented for its severity in the whole of world history” (Johnson, 2000, 9).

One year following the implementation of these far-reaching sanctions, in response to deteriorating humanitarian conditions, the UN Security Council established the *Oil for Food* program which allowed the Iraqi government to sell a fixed amount of oil and use the proceeds to purchase food and medical supplies for the citizens. The program was designed as massive humanitarian aid project, without UN member states having to contribute significantly financially, because of Iraq’s own oil wealth. In the end, this program was not successful in resolving humanitarian suffering; there were major problems in cooperation with Iraqi government and distribution of aid to the population.

Prior to 1999, Security Council members made a number of proposals to resolve the sanctions against Iraq, including lifting the oil embargo, as proposed by France. The United States was unrelenting and “...maintained a policy of hostility toward Iraq, placing a large number of holds on goods examined by the sanctions committee” (Cortright and Lopez, 2000, 26). The UN sanctions, which focused on Iraq’s disarmament, were categorized as a success. In 1997, inspectors concluded that Iraq had been disarmed of nuclear chemical and biological weapons (Cortright and Lopez, 2002, 25). Based on this information, several Security Council member states recommended revising the program and making reciprocal concessions, or offering carrots, in order to reward Iraq’s achievement;

[i]n response to this progress, Russia, France and other countries urged the Security Council to certify the partial completion of the UN disarmament mandate. Moscow called for a partial lifting of sanctions as a means of acknowledging progress... (Cortright and Lopez, 2000, 25)

Security Council members, including China, Russia and France, accused the United States of moving the goalposts in terms of achieving objectives, and generally lost interest overtime in pursuing coercive policies, including economic sanctions (Thompson, 2009, 132). Many feared that “the sanctions might be maintained even after an eventual change of regime to perpetuate American control over Iraq” (Rouleau, 1995, 69). In 2001, the Security Council, under the leadership of the United States, made adjustments to the sanctions program, in order to relieve pressure on Iraqi citizens.

The United States removed unilateral sanctions against Iraq following Saddam Hussein’s capture in 2003 and removed Iraq from the list of State Sponsors of Terrorism, as well. Similar to the case of Libya, though, economic sanctions against Iraq were unsuccessful in achieving the goal of regime change, however the UN’s disarmament goals were achieved. Sanctions were lifted following the U.S. military invasion and removal of Saddam Hussein from power, in order to assist Iraq’s economic development, not because of their own success, as evaluated by the United States.

*Intended Outcome.* U.S. economic sanctions against Iraq were intended to achieve all three goals of punishment: deterrence, isolation and retribution. Economic sanctions were applied to the Ba’athist regime in order to curb its aggressive actions in Iraq and to compel it to end the WMD programs. Coercive threats were aimed at deterring the leadership from undertaking action on any of these fronts. Economic sanctions were also intended to isolate Iraq from the global economy and isolate the

leadership, as punishment for non-compliance. Finally, economic sanctions were retribution for aggression and creating instability in the Gulf region.

The U.S. and UN sanctions accelerated the collapse of Iraq's economy, following the Persian Gulf War, which had already significantly damaged the country's infrastructure. Pape (1997, 106) estimates that between 1991-1996, economic sanctions eliminated 48% of the country's GNP. Rouleau (1995, 62) compares the damaging effects of sanctions to a straightjacket on the Iraqi economy. This consequence was intended to occur in order to induce the population to take action against the regime; however ultimately, conditions negatively impacted citizens and did not lead to an indigenous movement for regime change.

*Unintended Outcomes: Regime Stability and Humanitarian Suffering.* The sanctions imposed against Iraq contributed to the longevity and legitimacy of Saddam Hussein's authoritarian leadership in Iraq in at least two ways. First, through the Oil for Food program, the regime was able to raise up to \$5.25 billion every six months (Cortright and Lopez, 2000, 50). While these funds were intended to support the population of Iraq, they were not used to do so, and the UN had little recourse to force the leadership's hand. Hussein also enhanced his legitimacy among the elite population by protecting the incomes of his most loyal supporters at the expense of the citizens, by squeezing the rest of the Iraqi society (Pape, 1997, 110).

Secondly, Hussein may have been motivated to keep sanctions in place to gain support among kindred populations. Hussein believed that global citizens and leaders would be sympathetic to the suffering of his population, and he could therefore garner



their support, and shame the United States. One expert noted that Hussein's perspective was malicious;

...from international public opinion by depriving its own citizens of their material needs, exaggerate suffering, and blame the problem on the United States. Portraying Iraq as a nation of hungry people and sick children became a cynical propaganda tool. Blaming foreigners for the regime's decision and mismanagement could also increase domestic support for the government (Rubin, 2001).

