

WHEN SANCTIONS WORKED: THE CASE OF RHODESIA REEXAMINED

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IN JANUARY 1966 British Prime Minister Harold Wilson promised African states at the Commonwealth Summit in Lagos that recently imposed sanctions would bring down the minority Rhodesian regime in 'weeks, not months'.¹ This rash prediction later became established as an implicit criterion showing the failure of sanctions. Rhodesia's survival, years later, was *ipso facto* proof, for popular opinion as well as for many scholars, that 'sanctions don't work'.

Zimbabwe is independent now, but Rhodesian sanctions have not been a major subject of scholarly inquiry for some years. After the initial wave of studies², many scholars lost interest. Sanctions were written off as a dismal failure. A handful of studies, such as those by Strack, Losman, Doxey, and Renwick, analysed the Rhodesian case shortly before or after Zimbabwe's independence in 1980.³ Yet they too considered that sanctions, as an economic tool intended to effect political change, had had relatively limited success.

Writing in 1978, Strack claimed that not only were Rhodesian sanctions 'ineffective' in terms of securing policy objectives, they were possibly 'counter-productive', causing 'the deterioration of a situation they were designed to alleviate'.⁴ The following year, Losman wrote that 'political success has not been forthcoming' as a result of the Rhodesian embargo, 'despite sanctions having some very damaging economic results'. He attributed Rhodesian willingness to negotiate to the increased costs of the

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1. Martin Bailey, *Oilgate: the sanctions scandal* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1979), pp. 128-129.

2. See for instance: Johan Galtung, 'On the Effects of International Economic Sanctions: with examples from the case of Rhodesia', *World Politics*, 19, (April 1967), pp. 378-416; T. R. C. Curtin and David Murray, *Economic Sanctions and Rhodesia: an examination of the probable effect of sanctions on national and personal incomes in Rhodesia and of the effectiveness of sanctions on Rhodesian policy*, Research Monograph no. 12 (London: Institute of Economic Affairs, September 1967); T. R. C. Curtin, 'Rhodesian Economic Development under Sanctions and "the Long Haul"', *African Affairs*, 67, (1968), pp. 100-110; R. B. Sutcliffe, 'The Political Economy of Rhodesian Sanctions', *Journal of Commonwealth Political Studies*, 7, (1969), pp. 113-125.

3. Harry R. Strack, *Sanctions: the case of Rhodesia* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1978); Donald L. Losman, *International Economic Sanctions: the cases of Cuba, Israel, and Rhodesia* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1979); Margaret Doxey, *Economic Sanctions and International Enforcement*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980); Robin Renwick, *Economic Sanctions*, Harvard Studies in International Affairs, no. 45 (Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Center for International Affairs, 1981).

4. Strack, *Sanctions*, pp. 237-238.

war, the growing hostility of neighbouring states, and the pressure brought to bear by South Africa, but *not* to sanctions.⁵

In 1980, the year Rhodesian whites acquiesced to majority rule, Doxey published a new edition of her 1971 study. On the opening page, she proclaimed that the efficacy of Rhodesian sanctions had been 'revealed as limited'. It had been the military might of the guerrilla forces, as well as 'heavy diplomatic pressure from Western powers and from South Africa', with only marginal assistance from sanctions, that had brought about a transfer of power to the majority.⁶ The year after Rhodesia became Zimbabwe, Renwick wrote that sanctions 'have very rarely succeeded in producing the desired result'. In the case of Rhodesia, he concluded, the severe economic difficulties of the late 1970s 'owed far more to the world economic recession and, increasingly, to the war than to sanctions'.⁷

In contrast to these authors, the two most substantive studies of international sanctions in recent years, Columbia University political scientist David Baldwin's subtly argued *Economic Statecraft* and a massive study by the Washington-based Institute for International Economics (IIE), both consider Rhodesian sanctions a success.⁸ Baldwin argues that the judgement of failure by many authors rests on impossible criteria for 'success': the 'successful' sanctions must work quickly and by themselves to bring about the presumed objective. Both Baldwin and the IIE study conclude that sanctions, while not the only factor in bringing majority rule to Rhodesia, made a significant long-term contribution to that result.

Prominent white businessmen interviewed in Zimbabwe in 1986 agreed. They maintained that sanctions were a major factor in forcing the Smith regime to negotiate a transition to majority rule.⁹ Assessing their 14-year battle to keep the Rhodesian economy from succumbing to the effects of sanctions, the businessmen concluded that in the end they lost. 'Some people feel that sanctions failed', claimed a former employee of the Association of Rhodesian Industries. 'I think they failed initially', he added. 'But long term they exercised a very important element. . . . Certainly they didn't help'.¹⁰ 'Sanctions by itself (sic) would sooner or later have forced a political decision', affirmed a colleague employed by the Associated Chambers of Commerce of Rhodesia during the sanctions period. 'No economy anywhere in the world can exist under a sanctions type situation for a long period of time. . . . Sooner or later something had to give'.¹¹

5. Losman, *International Economic Sanctions*, pp. 122–123, 124.

6. Doxey, *Economic Sanctions and International Enforcement*, pp. 1–2, 73.

7. Renwick, *Economic Sanctions*, pp. 77, 87, 91.

8. David A. Baldwin, *Economic Statecraft* (Princeton University Press, 1985); Gary Clude Hufbauer and Jeffrey J. Schott, with Kimberly Ann Elliott, *Economic Sanctions Reconsidered: history and current policy* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for International Economics, 1985).

9. Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations are taken from interviews conducted by Elizabeth Schmidt in Zimbabwe between November 1985 and June 1986.

10. Anonymous interview, Harare, Zimbabwe, 14 May 1986.

11. Anonymous interview, Harare, Zimbabwe, 13 May 1986.

Moreover, more strongly enforced sanctions could have been even more effective. If Rhodesia's petroleum lifeline had been severed and if South Africa had not served as a back door to international trade, the businessmen agreed, the country could not have survived for more than a matter of months.

In light of the current prominence of the South African sanctions debate, a reassessment of the Rhodesian case is greatly needed. The differences between the two cases are substantial, but there are also significant parallels in the arguments and in the methodology for evaluating success. A careful look at Rhodesia can provide a guide to potential pitfalls in the South African debate, as well as challenging the premature scholarly consensus of 'failure' in Rhodesia.

A question of methods

Evaluating the effects of sanctions is complex. The use of economic means to attain political objectives implies the conceptual separation of the effects of particular measures from other interacting economic factors, and the even more problematic estimation of the political effects of such economic results. Much debate about sanctions further confuses the issue by not recognizing this complexity. Failure to distinguish short-term from long-term effects, direct from indirect causal sequences, and multiple objectives against which to evaluate success, makes a valid examination of the empirical evidence impossible.

'Sanctions', moreover, is a general term which may refer to any set of penalties applied to punish or modify behaviour. Evaluating the effects requires, first of all, specifying the particular measures adopted, which may range from highly selective tariffs or boycotts to a comprehensive economic embargo enforced by a military blockade.

David Baldwin's *Economic Statecraft* is virtually unique in laying out a systematic basis for analysing the effects of sanctions. His study provides several guidelines that we have adapted as a framework for this article.¹²

First, sanctions almost always have multiple objectives. This maxim, which applies even to sanctions adopted by one government, is especially applicable to multilateral sanctions, such as those against Rhodesia. Evaluating whether sanctions 'worked' in a particular case requires specifying the objective being considered, and weighing what contribution sanctions made toward achieving that result. In the Rhodesian case, a majority-ruled Zimbabwe is most commonly taken as the policy objective against which to evaluate success. We too will consider this the primary objective for the purposes of this article. But to the extent that some of the sanctioning

12. Baldwin, *Economic Statecraft*, pp. 145 ff.

parties had other more limited or indeed contradictory objectives, lack of effectiveness may be attributed to a lack of political will rather than a deficiency in the means (sanctions). And, vis-à-vis such more limited objectives, sanctions may well be termed 'successful' or 'working' even while the primary international objective of majority rule was not realized.

