

Following the Venezuelan episode, pacific blockade did not appear to be practicable politics. At the 1907 Hague Conference, the great powers agreed to the "Porter Convention" which proscribed the use of reprisals to exact payment of debts.⁵³ However, the political significance invariably attached to the use of pacific blockade is an unavoidable consequence of any act of power and is not inherently different from that attached to the use of economic sanctions. In the context of 19th century international relations, pacific blockade was a relatively successful means of protecting the interests of the great powers. Albert Hogan wrote in 1908: "during the last eighty years, pacific blockades have been the means of bringing a number of such disputes to a peaceful conclusion."⁵⁴ The inchoate rules of pacific blockade minimized the resentment of the developed states which possessed ocean-going merchant marines, and the "right" of such states to use force to manage relations with less developed states was scarcely questioned.

Mercantilism is rightly condemned by modern economists because it is seen as a restraint upon the total volume of world trade. However, it has been shown that this is also one of the great defects of economic sanctions which have serious effects on international trade. They possess all the negative qualities possessed by measures of mercantilist trade war, without possessing the capacity mercantilist measures might be made to have to increase the resources of the United Nations. It is worth considering the possibility that a new system of sanctions analogous to the forms of mercantilist trade war and pacific blockade should be added to the arsenal of the United Nations.

What is needed is a sanction capable of addressing violations of international law or morality which does not depend entirely on coercion of the target government, which does not create major problems for international commerce or the economies dependent upon it, and which channels money in directions supportive of the goals of the United Nations. The first and last criteria are really one, because a system which employed money to halt or reverse the problem created by the target state would by definition depend less upon coercion. This requirement, and that of minimizing the negative effects of sanctions upon world trade, could be met by replacing the idea of complete or partial trade embargoes with that of a tax placed on the target state's imports and exports set at the level which generated maximum revenue. Although such a tax would inevitably reduce the flow of trade from and to the target state, the revenue generated by it would be available for commercial and aid projects that could restore a large part of the lost volume of world trade, and create opportunities for international business to recover lost

⁵³ Leon Friedman [Editor], The Law of War, (New York, 1972), vol II, p. 298.

⁵⁴ Albert Hogan, *op. cit.*, p. 3.