This tactic was most likely a secondary goal of Hussein's; economic and regime stability were more important motivating factors in his decision making calculus.

Economic sanctions in Iraq are most notorious for the damage they inflicted on the country's vulnerable populations, including children and infirmed. It is widely believed that;

...as many as 567,000 Iraqi children may have died since the end of the Persian Gulf War because of economic sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council. This figure is higher than the reported...5,000 civilian deaths during the war itself (Pape, 1997, 110).

The deaths were attributed to lack of food and medical supplies, and also the crumbling infrastructure, because of the collateral damage accrued during the Persian Gulf War; sanctions weakened the economy further and delayed recovery. According to Khanna (2008, 221), "Saddam remained afloat for over a decade by manipulating the Oil for Food program while sanctions degraded the public health system and prevented an opposition from incubating."

Rubin (2001) makes the argument that this particular outcome was overstated in two ways. Hussein exaggerated conditions in order to garner support from kindred communities. Also, the United Nations may have misreported conditions; the figure of 567,000 deaths of Iraqi children was published by the United Nations Food and

Agriculture Organization in a report evaluating the Food and Nutrition Situation in Iraq, but some, such as Rubin (2001) believe it is a dubious claim. However, even if this figure was just 10% of the number reported, it would still be true that more children died during the sanctions period than civilians killed during the war itself.

*Blowback.* Economic sanctions against Iraq provide the most direct example of blowback. According to Johnson (2009, 9) detrimental economic sanctions “ensured that surviving Iraqis were likely to hold a grudge against the American government and its citizens.” Although sanctions were imposed by a coalition of states, through the UN Security Council, the hard-line U.S. position caused sanctions to become more strongly associated with United States. Ultimately, the backlash was directed at the United States more significantly than the international community.

The sanctions also may have been a rallying point for regional anti-Americanism. The best demonstration of this blowback is seen through Osama bin Laden’s (1998) Fatwa against the United States. In this document, he specifically references sanctions against Iraq, and the collateral damage that has been attributed to them, as justifications for jihad against the United States, more concretely than other issue;

despite the great devastation inflicted on the Iraqi people by the crusader-Zionist alliance, and despite the huge number of those killed, which has exceeded 1 million... despite all this, the Americans are once again trying to repeat the horrific massacres, as though they are not content with the protracted blockade imposed after the ferocious war or the fragmentation and devastation.

Although bin Laden may have had ulterior motives for attacking the United States and encouraging his supporters to do so, he exploited this key issue in order to gain additional support and grow his base of support, because humanitarian suffering and political disempowerment resonated with kindred groups.

## **Iran**

*Background.* The United States and international community imposed sanctions on Iran in 1984, in response to the country's support for terrorism and efforts to acquire WMD. The United States added Iran to the State Sponsor of Terrorism list at this point, and Iran faced increased sanctions. As of 2011, Iran remained on the list because of the country's relationship with Hizbullah. Dealing with Iran effectively has been a priority for the United States government for many years, especially with regard to its nuclear program. In recent years, the United States has spearheaded a movement to enact harsher multilateral sanctions against Iran in order to curb its nuclear energy program, which the United States believes is aimed at acquiring or producing weapons. The effectiveness of economic sanctions in terms of achieving these goals is undetermined, but to date, attempts at coercion have not resulted in the desired outcome.

As a signatory to the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty and a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Iran maintains that its nuclear program is peaceful in nature and legitimate, as the NPT allows all signatories to pursue peaceful nuclear energy. Iran has resisted pressure from sanctions to engage with the international community on its WMD program ("Iran Warns," 2010a; "IAEA meeting," 2010b; "IAEA Chief to report on Israel's N. capabilities," 2010; "Ahmedinejad, Clinton verbal dual," 2010). Iran's government maintains that the international community's actions are illegitimate. Sanctions are not seen by the regime as a credible threat of punishment because of the country's energy reserves allow it to avoid serious economic consequences, therefore the government hasn't been compelled to change behavior (Hafezi, 2010).