Second, even in strictly economic terms, sanctions have distinct effects in the short-term, medium-term and long-term. In considering economic effects, it is necessary to specify the time frame under consideration. Different measures take effect over different time periods. Such effects also depend on the particular sanctions adopted, the timing and severity of enforcement and concomitant economic conditions.

Third, the political effects of sanctions are also multiple and almost certainly contradictory. Evaluating the cumulative effect thus requires comparing a variety of separate effects and their interactions. It is particularly important to distinguish the symbolic effects of sanctions (both short-term and long-term) and the indirect socio-political consequences of the economic effects (primarily long-term). Such factors, moreover, vary with the sector of the society, particularly when the conflict itself concerns the relationship of the different sectors to social and political power. Sanctions may affect the political will of the different parties, the resources available to those parties, or both.

Fourth, in both economic and political terms, sanctions interact with other factors, which may reinforce or retard the attainment of the objectives being considered. There is no way to have a laboratory test-case considering *only* the effects of sanctions, with all other variables constant.

Accordingly, the relevant question is not whether sanctions alone led directly and obviously to the announced objectives of the sanctioning parties. This is *a priori* likely to be a rare occurrence, particularly when the major objective is an intrinsically difficult one such as overthrow of an entrenched regime or social system. The question is rather a counterfactual query: what would have happened had sanctions *not* been adopted, being replaced by inaction or some other policy alternative? Such a counterfactual question is indeed not easy to answer, but without it one cannot logically evaluate how important sanctions were to the final result, and, consequently, whether sanctions 'worked'.

It seems overly stringent to require that sanctions be a sufficient or necessary condition of majority rule in Rhodesia in order to say they 'worked'. But one would hesitate to claim success if in fact sanctions only made a minor contribution to that end. The proposition that 'sanctions worked' should be supported by evidence that sanctions were one of the major factors accelerating the fall of the white minority regime, or, in other words, that without sanctions majority rule would have been significantly delayed.

In this article, following a brief chronological summary of sanctions measures taken against Rhodesia, we review the evidence available on the objectives and political will of the major parties adopting sanctions, the economic effects, and the political effects and other concomitant factors leading to the demise of white minority-ruled Rhodesia. We conclude with brief comments on the implications for the case of South Africa.

Chronological summary

The application of United Nations sanctions against Rhodesia between 1965 and 1979 constitutes the most far-reaching and ambitious attempt to date to implement economic sanctions under international auspices.¹³ In evaluating their effects, it is important to note that they were imposed gradually, moving from partial to comprehensive, from voluntary to mandatory.¹⁴ In addition, Rhodesia was warned as early as October 1964, one full year before UDI, that a unilateral declaration of independence would result in the imposition of sanctions by Great Britain. Consequently, all sectors of the Rhodesian economy were able to plan for the event. The Rhodesian government was able to announce UDI at the most advantageous moment, in November, just after the sale of the tobacco crop. Over the long term, apart from covert evasion, several of Rhodesia's economic partners openly declined to apply sanctions during much of the period they were in effect.¹⁵

On 11 November 1965, Prime Minister Ian Smith announced the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) of Rhodesia. The British government refused to recognize Rhodesia as independent so long as the white minority regime rejected the possibility of eventual majority rule. In a decade characterized by militant African nationalism and rapid decolonization, Rhodesian-style 'independence' could not be defended to the Commonwealth or to the world at large.¹⁶ The day after UDI, the Security Council called upon all UN member nations to withhold recognition of Rhodesia and to provide it no assistance.

From the outset Britain rejected the use of force or all-out economic warfare as means to bring Rhodesia back to legality. Instead, it proposed a limited set of economic sanctions, the purpose of which was not to bring Smith to his knees, but to make him 'reasonable'.¹⁷ On the day UDI was

13. Renwick, *Economic Sanctions*, p. 9.

14. Strack, *Sanctions*, p. 22.

15. Doxey, *Economic Sanctions and International Enforcement*, p. 107; William Minter, *King Solomon's Mines Revisited: western interests and the burdened history of Southern Africa* (New York: Basic Books, 1986), p. 209.

16. Minter, *King Solomon's Mines*, p. 203.

17. Minter, *King Solomon's Mines*, pp. 203, 207, 208, 209.

declared, Britain imposed selective sanctions against Rhodesia and urged the world community to do likewise. The first wave of British sanctions included a ban on the purchase of Rhodesian sugar and tobacco (which constituted 71 per cent of the value of Rhodesian exports to Britain), a cessation of British aid and export credit guarantees, and the removal of Rhodesia from the sterling area and the Commonwealth preference system.¹⁸ Britain also banned the export of arms to Rhodesia and Rhodesia was denied access to the London capital market, its major source of financing.¹⁹

On 20 November, the Security Council adopted voluntary sanctions on Rhodesia, requesting all member nations to break economic relations with the country, and stressing the need to embargo the sale of arms, military material, and petroleum.²⁰ Britain still refused to concede that the Rhodesian situation constituted 'a threat to international peace and security', grounds for mandatory economic sanctions under Chapter VII of the UN Charter.²¹

In December, Britain expanded its embargo list, adding Rhodesian copper, chrome, asbestos, iron and steel, maize, and beef, encompassing 95 per cent of the value of Rhodesian exports to Great Britain. The sale of petroleum and petroleum products to Rhodesia was also prohibited.²² Rhodesia Reserve Bank assets in London, worth approximately 10 million pounds sterling, were frozen, and the payment of dividends, interest, and pensions to Rhodesian citizens was blocked.²³ By the end of January 1966, Britain had banned all exports to Rhodesia, with minor exceptions. By the end of February, the remaining five per cent of Britain's customary imports from Rhodesia were banned.²⁴

Not until 16 December 1966, however, more than a year after UDI, did the Security Council impose selective mandatory sanctions against Rhodesia, recognizing that the state of affairs in that country was 'a threat to

18. Strack, *Sanctions*, p. 17; Losman, *International Economic Sanctions*, p. 94; Robert McKinnell, 'Sanctions and the Rhodesian Economy', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 7, (1969), p. 561.

19. Losman, *International Economic Sanctions*, pp. 95, 105; Elaine Windrich, *Britain and the Politics of Rhodesian Independence* (London: Croom Helm Ltd., 1978), p. 63; Mervyn Frost, 'Collective Sanctions in International Relations: an historical overview of the theory and practice,' in *South Africa and Sanctions: genesis and prospects, a symposium* (Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations and South African Institute of International Affairs, 24 February 1979), p. 20.

20. Security Council Resolution 217, 20 November 1965.

21. Windrich, *Britain and the Politics of Rhodesian Independence*, pp. 64–65.

22. Strack, *Sanctions*, p. 17; McKinnell, 'Sanctions and the Rhodesian Economy', p. 561; Windrich, *Britain and the Politics of Rhodesian Independence*, p. 69; Renwick, *Economic Sanctions* p. 27; Losman, *International Economic Sanctions* p. 89; Doxey, *Economic Sanctions and International Enforcement*, p. 67.

23. Strack, *Sanctions*, p. 17; Frost, 'Collective Sanctions', p. 20; Losman, *International Economic Sanctions* p. 105; Doxey, *Economic Sanctions and International Enforcement* p. 68.

