

Sanctions Are War

Think sanctions are a civilized alternative to war? Think again. In fact, the application of the economic strangulation known as sanctions is nothing but siege warfare, a bestial feudal tactic for punishing, even exterminating an entire people, a process that leads inexorably to perpetual war.

Qualified historians know this from the history of warfare. Think back to the sieges of ancient cities, such as Troy (ca. 12th Century B.C.), all the way up to the Thirty Years War (1618-48 A.D.) and beyond, to get an image of the alleged humaneness of sanctions and economic boycotts. It was this grisly reality which former Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad invoked in 1994 when he excoriated the sanctions against Iraq, saying:

“This is not ancient days where you lay siege around the city until they feed on mice. This is modern times; we don’t do such things.

“The sanctions on food and medical supplies have been imposed for four years, and I have been informed that about 1 million children and aged people died due to insufficient food and medical treatment.” He demanded that this inhumanity be stopped.

Of course, the sanctions policy, led by British imperial puppets such as Tony Blair, continued, and did not stop war—although it did decimate one of the most advanced economies in the Middle East, and kill a lot of people—a British imperial goal.

The sanctions threatened against Iran today have a precedent: the oil embargo put into effect by the U.S. government against Japan in the run-up to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Some veterans today have referenced these sanctions, arguing that their application actually provoked the Japanese attack, and that following that

path against Iran, as currently proposed, would do the same with Iran today.

President Franklin Roosevelt, according to one of his biographers, was reluctant to shut the oil tourniquet on Japan, because he thought this would drive that nation to take more aggressive action in the South Pacific, and beyond. Japan was 80% dependent upon the U.S. for oil, and FDR feared that shutting it off would have the opposite of a deterrent effect, making war in the Pacific inevitable.

No simple comparisons can be drawn between Japan then and Iran today, or the strategic crisis then and now. What is clear is that the British hawks pushing sanctions today want to ensure a war.

Some may argue that sanctions are indeed “sanctioned” by the United Nations, but that proves nothing about morality, or war avoidance. As noted legal expert Hans Köchler of the International Progress Organization said in 1994: “Comprehensive economic sanctions ... have the ethical quality of terror bombings: the civilian population is explicitly taken hostage in the framework of a security strategy of power politics.”

The oil boycott decided by the EU against Iran on Jan. 23 flows directly from such a British strategy, as do the actions in the same direction by the British puppet Obama Administration. The idea is to *provoke* hotheads in Iran to provide a pretext for launching the war that the British monarchy desires—a war whose actual target is the Eurasian nations of Russia and China, not Iran.

The Russians understand this, and have made their views clear, while working feverishly for war avoidance. It is still not too late for the U.S. to join them—as soon as we strip Obama of his power to put us on the road to World War III.