

# Sanctions, Wars, and Assassinations

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Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [History](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

“Go, teach Eternal Wisdom how to rule/ Then drop into thyself, and be a fool!”—Pope

The American government likes to call itself “the leader of the free world.” Why anyone believes it is difficult to discern. The people are not obviously freer than people in most other nations. Ask any American what he is free to do that a citizen of The Netherlands cannot and listen for a meaningful reply. America has a large economy when measured by its GDP, but it is, after all, a huge country. Only Russia and Canada are larger but their populations are much smaller. And America is not especially well governed. While a minute number of its citizens are obscenely wealthy; many others barely eke out subsistence livings. The nation as a whole is fairly prosperous while a huge number of its people are impoverished. Its military might is huge; its victories meager. Henry Kissinger has said, “In my life, I have seen four wars begun with great enthusiasm and public support, all of which we did not know how to end and from three of which we withdrew unilaterally.” Wars are not won or lost anymore, they, like old soldiers, just fade away. Umair Haque, Director of Havas Media Labs and ranked as one of the world’s most influential management thinkers by Thinkers50 has written in the Harvard Business Review the following description of today’s America:

“The US is a rich country that’s beginning to resemble, for the average person, a poor one. Its infrastructure is crumbling. Its educational systems barely educate. Its healthcare is still nearly nonexistent. I can take a high-speed train across Europe in eight hours; I can barely get from DC to Boston in nine. Most troubling of all, it is poisoning its food and water supplies by continuing to pursue dirty energy, while the rest of the rich world is choosing renewable energy. The US has glaring deficits in all these public goods—education, healthcare, transport, energy, infrastructure—not to mention the other oft- unmentioned, but equally important ones: parks, community centers, social services.”

So while claiming to be the free world’s leader, while trying to teach the world how to rule, when it looks into itself, which it rarely does, it sees the consummate fool.

By persistently implementing policies that have proven to be ineffective, it has gotten this way. The War on Drugs, begun in 1971, has been so disastrous that numerous states have now legalized substances still banned by the federal government. The addiction to economic policies long discredited have brought down the world’s economy twice in seventy years. The refusal to do anything about gun ownership has turned America’s streets into battlefields. But as foolish as America is domestically, it is equally imbecilic in dealing with other nations. Take, for instance, the policy of using sanctions in attempts to induce others to change.

Applying sanctions is a form of economic warfare, and just like warfare both sides suffer

casualties. Like its wars, these economic wars are seldom if ever won. Sanctions have been applied in at least twenty-five international “conflicts.” None on the Treasury Department’s [list](#) has obviously been successful in achieving the stated goal. Currently sanctions are being applied to seven countries: Cuba (1960), Iran (1979), Burma (1997), North Korea (1993), Ivory Coast (2006), Syria (2012), and Russia (2014). Now isn’t that a list of economic powerhouses? As of this writing, the United States, for good reason, has not achieved its goals by imposing these sanctions.

The practice of imposing sanctions on nations which act in ways the United States disapproves of is a policy designed by fools for nefarious purposes. It is a policy that attempts to subvert the sovereignty of other nations, and to my knowledge, it has never succeeded. America is a narcissistic nation that sees its own reflection wherever it looks. American hubris allows it to believe that the entire world works as America does. So because America’s political economy has since the nation’s beginning been corrupted by its mercantile classes which dictate the nation’s policies, Americans believe that the mercantile classes of other nations have the power to influence their nations’ actions. But it is not obvious that they do. In Cuba and North Korea, mercantile classes barely exist. In Iran, they function at the behest of the Ayatollah, In Burma and the Ivory Coast, corrupt ruling classes are in control. The relationship between mercantile classes to the governments of Syria and Russia is ambiguous at best. Sanctioning these nations might adversely affect their economic activities but are unlikely to have much effect on their governments.

For sanctions to have any change of bring about the desired results, certain conditions are necessary. Any sanctioned nation must have a large mercantile class powerful enough to influence its government. A government must care what its mercantile class wants done. Second, no nation with either small or huge international trade can be successfully sanctioned. It does no good for a government to tell its merchants that they can’t trade with another nation that they already don’t trade with. And telling merchants not to trade with another nation with whom they do substantial business might very well injure the sanctioning nation’s economy more than it injures the economy of the sanctioned nation. What’s left are those nations with middling international trade. Sanctions on such countries economies do do some damage but seldom enough to cause them to change. Such sanctions rarely if ever succeed. And what happens when they fail? Failures often lead to wars.

About one year after the US sanctioned Cuba, the US invaded Cuba with a CIA-sponsored paramilitary group. Eight CIA-supplied B-26 bombers attacked Cuban air fields. The next night, the invaders landed at the Bay of Pigs. They had been led to believe that the Cuban people would rise up and overthrow the Castro government. Instead they watched the Cuban army round up the invaders in just three days. The invasion was a major embarrassment for the US; in much of Latin America and the world, it was celebrated as evidence of the fallibility of US imperialism. But, despite the defeat, the United States had begun its sanctions-wars. Since then Americans have fought wars, often unannounced and unacknowledged, in numerous places after sanctions have failed: the Balkans, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, Sudan—another list of economic powerhouses. War backs up sanctions even when the wars also fail—an absolutely preposterous policy. Then the policy evolves into assassinations.

But perhaps sanctions, the wars that follow, and the assassinations are not meant to succeed, to cause any change. Some explanation for the absurdity must exist. Perhaps an

explanation can be garnered from an examination of the American penal system.

Every society from time to time has citizens whose actions endanger others. Sometimes those people endanger the existence of the society itself. So in primitive societies, such people were merely expelled, banished, or exiled. In early America, banishment was used by the Puritans when they exiled Roger Williams who then founded Rhode Island and the First Baptist Church. Williams' theology had endangered the religious unity of Puritan society. In many ways, exile is a far more humane way of treating nonconformists than the penal systems of today. But when finding places to exile people to became difficult, penal systems became prevalent. Then things became complicated. Instead of a way of merely removing dangerous people from society, people began to use prison as a form of punishment, which is what prisons have become today. When a victim says, "I want justice," s/he wants the perpetrator to be punished. So perpetrators pay a price when imprisoned and society, too, pays a price when it pays the costs of the penal system. Both the perpetrators and the law abiding people pay a price. The system's purpose is merely punishment regardless of its cost. It has no other function.

So, too, with sanctions and "we'll get you for that" wars. Their purpose is mere punishment for defying America's wishes and it matters not if the sanctions or the wars are successful. The punishment is inflicted regardless of the cost.

The sanctions against Cuba and the Bay of Pigs invasion never have had any result that favors America, but that doesn't matter. The Cuban people have been punished for more than half a century for not rising up and overthrowing the Castro government in 1961. The Iraqi people have been punished for the actions of Saddam Hussein. And the Afghan people are likewise being punished for their government's not having yielded Osama Bin Laden when America requested him to stand trial for planning the incidents of Nine/Eleven. And it doesn't matter if the punishments have cost America dearly. The costs of punishment don't count.

This policy is not uniquely American. The Western World is punishing the Palestinians for the Holocaust that Western European Christians inflicted on Europe's Jews. Not only does the cost of punishment not matter, neither do the people being punished. America persists in implementing these failed policies because Americans count its failures as successes. Fundamentally, the operational principal is, Hell hath no fury like an America scorned!

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