24. Doxey, *Economic Sanctions and International Enforcement* p. 67; Windrich, *Britain and the Politics of Rhodesian Independence*, pp. 78–79; Renwick, *Economic Sanctions*, p. 27.

the peace'.²⁵ These sanctions affected approximately 60 per cent, by value, of Rhodesia's exports and 15 per cent, by value, of its imports (military equipment, aircraft, motor vehicles and petroleum).²⁶ Failure of any member state to implement the mandatory sanctions constituted a violation of Article 25 of the UN Charter.

Two and one-half years after UDI, in the face of the white minority regime's continued intransigence, the Security Council imposed comprehensive mandatory economic sanctions against Rhodesia. As of 29 May 1968, citizens, entities, and governments of UN member states were prohibited from importing any item that originated in Rhodesia. Nor could they export any item to Rhodesia, with certain humanitarian exceptions. Transport of Rhodesian goods, investments and loans, and promotion of emigration to Rhodesia were banned. Airline companies were prohibited from operating flights to or from Rhodesia. UN member states were required to break diplomatic relations with Rhodesia and to withdraw all trade representatives from that country.²⁷

International law obliged member states of the United Nations to implement sanctions, and deference to African states or to Britain ensured nominal compliance even from skeptical Western powers such as France and the German Federal Republic. But there were major overt gaps. Botswana, wedged between Rhodesia and South Africa, was not expected to implement the sanctions it agreed with in principle. Rhodesia's northern neighbours, Zambia, was an enthusiastic advocate of sanctions and moved quickly to reduce trade with and through Rhodesia. But it was commonly acknowledged that Zambia could ill afford a total cutoff. Not until January 1973, when Rhodesia attempted to pressure President Kaunda with a temporary border closure, did Zambia retaliate by refusing to reopen the border for nearly six years. In October 1978, under severe economic and military pressure, Zambia was forced to reopen the border.

Rhodesia's other neighbours, South Africa and the Portuguese colonial regime in Mozambique, openly rejected sanctions. Only after Mozambique's independence did the new government there implement sanctions, closing the border in March 1976. South Africa, for its own reasons, applied economic pressures against the Smith regime, particularly after 1976, but consistently refused to admit that it was doing so, much less concede that such pressures could be considered sanctions. In late 1971, moreover, the US Congress passed the Byrd Amendment, explicitly authorizing violation of sanctions to permit importation of 'strategic and critical materials' from Rhodesia. This unilateral violation of international

25. Security Council Resolution 232, 16 December 1966.

26. Losman, *International Economic Sanctions*, p. 95.

27. Security Council Resolution 253, 29 May 1968.

law continued until March 1977, when it was rescinded at the initiative of the Carter administration.²⁸

Comprehensive mandatory sanctions, in sum, were only in effect from 1968 to 1979. The US was in open violation for half that period. Strategic Mozambique complied only during the last three years. Even formal adherence to sanctions was, therefore, limited. Covert violations raised even more questions about the will to implement sanctions.

The issue of political will

For Zimbabwean nationalists, African states and the UN majority that joined them in supporting international sanctions, the objective was clear: the fall of the white settler regime and its replacement by a government based on a universal franchise. Britain, however, the formal colonial power and Rhodesia's leading trading partner, was necessarily the leading actor in implementation of sanctions. And the objectives of successive British governments were far more limited, qualified and ambiguous. Despite Harold Wilson's 1964 electoral promise of 'no independence before majority rule', both he and his successors in practice advanced more limited goals. London's 'moderate' solutions, before and after UDI, would have allowed the continuation of white minority rule, provided only that the principle and the future possibility of majority rule were admitted. The key demand for much of the period was Rhodesia's 'return to legality', combined with the objective of avoiding wider revolutionary confrontation in Rhodesia or in the region.

The distinction between these goals and the African demand for defeat of the Smith regime is important, for it makes British slowness in implementing sanctions and opposition to other concomitant measures more intelligible. Britain ruled out not only any use of force against Rhodesian whites, but any sanctions which raised the possibility of confrontation with South Africa or Portugal. And any actions by African nationalists that might provoke a 'breakdown in law and order'—a term not applied to Smith's own illegal action—were strongly discouraged. The sanctions adopted by Britain, therefore, were intended not only to put pressure on the Smith regime, but also to deflect African pressures for the use of force or all-out economic warfare and to contain to manageable proportions the negative reactions of Commonwealth members towards Britain's perceived inaction.

If the primary British objective had been to bring down the Smith regime, then sanctions would logically have been implemented more decisively and accompanied by other measures designed to accomplish this end. Many

28. The most extensive study of the Byrd Amendment controversy, through 1976, is Anthony Lake, *The 'Tar Baby' Option: American policy toward Southern Rhodesia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976).

observers at the time argued that a quick, decisive blow against Smith might have established British authority in Salisbury. But success would have required British willingness to use force, to go immediately to all-out economic warfare, or to appeal to Africans and other loyal British citizens in Rhodesia to rebel. All these measures were ruled out in advance. Wilson explicitly renounced the threat of force, thus denying himself its use, if only as a bluff. Instead, sanctions were implemented gradually. The lag time of two and one-half years before Britain accepted comprehensive mandatory sanctions gave Rhodesia time to restructure its economy, develop new markets and devise means of disposing of its products clandestinely.

The limitations of political will vis-à-vis the objective of majority rule were particularly apparent during the period the Conservative Party was in office in Britain (1970–1977, 1979). A substantial faction of the party was more sympathetic to the Smith regime than to the objective of majority rule, and persistently lobbied against sanctions. The Conservative government, it is true, did renew sanctions legislation, but the decisive argument in favour of this policy was reluctance to provoke African and Commonwealth reaction, *not* urgency to end minority rule.

The mixture of objectives in adopting sanctions is revealed most clearly in the enforcement process. If there had been the political will to make sanctions effective, then it would have been logical to identify and target key areas of vulnerability, such as the oil known to be passing through Mozambique and South Africa. But it was taboo to focus on the obvious involvement in sanctions-breaking of South Africa and Portugal, or of British, American, and other multinational firms with subsidiaries in the region.²⁹ Instead, the world was urged to consider a variety of smaller gaps and loopholes in sanctions. Having decided that the mainstream of economic commerce with Rhodesia could or should not be dammed, Western policymakers did their best to pretend it did not exist. Such a charade makes sense only if one allows that other objectives took priority over the presumed goal of majority rule.

The logical steps to enforce sanctions were blocked by the parallel Western objective of avoiding a confrontation with South Africa or Portugal. In legal terms it was possible to take such steps under Article 25 of the UN Charter.³⁰ But the proposal to extend economic sanctions to South Africa and Portugal, in order to force their compliance with mandatory sanctions against Rhodesia, was rejected outright by Great Britain and its allies on the

29. Doxey, *Economic Sanctions and International Enforcement*, p. 118; Minter, *King Solomon's Mines*, p. 203; Garfield Todd, 'Address Regarding Rhodesian Sanctions to the Economic Symposium, held at the University of Zimbabwe', Salisbury, 8–10 September 1980, p. 8; Bailey, *Oilgate*, p. 8.

30. Windrich, *Britain and the Politics of Rhodesian Independence*, p. 106; Renwick, *Economic Sanctions*, p. 35; Doxey, *Economic Sanctions and International Enforcement*, pp. 3–4.

Security Council.³¹ Critics to the left and right of the British government freely predicted that sanctions would fail if there were no efforts to close these giant loopholes. Yet for most sectors of public opinion in the West, the British government succeeded in diverting attention from the obvious. The massive evasion of sanctions was so taken for granted that it largely became invisible.

