

Sanctions: Diplomacy's Weapon of Mass Murder

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In 1945, the United States of America dropped two atomic bombs on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki immediately killing 120,000 civilians. The final death toll of the horrendous bombings has been conservatively estimated at well over 200,000 men, women, and children. To this day, the world continues to be shocked and horrified by the visual images that captured the death and destruction caused by the bombs. The negative impact prompted America to devise a different weapon of mass murder – sanctions.

Unlike the shock and horror which accompanied the atomic bombs dropped on Japan , there were no images of the 500,000 Iraqi children whose lives were cut short by sanctions to jolt the world into reality. [Not only has America taken pride in the mass killing](#) of innocent children, but encouraged by silence and the surrender to its weapon of choice, it has turned diplomacy's weapon of mass murder on another country – Iran .

There has been little resistance to sanctions in the false belief that sanctions are a tool of diplomacy and preferable to war. Enforcement of this belief has been a major victory for American public diplomacy. The reality is otherwise. Sanctions kill indiscriminately – they are far deadlier than “Fat Man” and “Little Boy” – the two atomic bombs that took the lives of over 200,000 people. In the case of Iraq , the United Nations estimated 1,700,000 million Iraqi civilians died as a result of sanctions. 1.5 million more victims than the horrific atomic bombs dropped on Japan . Diplomacy's finest hour.

Even though Denis Halliday, former Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations, and many other top officials resigned from their posts in protest to the sanctions saying: “The policy of economic sanctions is totally bankrupt. [We are in the process of destroying an entire society. It is as simple and as terrifying as that](#)”, the murders continued. In 1999, seventy members of Congress appealed to President Clinton to lift the sanctions and end what they termed [“infanticide masquerading as policy.”](#) But America continued its lead with its diplomatic death dance.

America , a morally bankrupt nation and the self-appointed global morality police, obeying the wishes of the pro-Israel lobby groups, has for years now pointed its deadly weapon of mass murder at Iran — sanctions disguised as diplomacy. The misinformed and misguided global community indulges itself in the false belief that war has been avoided, without thought to suffering and death.

In fact, the notion that economic sanctions are always morally preferable to the use of military force has been challenged by Albert C. Pierce, Ethics and National Security professor at the National Defense University . His analysis showed that economic sanctions inflict great pain, suffering, and physical harm on the innocent civilians—so much so that

small-scale military operations were sometimes preferable (*Ethics and International Affairs*,1996).

But America prefers not to engage in battle. Not only would military confrontation bring global condemnation, but history has shown us that while America can win battles, it cannot win wars (Vietnam , Iraq , Afghanistan). It therefore resorts to sanctions- a coward's ruthless "diplomacy" tool in order to disguise its role as the enemy with the purpose of depriving the target nation of self-defense against such horrendous aggression. Sanctions, the warfare by an enemy unidentified by a military uniform is intended to eliminate resistance, to attack women and children, the weak and the old, to being about regime change, without fear of retaliation or censure by the 'peace-loving' community.

In this election year, as in the past, appeasement of the pro-Israel lobbies takes precedent to humanity, to the well-being of Americans, and to the security of the global community.

A [2005 report](#) developed by economists Dean DeRosa and Gary Hufbauer demonstrates that if the United States lifted sanctions on Iran the world price of oil could fall by 10 percent translating into an annual savings of \$38-76 billion for the United States alone. The current global recession would dwarf the figures cited.

At war even with itself to please the lobbies, House passed *H.R. 1905 - Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act*. Putting aside the oxymoron of sanctions and human rights for now, America is demanding that the world community not only partake in deadly sanctions, but to do so in direct opposition to the national interests of each and every sovereign nation. This is a sharp departure from the arguments presented by AIPAC in 1977 in response to the Arab league boycott.

AIPAC successfully defined the Arab League boycott as " harassment and blackmailing of America, an interference with normal business activities ... that the boycott activities were contrary to the principles of free trade that the United States has espoused for many years ... and the Arab interference in the business relations of American firms with other countries is in effect an interference with the sovereignty of the United States."[\[i\]](#)

However, the United States has successfully blackmailed other nations to be its accomplice in suffering and mass murder - diplomacy's weapon of choice. To believe that Iran (or Syria) is the only target of these sanctions is as naïve as believing that sanctions are diplomacy put in place to avoid war. The global impact of the lethal weapon - sanctions — is simply cushioned in diplomacy ; A brilliantly and ruthlessly executed diplomatic coup.

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