*Intended Outcomes.* Economic sanctions are intended to punish Iran in two ways: deterrence and isolation. The threat of sanctions imposed a higher cost on the state if the regime rejected the international community's request to negotiate on the nuclear issue. However, threats were unsuccessful in coercing Iran to change its position. Additionally, the sanctions attempt to prevent Iran from fully developing nuclear weapons capability, by denying it access to technology. In this case, deterrence is intended to maintain the status-quo in Iran's undeveloped proliferation capabilities. Recent sanctions imposed against Iranian Republican Guard Corporation businesses reflect this intention. The Guard is an elite group within the military, and the current president Mahmoud Ahmedinejad was a member of this unit during his time in service.

Sanctions against Iran reach much further than other programs the United States has implemented. The United States acknowledged that these sanctions are also aimed at a more traditional form of deterrence. In a speech at the Nuclear Security Summit in 2009, U.S. President Barack Obama (2009) framed the sanctions as a warning to other countries with proliferation aspirations; he said that "what sanctions do accomplish is hopefully to change the calculus of a country like Iran so that they see that there are more costs and fewer benefits to pursuing a nuclear weapons program." The United States is concerned that ignoring Iran or allowing the country to acquire WMD capability, would give a *green light* to other countries that have similar goals (Bar'el, 2010).

The U.S. economic and diplomatic sanctions are also aimed at isolating Iran from the international community as a component of its containment strategy. Sanctions, which frame Iran as a dangerous regime with deadly capabilities, contribute to "Washington's goal...to eliminate Iran's influence in the Arab world..." (Nasr and

Takeyh, 2008, 86). Additionally, sanctions seek to draw Iran's allies out of the country's sphere of influence. Sanctions against Iran are also a form of retribution, both for defying the international community on the nuclear issue and for its alleged support for Hizbullah. These sanctions include airline sanctions, which directly respond to Hizbullah's aggressive activities. This goal is secondary to deterrence and isolation.

Iran's government has largely been able to avoid serious economic issues by shifting their economy towards new markets and filling the void of European and U.S. companies with their own companies. However, there has been a measurable effect on the economy attributed to sanctions; over the past ten years, there has been 10 to 20 percent decline in GDP, annually (Askari and Parsi, 2010). Citizens have expressed a negative attitude regarding sanctions' impact on the economy, as well. A recent World Public Opinion Poll (2009) found that "six in 10 Iranians believe that economic sanctions... are having a negative impact" and 70 percent believe that they will have an even more negative impact in the future. In 2007, the Iranian government imposed gasoline rations on the population (Lake, 2010). Iran imports about 40 percent of its domestic gasoline consumption, because it has limited refining capabilities (Askari and Parsi, 2010).

The Iranian population has also been able to avoid negative humanitarian consequences that have occurred in other countries facing other similar sanctions. There are robust illicit smuggling operations in neighboring countries, which prop up the commercial sectors of the Iranian economy. Also, consumer goods from the U.S. and West are shipped to Iran from nearby United Arab Emirates and smuggled into Iran

(Cummins, 2009). Crude oil and refined products are smuggled from the Kurdish area of Iraq to augment imports, which are limited by sanctions (Dagher, 2010).

*Unintended Outcomes: Enhanced Leadership Stability.* Economic sanctions have helped the Iranian regime's various ruling elements consolidate power and empower hardliner elements. Most recently, in the absence of international corporations, the Republican Guard filled the void of foreign companies through indigenous economic adjustment; the Republican Guard has taken over many infrastructure and energy sector projects that were previously executed by foreign companies. The Republican Guard gained expertise in the later part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as it was "...heavily involved in the reconstruction after the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq War and expanded their work to cover areas such as import-export, oil and gas, defense, transport and construction" ("Iran Guards dismiss sanctions drive," 2010). During the debate over economic sanctions, the Guards expressed confidence that they could replace foreign oil companies ("Iran Guards dismiss sanctions drive," 2010). Strengthening the Republican Guard also helps the regime maintain power. The Republican Guard was suspected of violently putting down anti-regime protests following the disputed 2009 elections. Empowering this element serves to protect the status-quo, but limits the ability of citizens to express their democratic aspirations.

Following the latest round of sanctions, Iranian public officials undertook a major public relations campaign in 2010, aimed at encouraging a strong sense of Iranian nationalism to enhance the regime's credibility and counter attempts to destabilize the regime. Leaders told citizens to be proud of their technological achievements and progress, to mitigate any humiliation which might emerge and be directed at the regime.