This is particularly striking in the case of oil. In April 1966, with Wilson's forecast of January already proven false, the Labour government asked the UN Security Council for, and received an endorsement for, the use of force to stop oil tankers from landing at Beira.³² In consequence, the Royal Navy maintained a patrol over the next ten years at a cost estimated at some £100 million, blocking the flow of crude oil to Rhodesia.³³ But this did nothing to halt the flow of refined oil products through South Africa or Mozambique's other port of Lourenço Marques (now Maputo). The British government claimed that a blockade so close to South African waters would be unnecessarily provocative.³⁴ As a result, for the first ten years of sanctions, the bulk of Rhodesian oil was processed in South African refineries, transported by ship to Lourenço Marques, and then by rail to Rhodesia.³⁵ After Mozambique closed its border with Rhodesia, South Africa took over the transport network, supplying oil to Rhodesia by way of a rail link hastily built between the two countries.³⁶ The major Western oil

31. Doxey, *Economic Sanctions and International Enforcement*, pp. 92, 119; Lake, *The 'Tar Baby' Option*, pp. 39, 44; Windrich, *Britain and the Politics of Rhodesian Independence*, p. 218; Curtin, 'Rhodesian Economic Development', p. 102. Strack contends that it was the firm conviction of the vast majority of African states that sanctions against Rhodesia would be ineffective unless they were also applied to South Africa and Portugal, and unless they were backed by the use of force. This was the essence of paragraph 4 of United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2382 (XXIII), of 7 November 1968. (Strack, *Sanctions*, p. 242).

32. Security Council Resolution 221, 9 April 1966.

33. Minter, *King Solomon's Mines*, p. 210; Doxey, *Economic Sanctions and International Government*, p. 71. The British government removed the blockade in 1976 when the newly independent government in Mozambique announced that it would enforce sanctions.

34. Doxey, *Economic Sanctions and International Enforcement*, p. 119; Windrich, *Britain and the Politics of Rhodesian Independence*, p. 204; Lake, *The 'Tar Baby' Option*, p. 39; interview with Tirivafi J. Kangai, Harare, Zimbabwe, 11 June 1986. Kangai was chief representative of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) to the United Nations, the United States, and the Caribbean from 1977 to 1980.

35. Doxey described the Beira naval blockade as 'a farce at the British taxpayer's expense'. *Economic Sanctions and International Enforcement*, p. 93.

36. Bailey, *Oilgate*, pp. 140, 173, 241; Bernard Rivers, 'Sanctions Breakers—selling oil to Rhodesia', *Southern Africa*, 10, no. 7 (September 1977), pp. 9–11; Center for Social Action of the United Church of Christ, *Oil Conspiracy: an investigation into how multinational oil companies provide Rhodesia's oil needs* (New York: Center for Social Action, 21 June 1976), p. 26. As early as December 1965, Shell, a British-Dutch firm that played a leading part in Shell/BP marketing arrangements in southern Africa, told the British government that the only way to keep oil from getting to Rhodesia was to cut off all oil supplies to South Africa. According to Robin Renwick, head of the Rhodesia Department of the British Foreign Office during the Lancaster House negotiations, the British government was unwilling to sever South African oil supplies, and the matter was dropped. *Economic Sanctions*, p. 29.

companies were intimately involved at every stage of the sanctions-busting operation. A government inquiry, for example, estimated that in 1966 as much as two-thirds of the oil sent through Lourenço Marques came from the South African subsidiaries of British-Dutch Shell and state-owned British Petroleum. Mobil, Caltex and Total supplied smaller percentages.³⁷

The failure of Western powers to notice these links, or to recognize the aid and encouragement they gave to the Smith regime, should not be seen as mere mistakes or inadvertence. Common sense alone could predict that sanctions would be violated through South Africa and Mozambique. Since the major oil companies controlled supply and distribution in these countries as well as Rhodesia, it required no special expertise to anticipate their involvement. Press reports and private communications from the Portuguese government, as well as their own intelligence reports, were available to British officials. British ignorance at the top, to the extent that it was genuine self-deception rather than conscious duplicity, can only be explained by a 'need not to know' that screened out contradictory information.

This selective enforcement of the oil embargo made little sense if the objective were indeed depriving Rhodesia of vital oil supplies, thereby forcing Smith to negotiate an end to minority rule. However, judged as a means of preserving Britain's international credibility as an opponent of white minority rule, partial implementation seems to have had much success. Without the flashy confrontation over Beira, international pressures on Britain for a more substantive confrontation with Rhodesia might have escalated more rapidly. An open refusal to implement the oil embargo would have solidified the radical critique of Britain as an accomplice of the Smith regime. The charade did not stop the oil, but it did muffle the criticism, avoid a confrontation with South Africa, and even limit the conflict with Portugal, objectives equally or more important to London.

The other major international violation of sanctions also reveals the relevance of contradictory objectives and political will. In November 1971, the so-called Byrd Amendment became US law, enabling the United States to import Rhodesian chrome ore in contravention of United Nations sanctions. This forbade any prohibition on the importation into the

37. The British government's Bingham Report (1978) officially confirms that senior British ministers knew from early 1968 that oil was reaching Rhodesia through a number of suppliers, including the subsidiaries of Shell and BP. At that time, the British government was the controlling shareholder of BP, owning 51 per cent of the stock. Moreover, two of BP's directors were British government-appointed. British interests owned 40 per cent of Shell, the remaining 60 per cent belonging to Dutch investors. The French government owned a 40 per cent voting share of Total, while Mobil and Caltex were American companies. (Doxey, *Economic Sanctions and International Enforcement*, pp. 105, 117; Bailey, *Oilgate*, p. 24).

United States of any strategic and critical material from any non-communist country so long as the importation of such material from communist countries was not prohibited.³⁸ Although Rhodesian chrome ore was not mentioned in the law, Senator Harry Byrd of Virginia, a long-time opponent of United States and United Nations policy toward Rhodesia, made no secret of the fact that his amendment was specifically intended to allow its importation.³⁹ Between 1972 and 1977, the United States imported \$212 million worth of Rhodesian ferrochrome, chrome ore, and nickel, as well as asbestos, copper, and other ores and alloys.⁴⁰ This was important to Rhodesia. In a 1986 interview, for instance, a businessman involved in the covert exportation of minerals during UDI maintained that the Byrd Amendment was a major boon to Rhodesia. The country's minerals, he claimed, had been 'blotted out of the US market by sanctions'. According to the businessman, when the United States was intent upon enforcing sanctions, Rhodesia 'did not find it either possible or convenient to try to break those sanctions', for the US administered sanctions 'fairly efficiently'.⁴¹

Soon after amendment was signed into law by President Nixon, Ian Smith told *US News and World Report* that the reopening of the US chrome market would help Rhodesia to surmount its foreign exchange problems.⁴² Editorials in the *Rhodesian Herald* called the move 'a wonderful boost for Rhodesian morale' and forecast 'the accelerated erosion of sanctions'. One editorial concluded that '... the American move is at the least a signal to the world that sanctions are not important enough to warrant serious sacrifices; and at the most that their usefulness has lost its credibility in American eyes'.⁴³

The opposition to sanctions shown by the Byrd Amendment was not primarily based on hostility to sanctions as a means, but on rejection of the goal. Congressional supporters of the amendment, disproportionately from the southern states, included many openly sympathetic to the Smith regime. Others who gave nominal support to the objective of majority rule argued that it was not worth the putative costs to US security of forgoing

38. Strack, *Sanctions*, pp. 146–147; Edgar Lockwood, 'An Inside Look at the Sanctions Campaign', *Issues*, 4, no. 3 (Fall 1974), p. 73.

