

The value of the Rhodesian case is affected by the evidence that London's real political objective was to protect British interests in the multi-racial Commonwealth rather than to compel Rhodesian submission, and that the broader economic requirements of the British state were permitted to impede the ostensible political purpose of the sanctions. This fact, however, only displaces responsibility for fraud, and is consistent with historical patterns related to the difficulties involved in the enforcement of sanctions.

The sanctions imposed on the Republic of South Africa were steadily tightened, but were never complete. South Africa is heavily dependent upon international trade, has limited capacity to compensate for deficiencies by domestic production, and does not enjoy the protection of sympathetic neighbours as did Rhodesia. Its economy could not withstand a complete trade embargo, but it never had to confront one.⁴⁴ The protracted refusal of the British government to participate in the international sanctions regime against South Africa was stated to be based on the negative impact it would have on employment in Britain, as well as amongst the black work-force in South Africa which it was the object of the sanctions to serve.

The sanctions imposed by President Carter on the Soviet Union following the invasion of Afghanistan were also far from complete because of the economic and political repercussions trade barriers would have had in the United States. Similar considerations severely restricted the willingness of other western states to impose trade controls.⁴⁵

The overriding consideration in the problem of enforcement is that the incentive for traders who wish to evade sanctions will generally be greater than is that of the officials who are charged with the task of blocking it. The bureaucratic conflict between those responsible for enforcement and those in Boards of Trade responsible for maintaining a favourable balance of trade is a significant addition to the problem. Over the history of naval and administrative blockade, there has been a steady improvement in the technology of enforcement, but there has never been a blockade of a major state which was impermeable. Governments connive at wartime trade with the enemy, either because it is recognized that the belligerent itself must trade to live, or because business interests suborn government. Certain international business interests are little concerned about respecting a blockade, preferring to profit from high wartime prices, and providing themselves with insurance against war loss. The deficiencies of wartime blockade have been more than equaled by those of peace-time sanctions.

⁴⁴ Joseph Hanlon, ed., South Africa, The Sanctions Report, pp. 154-60 and *passim*.

⁴⁵ Peggy L. Falkenheim, *loc. cit.*