For example, Oil Minister Mir-Kazemi said in 2010 that Iran has “reached a stage of self-sufficiency in the field of exploration of oil...” (“Iran will ‘stride’ past oil sanctions,” 2010)

*Blowback.* Iranian citizens have highly negative views of the United States; in part this may be due to the punishment they endure and the resulting political disempowerment. The country’s inability to progress and modernize, as well as its isolation as a pariah state in the international community has an effect on the citizens and leaders and results in humiliation. One way in which resistance is expressed by the government is by targeting Israel, as the United States’ top regional ally. Recent examples of this represent a creative means of seeking to humiliate the United States by calling attention to double standards. The action on the part of Iran has touched-off a cycle of rhetoric, where each side continually seeks to call attention to the flaws of the other and humiliate the leadership. As with previous confrontations, the Iranian leadership has exploited U.S. support for Israel, at the expense of Arab, Muslim states with regard to the recent sanctions.

In the summer of 2009, prior to the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty Review undertaken by the members of the IAEA, Iran and Egypt led an 18 country block of Arab nations to push for measures to force Israel to become a signatory to the Treaty. (Israel currently maintains a posture of *strategic ambiguity* with regard to its nuclear arsenal, although it is widely believed to have a significant capability, and the United States has supported the country’s posture and position.) Ali Asghar Soltanieh, Iran’s ambassador to the IAEA criticized U.S. actions to shield Israel from international scrutiny on this matter. He framed the issue in such a way that painted America as harmful to Arab

publics by arguing that, “Americans and a few other countries have tried to mislead the public from the threat, which is Israeli nuclear capability” (Jahn, 2010).

Iranian leadership has exploited an already contentious issue to galvanize sentiment and solidify their own position as victims of inconsistent, unjust U.S. policies. Publics and leaders identify with the plight of the Iranian people, who they also believe have been unfairly targeted by U.S. power. Although they may oppose Iran, given religious differences, anti-U.S. attitudes provide an area of agreement for these groups, who engage in passive resistance, as kindred actors, and express support for Iran. For example, following a recent Arab Economic, Social and Development Summit, members drafted a declaration which “...affirmed rejection of unilateral sanctions imposed on some Arab countries due to their negative effects on development efforts in them” (“Arab Economic Summit condemns acts of terror,” 2010).

Citizens of other states also support Iran, as kindred population, who are sympathetic to the pressures of U.S. coercion and its negative implications. For example, in a 2010 survey of six Arab States (Telhami, 2010), the majority of citizens (57%) believe that it would be better for the Middle East region if Iran acquired nuclear weapons. This marks a sharp increase from the prior year (2009), when only 29% expressed this view. Highly sympathetic groups include citizens and leaders of “...countries who themselves are pursuing nuclear technology for peaceful purposes and want to develop their nuclear reactors” (“Iran warns,” 2010a). Citizens of these countries may be basing their opinion on a reaction to pressure the United States has imposed on Iran, rather than a keen desire for Iran to actually possess nuclear weapons. This is form



of passive resistance on behalf of the kindred population of Iran and demonstrates negative consequences of power projection when it takes the form of punishment.

Economic sanctions have been a difficult policy for the United States to execute successfully. These sanctions programs have had highly mixed results. In the majority of cases, economic sanctions, as imposed by the United States, were not successful in resolving the policy goals, as intended. In the cases where UN Security Council sanctions were imposed, particularly in Iraq and Libya, specific issues were resolved through the successful implementation of sanctions. However, in these cases, the U.S. did not view these resolutions as successes and continued or pursued new unilateral sanctions, in response.

More importantly, though, economic sanctions are used as a tool of punishment by a powerful actor and have unintended consequences associated with their various goals, which contribute to the conditions of humiliation, regardless of success. For example, in the cases where sanctions are used as deterrence, to weaken the economy of the target state, they often result in negative humanitarian consequences. In some instances, such as Iran, citizens have been able to overcome some of this punishment by developing alternative supply lines, through illicit markets. Most often, though, populations are significantly weakened, as they were in the cases of Burma and Iraq. Suffering of vulnerable populations and lack of economic opportunity inspire sympathy in kindred populations and contribute to a sense of humiliation within the target population. Both of these groups may be motivated to seek revenge for this humiliation.

Political disempowerment is another key unintended outcome of economic sanctions. It is perhaps most consequential because it is counterproductive to achieving

one of sanctions major goals: regime change. In most cases of economic sanctions, strong leaders have been able to protect themselves and remain in power, even when regime change was a U.S. goal. These leaders continue to pursue their goals, while citizens face negative consequences. They exploit citizens' suffering in order to enhance their popularity, by using the sender state as a scapegoat. This outcome is the most significant unintended effect of economic sanctions policy because sender's attempt to inspire the population to rise up against their leaders, is thwarted. Instead, a common sentiment that emerged in a target state's population is a negative opinion about the sender.