39. Strack, *Sanctions*, p. 148; Gale W. McGee (Chair, Senate Subcommittee on Africa), 'The U.S. Congress and the Rhodesian Chrome Issue', *Issues*, 2, no. 2 (Summer 1972), p. 3.

40. When the Byrd Amendment was enacted, 60 per cent of US chrome ore imports originated in the Soviet Union. During the five-year tenure of the Byrd Amendment, the Soviet Union continued to be the leading supplier of high grade chrome ore, supplying 52 per cent by volume, as compared with Rhodesia's 11 per cent. Although the quantity was thus relatively unimportant for the US, it was of tremendous significance to Rhodesia, both in terms of foreign exchange and public relations. Strack, *Sanctions*, p. 148; Renwick, *Economic Sanctions*, p. 44.

41. Anonymous interview, Harare, Zimbabwe, 20 May 1986.

42. Interview in *US News and World Report*, 29 November 1971, quoted in Strack, *Sanctions*, p. 162.

43. *Rhodesian Herald*, 25 September 1971; 6 November 1971; 27 January 1972, quoted in Strack, *Sanctions*, pp. 163–164.

free access to Rhodesian minerals. The revocation of the Byrd Amendment sanctions loophole, in March 1977, at the urging of newly elected President Jimmy Carter, reflected a shift in US political priorities.⁴⁴ The result provides good evidence for the potential of seriously enforced sanctions measures.

According to the minerals exporter quoted above, the consequences were absolutely devastating for Rhodesia. Not only did the new law prohibit the further import of Rhodesian chrome and ferrochrome into the United States, it also banned the import of stainless steel unless the exporting country had taken measures against Rhodesian chrome. In effect, the businessman claimed, 'the United States found a means of extending its own domestic actions to most other countries'. The United States, he noted, required that chrome ore and ferrochrome be analysed upon receipt by a scientific test which could easily distinguish the higher-quality Rhodesian ore from South African ore. All stainless steel imports had to be accompanied by the results of similar tests. The businessman continued: 'This was very neatly done. . . The net result was that we found ourselves blotted out of most significant markets'. While ferrochrome continued to be produced, the ability of Rhodesian industry to manufacture lower grade ferrochrome was limited by technical considerations and the availability of raw material. Moreover, the process was extremely uneconomic. As a result, the businessman concluded: 'Things ground slowly, but surely, to a halt'. Once the United States acquired the political will to make sanctions effective, it found the technical means to plug the loopholes. Because it represented an extremely large market for stainless steel and related products, the United States was able to make other countries comply with its stringent enforcement demands. This loss of such major foreign exchange earners as chrome ore and ferrochrome, the minerals exporter concluded, was 'a contributing factor in the growing inability of the Rhodesian government to finance the war'.

The cases of oil and chrome are only the most dramatic illustrations of the need to consider political will, as reflected in implementation and enforcement, in evaluating the effects of sanctions. The economic effects depend not only on the 'objective' economic vulnerability of the target state, but on the mix of objectives of the sanctioning states and their will to enforce the sanctions. The political effects in turn depend not only on the immediate symbolic impact and on the economic results, but also on the signals of intention conveyed by enforcement or lack of enforcement.

Tirivafi Kangai, the chief representative of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) to the United Nations, claimed that Britain could have brought down the Smith regime had it imposed a total blockade and seriously enforced economic sanctions. Had Britain taken such a position,

44. Losman, *International Economic Sanctions*, p. 151.

Kangai maintained, the armed struggle, and the horrific bloodshed that it entailed, could have been avoided.⁴⁵ Certainly, if the flow of oil had been dammed, Rhodesian industries, as well as its war machine, would have ground to a halt.

Clearly, the political will for such drastic sanctions enforcement was absent. As early as 1967, the *Financial Mail* reported that 'United Nations members have paid lip service to UN resolutions on the subject [of sanctions] and allowed their nationals to go about their Rhodesian business quietly and profitably'. That the firms of numerous countries were actively breaking sanctions was 'obvious to anyone doing a spot of window shopping'.⁴⁶ The *Financial Mail* predicted that if such sanctions busting activities continued, 'Rhodesia could soon be out of the dog box economically and therefore, in the end, politically'.⁴⁷ The home governments of the companies violating sanctions were, for the most part, aware of the illegal activities. According to a prominent businessman employed by the Associated Chambers of Commerce of Rhodesia during the 1970s, 'they had to have a pretty good idea of what was going on. . . . They knew that we were getting things out'.⁴⁸ Thus, as a result of massive sanctions busting by foreign corporations, with the collusion of many governments, the illegal Rhodesian regime continued to survive.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, sanctions *did* have substantial effects; but they were not all immediate, nor were they all obvious and direct.

Economic effects of sanctions

In 1965, Rhodesia's economy was extremely dependent upon foreign trade and investment. Exports earned 45 per cent of national income, of which 34 per cent was in turn spent on imports.⁵⁰ The country was essentially an exporter of primary products, the most important being tobacco, which constituted nearly one-third of total export value, and minerals, which comprised another 22 per cent. Rhodesia relied on imports for virtually all of its machinery, transport equipment, chemicals, and spare parts, and for all of its petroleum.⁵¹ According to Rhodesia's National

45. Interview with Tirivafi J. Kangai.

46. *Financial Mail* (SA), 29 September 1967, p. 1049.

47. *Financial Mail*, 5 May 1967, p. 368.

48. Anonymous interview, Harare, Zimbabwe, 13 May 1986.

49. Minter, *King Solomon's Mines* p. 210; Doxey, *Economic Sanctions and International Enforcement*, p. 105; Interview with John Deary, head of Rhodesia's Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace during UDI, Harare, Zimbabwe, 15 April 1986. On 10 September 1978, *News of the World* quoted the British Liberal Party Leader, David Steel, as saying: 'Those who shipped in the oil were not hostile powers. They were British companies, backed by the British Foreign Office, with the connivance of British Cabinet Ministers and the knowledge of the Prime Minister. . . . The sanctions-busters were our own leaders!' (Quoted in Bailey, *Oilgate*, p. 15).

50. Strack, *Sanctions*, p. 16; E. G. Cross, 'Economic Sanctions as a Tool of Policy Against Rhodesia', *The World Economy*, 4, (March 1981), p. 70; Donald L. Losman, 'Rhodesia: a decade under sanctions,' *Il Politico* (June 1978), p. 323.

51. Losman, 'Rhodesia', p. 323.

Development Plan of 1965, the inflow from abroad of capital, technical skills, and management capability was absolutely crucial to the country's economic growth.⁵²

The immediate impact of sanctions was dramatic. Between 1965 and 1966, the total value of Rhodesian exports fell by 38 per cent. By 1968 total exports were worth slightly more than half their 1965 value.⁵³ Minister of Finance John Wrathall told the Legislative Assembly in July 1966: 'Exports are Rhodesia's lifeblood. Our success or failure as a nation depends on our ability to make good, by whatever means possible, the loss of the export markets which have been closed by sanctions'.⁵⁴ Sanctions reduced not only the volume of exports but also their value. The regime's covert trading partners were not willing to risk the purchase of contraband products unless they could strike a good bargain. Thus, Rhodesia had to sell cheap and buy dear, paying extra costs at every step of the routes used to disguise the trade. Over the 14-year sanctions period, the sales discounts alone were estimated to have cost Rhodesia R\$1.1 billion.⁵⁵

The rapid deterioration in Rhodesia's terms of trade caused serious problems. By 1973 even Prime Minister Ian Smith was forced to concede in parliament that 'we are compelled to export at a discount and import at a premium. . . . This has the effect of reducing profit margins internally, and at the national level, it has an adverse effect on our balance of payments and foreign reserves'.⁵⁶ Rhodesia's foreign exchange earnings declined markedly, and the Smith regime imposed stringent import controls. Between 1965 and 1966 imports declined by 30 per cent, affecting agricultural and industrial inputs, new machinery, and spare parts.⁵⁷

Tobacco, the most vital export, was most severely damaged. Between 1965 and 1966 the volume of tobacco produced fell by one-half, its value by two-thirds.⁵⁸ 'Sanctions disrupted our tobacco industry terribly', asserted John Graylin, who in 1965 was chairman of the Tobacco Export Promotion Council. 'The prices fell alarmingly. We couldn't sell it. We had a big stockpile Then we started to have to sell it under the counter', but at a tremendous discount. The covert process 'wasn't very profitable', Graylin concluded.⁵⁹ The government was forced to subsidize tobacco growers, paying out some R\$16 million per year. By the time independence came in

52. Robert McKinnell, 'Assessing the Economic Impact of Sanctions Against Rhodesia: a note on T.R.C. Curtin's article', *African Affairs*, 67, (1968), p. 231.

53. Cross, 'Economic Sanctions as a Tool of Policy', p. 73; Renwick, *Economic Sanctions*, p. 40.

54. Strack, *Sanctions*, p. 88.

55. Cross, 'Economic Sanctions as a Tool of Policy', p. 73; Losman, *International Economic Sanctions* p. 103; *Financial Mail*, 6 January 1967; Interview with John Graylin, Harare, Zimbabwe, 5 May 1986. Graylin was chair of the Tobacco Export Promotion Council from 1965 to 1968. He subsequently chaired the National Export Council, and, finally, was named chief executive of the Association of Rhodesian Industries.

56. Renwick, *Economic Sanctions*, p. 77; Strack, *Sanctions*, p. 87.

57. R. B. Sutcliffe, 'Rhodesian Trade Since UDI', *The World Today*, 23, (1967), p. 420.

58. Interview with E. G. Cross, Harare, Zimbabwe, 26 March 1986.

59. Interview with John Graylin.

1980, the tobacco industry had lost billions of dollars.⁶⁰ Writing for the South African *Financial Mail* in 1968, Ruth Weiss described the plight of Rhodesian farmers under sanctions. 'Agriculture is the real casualty of the sanctions war', she wrote. 'The tobacco industry has suffered and will take years to recover'.⁶¹ While many of the big growers survived the sanctions years, many of the smaller farmers did not. According to H. W. Freeman, managing director of the Tobacco Corporation set up by the government to sustain the industry, there were 3,054 European tobacco producers in 1964. By 1980, only 1,544 producers remained. Scientific research, spurred by sanctions, had resulted in increased yields per acre, so that the same quantity of tobacco was produced. But only the most prosperous and efficient farmers survived; the others abandoned farming or turned to different crops.⁶²

Agriculture, although hardest hit, was by no means the only sector affected. The motor vehicle industry was also severely damaged. Petrol rationing led to a decline in automobile sales. New car sales dropped more than 40 per cent in the first half of 1966. The number of imported vehicle kits, to be assembled in Rhodesia, was cut back severely, and the price of imported spare parts shot up.⁶³ At the end of 1966, BMC and Ford, the two largest assembly plants, were producing at a rate of seven to eight units a day, one-third the 1965 rate. Both companies had lost their export markets overnight, that is, one quarter of their total sales. By early 1967 both plants were forced to shut down.⁶⁴

Meanwhile the commercial sector was also incurring heavy losses. The strict import controls imposed by the government served to stimulate local industry, but to the detriment of both quality and variety. Although they accepted government protection of local industry as a necessary evil, merchants maintained that such measures must be only temporary. Because local industry was not keeping up with local demand, stocks were running down. Stringent import control measures began to force smaller entrepreneurs out of business.⁶⁵ In June 1966 John Hughes, president of the Associated Chambers of Commerce of Rhodesia, declared that 'many firms are struggling for their continued existence . . . They cannot continue this holding operation indefinitely'.⁶⁶

60. Renwick, *Economic Sanctions*, p. 32; Interview with E. G. Cross.

61. Ruth Weiss, 'Rhodesia: truth or blind faith?', *Financial Mail*, 5 January 1968, p. 31.

62. Losman, *International Economic Sanctions*, p. 107; *Financial Mail*, 23 June 1967, pp. 989, 992. Interview with H. W. Freeman, Harare, Zimbabwe, 26 May 1986. Corroborated by anonymous interview with tobacco exporter, Harare, Zimbabwe, 21 May 1986.

63. *Financial Mail*, 11 February 1966, p. 332; 24 June 1966, p. 868; 3 February 1967, p. 313; 12 May 1967, p. 453.

64. *Financial Mail*, 14 October 1966, p. 115; 23 December 1966, p. 951; Sutcliffe, 'Rhodesian Trade since UDI', p. 421.

65. *Financial Mail*, 25 March 1966, p. 715; 2 September 1966, p. 660.

66. *Financial Mail*, 10 June 1966, p. 693.

Rhodesian railways were also running at a serious deficit. In 1967 the *Financial Mail* described the 'slow death' of the rail system, attributing it to the 'sanctions war'. The railways were in the red to the tune of eight million pounds sterling by June 1967. In late 1966 Zambia had declared the entry of all but essential goods illegal if they had been transported at any point on Rhodesian railways. South African goods were thus stalled in Rhodesia, awaiting slow and cumbersome transport by Zambian trucks. By far the largest decline in railway revenue was due to the loss of Zambian copper exports and petroleum imports. Meanwhile, British investment in the rail system was frozen and revenue transfers between Zambia and Rhodesia ceased. Rhodesia faced a severe shortage of railway wagons, and equipment and rolling stock fell into disrepair.⁶⁷ As a result of transport snarl-ups, Rhodesian coal sales suffered. From July to September 1966 an average of 56,000 tons of coal per month were shipped from Rhodesia to Zambia and Zaire, less than half the tonnage of the year before. Sales declined even further when Zambia opened its own new coal deposits.⁶⁸

In the short-term, then, economic sanctions resulted in considerable damage to the Rhodesian economy. For a country so dependent on foreign trade and investment, an abrupt termination of most international business dealing was devastating. Under-the-counter sales, accomplished at great risk and expense, never fully compensated for the loss of aboveboard trade. The consequent decline in foreign exchange earning was an ominous portent for the future.

After the first few years of hardship and readjustment, the Rhodesian economy began to recover. Government incentives induced the diversification of agriculture towards large scale production of maize, cotton, soya beans, and beef. This in turn stimulated food processing, textiles, clothing and footwear manufacturing, and other import-substitution industries. The mining industry also expanded during this period, financed largely with the funds of transnational corporations, blocked in Rhodesia in retaliation for sanctions.⁶⁹ Thus, between 1967 and 1974, the Rhodesian gross domestic product grew at an annual rate of more than 8 per cent in real terms. By 1969 exports had recovered enough to assist in the financing of domestic economic growth. It is this phenomenon which is most commonly cited when noting the 'counterproductive' economic effects of sanctions. The Rhodesian economy did grow, and even became more self-sufficient in certain respects. These effects, however, were limited.

67. *Financial Mail*, 14 October 1966, p. 115; 17 February 1967, pp. 447, 449; 10 March 1967, p. 652; 12 May 1967, p. 453.

68. *Financial Mail*, 28 October 1966, p. 271; 18 November 1966, p. 538; 17 November 1967, p. 624.

69. Strack, *Sanctions*, pp. 98–99; Tony Hawkins, 'The Rise and Fall of Smith's Rhodesia', *Financial Times* (UK), 1 August 1986.