Because the sanctions can contribute to increased regime stability, citizens are disempowered and are unable to improve the conditions which may result from economic sanctions, or other policies which use power to inflict punishment on a target. The demonstration of power through punishment often generates resistance to punishment. When citizens' power is limited in the face of power, the sense humiliation develops. This is the most dangerous feeling in international politics. Economic sanctions, as an instrument of power, limit citizens' efficacy when they are already facing extremely negative conditions, including an impact on vulnerable populations, lack of economic opportunity, and diminished prosperity. The desire for revenge, to avenge this suffering, may intensify and lead to blowback against the sender state responsible for economic sanctions.

## **Chapter Six: Conclusion**

Economic sanctions negatively impact the population of the target state which results from their use as punishment against the target for not pursuing a particular course of action deemed appropriate by the sender. Economic sanctions have a negative impact on the target because they have the same characteristics as subjugation, which causes collective humiliation. Typically, inducing humiliation is not a goal of the sender country; it results from the experience of the target population, due to loss of dignity and opportunity. This humiliation has negative implications for the sender state, because, as Lindner (2006) argues, it will result in the desire to take action against the sender, where the opportunity presents itself.

Economic sanctions have the capacity to produce blowback, and indeed have done so in the past. In these cases, anti-American sentiment is unintended from the perspective of the United States; economic sanctions with the goal of regime change are intended to bring positive change to citizens, which should result in appreciation toward the sender. Since sanctions often fail to achieve their goals in this regard or remain in place after goals have been achieved, this unintended consequence emerges. Countries which either have been subjected to punishment from a powerful sender, such as being sanctioned by the United States, tend to have highly anti-American orientations among their populations.

The country cases each represent instances of punishment being inflicted upon a target state, by the United States or international coalition, from a position of power. Each case illustrates unique ways in which economic sanctions create an environment of subjugation. Although unintended consequences are similar in each case, the desire for revenge differs, due to the unique circumstances of each country and the interaction between the sender and the target. The cases of Iraq and Libya demonstrate the ways in which blowback occurs as a result of economic sanctions. In Iraq, where the humanitarian consequences were widely publicized, negative attitudes and sympathetic responses from kindred populations resulted in the most demonstrable case of revenge. Policies towards Libya, including economic sanctions, were responsible for generating a great deal of blowback, including violent revenge, directed by the country's leadership, in response to the sanctions. In many of these cases sanctions represent only one component of a broader strategy or a long-term interaction between the sender and the target. In these cases, sanctions may contribute to attitudes or revenge, but must be considered as a part of an overall strategy.

In Iraq and Libya, economic sanctions resulted in blowback with significant national security implications for the United States. In Iraq, kindred communities responded to the humanitarian crisis in the country and used it to justify attacking the United States. In Libya, the regime responded to economic sanctions, and its humiliation at being punished and excluded from the international community, by seeking revenge through terrorism. These cases demonstrate the dangers in how humiliated groups will resist punishment, or respond to it.

Kindred populations may also play a role in a future response to sanctions against Cuba, as they play out in the Cuban American population. Culture plays an important role in limited blowback emerging from the sanctions against Burma, although the humanitarian outcomes are significant. Sanctions against Pakistan have also contributed to negative attitudes towards the United States, as the sender. In Syria and Iran, interaction between policies is extremely important in determining the likelihood of blowback occurring in the future.

Based on this analysis, the exercise of power generates blowback, but the level and mechanism varies across each case. In the cases of Cuba and Burma, there has been no demonstrable blowback and latent blowback does not seem likely. However, the Middle East countries targeted with sanctions experienced significant blowback. Factors such as level of suffering of the population, which is particularly high in Burma, Iraq and Pakistan, do not seem to have an impact on blowback, based on the cases discussed herein.

The relationship between the target and sender would seem to have an influence on the impact, in terms of humiliation and blowback. Cuba and Burma have fundamentally different interactions with the United States, and all states where blowback occurred also have a common level of interaction. In the case of Cuba, there is a significant connection based on kinship and culture, between the United States and Cuban citizens. The Cuban American community in the United States is one of the largest expatriate communities in the country. The group sends a large amount of remittances to Cuban family members. (Cuban Americans tend to be highly educated and well employed in the United States.) Additionally, in spite of the embargo, the group

is active in promoting the rights of Cubans in the political arena in the United States. By comparison, Burma's connection to the United States is weaker. There is no organized expatriate or kinship community in the United States, as compared to Cuban Americans. The extremely strong or weak connection may have an impact on limiting blowback directed at the United States.