Foreign exchange shortages continued to be an ever-present concern.⁷⁰ Although export volumes grew by an average of nearly 10 per cent annually between 1969 and 1974, annual export value, without accounting for inflation, barely surpassed that of the period immediately prior to UDI. By the end of 1972, the value of Rhodesian exports was only 6.2 per cent higher than the 1965 figure. This tremendous discrepancy is indicative of the enormous costs imposed by sanctions.⁷¹ The greatly increased productivity of the Rhodesian economy was necessary for the country simply to remain in the same place. Furthermore, the industrial boom of 1969 to 1974 focused almost exclusively on the production of consumer goods. Rhodesia continued to be dependent upon the outside world for most of its capital goods and many of its raw materials, imported with great difficulty and expense.

The expansion of the Rhodesian economy during the first decade of sanctions was due primarily to three factors: the use of excess industrial capacity, the development of import substitution industries, and increased productivity.⁷² By 1975 there was no room for further expansion. Most of the consumer goods that could be made within the constraints of the Rhodesian economy were being produced. The limited domestic market and obstacles imposed by sanctions on external trade meant that Rhodesian industries frequently did not produce enough to achieve economies of scale. Thus their manufactures were often costly, of inferior quality, and uncompetitive internationally.⁷³ In September 1966 P. C. Aldridge, director of the Association of Rhodesian Industries, expressed concern at the mushrooming of backyard industries. The reputation of established local products would be damaged, he maintained, 'if supplies of shoddy or inferior goods should be finding their way to the market'. The *Financial Mail* found that the white public was 'restive about the quality of some of Rhodesian made goods' and unhappy about paying the higher prices.⁷⁴ By the mid-1970s both the domestic and foreign markets were glutted. The sanctions-induced decline in export earnings meant that the country was desperately short of foreign exchange, needed either to produce capital goods or to import them. Hence, there was a serious structural limit to the growth of the manufacturing sector.⁷⁵

70. Cross, 'Economic Sanctions as a Tool of Policy', pp. 71, 73.

71. Hawkins, 'The Rise and Fall'; Strack, *Sanctions*, p. 97.

72. Strack, *Sanctions*, p. 96.

73. *Financial Mail*, 28 April 1967, p. 281; 25 August 1967, p. 627; T. Curtin, 'Total Sanctions and Economic Development in Rhodesia', *Journal of Commonwealth Political Studies*, 7, (1969), p. 131.

74. *Financial Mail*, 2 September 1966, p. 660.

75. Strack, *Sanctions*, p. 96; Anthony Hawkins, 'Rhodesian Economy Under Siege', *Bulletin of the Africa Institute of South Africa*, 13, (1975), p. 15; Interview with Simon Gray, currently an economist for the Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries, Harare, Zimbabwe, 7 May 1986. Corroborated by a businessman formerly employed by the Association of Rhodesian Industries, Harare, Zimbabwe, 14 May 1986.

Ten years after the imposition of sanctions the Rhodesian economy had reached a plateau. Machinery was wearing out. Spare parts could not be obtained. The country was 'running down its capital goods stock right across the board', claimed Ruth Weiss, who covered Rhodesia for the *Financial Mail* during the early sanctions period. Far from ensuring economic growth, sanctions had 'made a massive holding operation necessary'.⁷⁶ A prominent businessman in the commercial sector concluded: 'If you're not moving forward in economic terms, then you're actually going backwards'.⁷⁷ Rhodesia, claimed one of his colleagues, had finally 'come to the crunch line'.⁷⁸

Sanctions severely limited Rhodesia's access to foreign loans and direct investment. According to the *Rhodesian Herald*, 'Unless access to external sources of capital is eased soon, the rate of development necessary to sustain the population cannot be achieved'.⁷⁹ An entrepreneur involved in under-the-counter tobacco sales maintained that 'the long, drawn-out effects of sanctions did harm us. There was no more capital investment from overseas. Exploration for new minerals, irrigation schemes, and new industries need overseas capital. This was frozen by sanctions'.⁸⁰ Rhodesia's forgone growth potential was enormous. Eddie Cross estimated that, over the course of the sanctions period, the value of lost exports approximated R\$3.6 billion, as compared with the actual value of R\$5.8 billion.⁸¹

The issue of 'other factors'

Since the Rhodesian regime did eventually fall, the argument that 'sanctions failed' now rests on stressing the relative importance of 'other factors'. Thus Bienen and Gilpin maintained that 'all analysts agree that... it was not economic weakness brought about through trade and investment sanctions but military struggle in Rhodesia that had made the survival of the Smith regime problematic'.⁸² Other studies cite hostility from Mozambique, pressure from South Africa, and diplomatic pressure from the West, in addition to guerrilla warfare, as more important than sanctions.

If the criterion for success be the achievement of majority rule as a result of formal international sanctions, regardless of other circumstances and in particular without any military pressure on the regime, then such a judgement of failure holds. Baldwin notes that economic sanctions and military

76. Interview with Ruth Weiss, Harare, Zimbabwe, Nov. 1985. Weiss wrote the 'Rhodesia Round-Up' column for the *Financial Mail* from September 1965 until she was deported from Rhodesia in early 1968. *Financial Mail*, 27 January 1967; 31 March 1967, p. 857; David Wield, 'Manufacturing Industry', in Colin Stoneman, (ed.), *Zimbabwe's Inheritance* (London: The College Press & MacMillan Press, 1981), p. 160.

77. Anonymous interview, Harare, Zimbabwe, 13 May 1986.

78. Anonymous interview, Harare, Zimbabwe, 20 May 1986.

79. *Rhodesia Herald*, 5 April 1973.

80. Anonymous interview, Harare, Zimbabwe, 21 May 1986.

81. Cross, 'Economic Sanctions as a Tool of Policy', p. 73.

82. Quoted in Baldwin, *Economic Statecraft*, p. 196.

measures are often considered mutually exclusive alternatives, even though the drafters of the League of Nations Covenant had envisioned them as mutually reinforcing.⁸³ But such a dichotomy of sanctions and 'other factors', considered as independent of each other, is surely simplistic, diverting attention from interactions which need to be investigated rather than excluded *a priori*.

In the mid-1970s a number of factors converged in Rhodesia to intensify the damage done by sanctions. First, petroleum prices shot up dramatically, trebling the cost of Rhodesian oil imports between 1973 and 1976.⁸⁴ Rhodesia was particularly affected in that it paid the sanctions premium on top of the OPEC price increase. The oil price rise sparked a world economic recession, which caused a rapid deterioration in Rhodesia's terms of trade. The prices offered for Rhodesia's primary commodity exports fell sharply, while import prices sky-rocketed. By 1979 Rhodesia's terms of trade were 40 per cent worse than they were when sanctions were imposed.⁸⁵ In order to finance vital oil requirements, the Smith regime drastically cut non-petroleum import allocations from the mid-1970s onwards. With its supply of capital goods, spare parts, and certain essential inputs practically severed, the Rhodesian manufacturing sector embarked upon a downward spiral.