In the other countries, there is a moderate level of interaction between the United States and each country. There are more significant expatriate communities in the United States from Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, and other countries, although not on the level of organization of the Cuban American community. However, their political participation and power in the U.S. system is relatively minor, compared to that of Cuba. These groups have limited recourse to take action against U.S. policies in their own country because they are disempowered, or in the United States, and this can contribute to humiliation. Regardless of how humiliation becomes part of the collective identity of a state, either through control or inability to attain key objectives, it is clear that increased humiliation leads to increased resentment at the sender state.

Humiliated groups or kindred groups will seek revenge upon the humiliator, by forcibly lowering them, when they are denied the opportunity to address their abuser. Active resistance takes the shape of revenge, or retributive punishment, where the target seeks to punish the sender in response to the action that caused their humiliation. Due to the disparity in power between these two groups, the target must use asymmetric means to punish the sender. In these instances, revenge is *blowback*; the sender does not intend for the target to have the means or desire to inflict punishment on them.

Research on terrorism illustrates possible future scenarios for resistance to power. Terrorist attacks occur as a means of seeking revenge against the perpetrators of the policies that detrimentally impacted these states. In Johnson's (2000, 9) view, terrorist attacks are the most important mechanism for blowback. His research found "...a strong correlation between U.S. involvement in international situations and an increase in terrorist attacks against the United States." Pape's research finds a similar connection between U.S. military policy and suicide terrorism. Pape (2009, 95) argues that suicide terrorism is not a particularly effective means of engendering change, because powerful "...modern nation states generally will accept high costs rather than abandon important national goals..."

Although policymakers often are not willing to consider them in this way, economic sanctions are a paradigm expression of power and punishment and contribute directly to humiliation. Moreover, the notion that these sentiments might be ameliorated by the end of the sanctions is unlikely to have a significant impact on the target population. Johnson (2000, 12) argues the contrary, that, "[i]t is typical of an imperial people to have a short memory for its less pleasant imperial acts, but for those on the receiving end, memory can be long indeed." This response is not necessarily a psychological condition, as much as a reflection of reality. Those on the receiving end of punishment may experience the impacts for a longer period of time than the contributing policies are in place. For example, when a country's GDP is significantly reduced through economic sanctions or similar expressions of power, making up for the years lost in growth and development is a long-term prospect.

*Limitations and Further Analysis.* This study examined selected instances of economic sanctions but does not include a discussion of targeted or smart sanctions, although their use reflects recognition by the international community that the negative impact of economic sanctions on a country's population is undesirable. However, smart sanctions, which target leadership or key institutions in a country, also may have limited impact, in terms of leading to reform of political goals. Furthermore, smart sanctions can still bear resemblance to punishment of one country by another, through the rhetoric that states and organizations use when implementing them. Similarly, the perception of punishment can also be driven by the leadership of the target state. As has been established, leaders' rhetoric is extremely important in terms of influencing the opinion of the target state's citizens. Adept leaders can exploit challenges in their favor to enhance their own legitimacy. Leaders have the ability to frame punishments directed specifically at them, as punishment of the broader population, thus creating a perception of widespread punishment and control, which will lead to the collective humiliation. As previously discussed, this has dangerous implications for U.S. national security. Additional research on the precise impacts of smart sanctions and manipulation by leaders to exploit challenges would lead to a better understanding of future implications of the exercise of power.

My analysis reinforces the findings of Hufbauer, Schott and Elliot (1990), Pape, (1997), Miyagawa (1992), and others, whose work provides a solid foundation on the challenges in utilizing economic sanctions. My analysis focuses on outcomes and unintended consequences which emerge when power is considered through the



framework of punishment and subjugation. Humiliation experienced by the target has dangerous consequences for all when it is expressed through resistance mechanisms.

Targeting a rogue actor with punishment is a legitimate action, especially in cases where the action satisfies the deterrent goal of punishment, and protects the broader population from the actor's negative actions. However, punishment is not always a successful strategy in global politics, especially as a means of deterrence. When punishment generates the conditions of humiliation and results in blowback, it may not increase the security of the broader population; when necessary, power and punishment should be used in ways which limit unintended outcomes, particularly humiliation, so that they will successfully achieve all objectives.

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