This exogenous factor battering the Rhodesian economy was clearly distinct from sanctions. Yet its effects were mediated through an economy under the strain of sanctions. Even if the separate factors had merely additive effects, both contributed to Rhodesia's economic weakness in the late 1970s. It was during this period of increased economic hardship that Zambia and Mozambique also began to intensify pressure on Rhodesia. In January 1973, in response to stepped up guerrilla activities from Zambian territory, Rhodesia closed the border with its northern neighbour. In retaliation Zambia declared that it would keep the border closed permanently, regardless of a Rhodesian decision to reopen it. Henceforth Zambia would reroute its copper exports through Tanzania, at tremendous loss to the Rhodesian railways.⁸⁶

The Zambian border closure eliminated a major source of foreign exchange earnings for Rhodesia. Before 1965, Zambia had been Rhodesia's largest export market, accounting for approximately 65 per cent of total foreign sales. In 1967 the value of Rhodesian manufactured goods consumed in Zambia was still one-third the pre-sanctions value. By 1973, although the market for Rhodesian consumer goods had shrunk considerably, revenues

83. Baldwin, *Economic Statecraft*, p. 155.

84. Strack, *Sanctions*, p. 88.

85. Renwick, *Economic Sanctions*, p. 48.

86. Renwick, *Economic Sanctions*, p. 46; Windrich, *Britain and the Politics of Rhodesian Independence*, p. 216; Doxey, *Economic Sanctions and International Enforcement*, p. 142, footnote 11.

from transit freight to and from Zambia were still worth several million pounds sterling per year. The loss of these earnings caused a trebling of Rhodesia's deficit in services.⁸⁷ In 1976 the new Mozambican government, in addition to allowing Zimbabwean liberation forces to use Mozambique as a rear base, closed its border with Rhodesia, forcing the Smith regime to reroute over one and a half million tons of export goods per year through South Africa, at much greater expense.⁸⁸ Rhodesia became almost totally reliant on South Africa for imports, exports and transport to the sea.

Until the Mozambique border closure, about half of Rhodesian exports were shipped through the Mozambican ports of Beira and Lourenço Marques. While Beira was 360 miles from the Rhodesian capital, the South African port of Durban was 1,260 miles away. Thus, transport through Mozambique was faster and cheaper than transport through South Africa. Moreover, according to John Graylin, 'Beira was a tremendously well-run port at that time. It was handling more goods per person employed than almost any port in the world'. Ports in South Africa, by contrast, were extremely congested. Trade was hampered by serious delays and greatly increased shipping costs.⁸⁹ The actions by Mozambique and Zambia also closed potential markets to new Rhodesian manufactures. This meant stagnant or even diminished foreign exchange earnings.

These measures are sometimes implicitly considered as factors 'other than' sanctions.⁹⁰ Yet, even if the Zambian and Mozambican actions are not included as international sanctions measures, they were clearly influenced by them. Both governments would have been hostile to white minority rule in any case, but it is quite unlikely that they would have adopted such consistent measures without the cover of international legitimacy and the promise of international support, however inadequately fulfilled. As a result of these multiple pressures, according to a businessman who at that time worked for the Association of Rhodesian Industries, by 1974 economic deterioration was evident 'right the way across, through industry, agriculture, mining, and inadequate capital replacement'. The country could not afford new machinery and equipment. Moreover, the businessman recalled, 'We were fighting a war, so quite a lot of our import capacity had to be diverted to military hardware'.⁹¹

87. Windrich, *Britain and the Politics of Rhodesian Independence*, p. 216; Losman, *International Economic Sanctions*, p. 103; *Financial Mail*, 11 November 1966, p. 419; Richard Hall, *The High Price of Principles: Kaunda and the white south* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1969), pp. 165-166.

88. Renwick, *Economic Sanctions*, p. 46; Interview with John Graylin.

89. Renwick, *Economic Sanctions*, pp. 46-47; Losman, *International Economic Sanctions*, p. 101; Interview with John Graylin; Carol Thompson, 'Southern Africa: who is the 'dependent' one?', *ACAS Newsletter*, no. 19 (Fall 1986), p. 23.

90. Baldwin, *Economic Statecraft*, p. 197.

91. Anonymous interview, Harare, Zimbabwe, 14 May 1986.

Heightened Rhodesian dependence on South Africa further reduced the Smith regime's flexibility as pressures later intensified for a settlement. Then the effectiveness of sanctions was dramatically enhanced during a brief period when South Africa imposed its own economic pressures. While never acknowledged as such, these pressures were arguably decisive in forcing Smith to accept the principle of majority rule in 1976, and thus were indirectly a contributing factor to the final Lancaster House settlement of 1979 as well. By all accounts, South Africa was the most notorious sanctions buster. Without the full-fledged support of its southern neighbour, Rhodesia could not have withstood sanctions for as long as it did. However the relationship between the two countries was not an altogether happy one. 'The South Africans were totally mercenary about the sanctions against Rhodesia', charged Eddie Cross, an economist for the Rhodesian government's Agricultural Marketing Authority from 1969 to 1980. 'They exploited the situation right from the word go. They exploited their monopolistic control over our transport routes. They exploited their favourable position as a supplier of spares and critical things that we couldn't buy internationally because of sanctions. We owe the South Africans nothing for 14 years of sanctions busting', he concluded. 'They were making a good business out of it. For many South African businessmen sanctions against Rhodesia were a boom, a tremendous thing'.⁹²

After the fall of Portuguese colonialism, South African Prime Minister John Vorster came to consider the Smith regime as a destabilizing factor in the region. He thought that the fires of African nationalism had to be contained before they spread further south. Moreover, South Africa itself was beginning to feel the heat of external pressures. US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger warned Vorster that South Africa was the next candidate for international sanctions, if it failed to sever its ties with the illegal Rhodesian regime.⁹³ In this context, South Africa began to turn the screws. 'Unexplained' snarl-ups in the South African transport system left Rhodesian imports stranded south of the border. Oil and other vital supplies were cut off. The arms flow dwindled. Rhodesian exports piled up in South African ports. South African loans, crucial for financing the war and large infrastructure projects, came to a halt.⁹⁴ 'If the border with Mozambique had been open, the South African situation could have been weathered', claimed a former employee of the Association of Rhodesian Industries.⁹⁵ But, with that escape hatch closed and South Africa applying sanctions, Rhodesia had to respond.

92. Interview with E. G. Cross.

93. Strack *Sanctions*, pp. 68-69, 243; Renwick, *Economic Sanctions*, pp. 52-54.

94. David Martin and Phyllis Johnson, *The Struggle for Zimbabwe* (Harare: Zimbabwe Publishing House, 1981), pp. 238-254; Deon Geldenhuys, *The Diplomacy of Isolation: South African foreign policy making* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984), pp. 213-215; Renwick, *Economic Sanctions*, p. 53; Interview with E. G. Cross.

95. Anonymous interview, Harare, Zimbabwe, 14 May 1986.

The result (Smith's agreement in principle to majority rule) came close to achieving the goal of sanctions as defined by Britain and its Western allies. African demands were not satisfied, however, since this admission, and the 'internal settlement' that followed, were seen as manoeuvres that disguised the continuation of white domination. The debate over whether to lift sanctions in these years reflected in part the original disagreement over objectives.

South Africa, in particular, resumed stronger support for Smith once he had made the commitment in principle to an African government. The Botha regime, which took office in Pretoria in 1978, backed the Smith-Muzorewa internal settlement and the continuing war effort. South Africa's covert financing of Muzorewa in the 1979 election was indeed a further example of the use of economic influence, although not via the route of negative economic pressure. Nevertheless, the change in the context for negotiations certainly facilitated the Lancaster House settlement. Rhodesian retrogression to denial of majority rule *per se* was barred by the potential of renewed South African pressure. Furthermore, even if one considers South Africa's use of economic pressure as distinct from international sanctions, these sanctions did create the political and economic context in which South Africa came to act. Remarkably, not even South Africa formally recognized the Smith regime during the 1965-1979 period. Resolving the conflict in a way that would restore 'legitimacy' to a neighbouring government was thus a South African objective which, under certain circumstances, took priority. Moreover, Pretoria's extraordinary leverage over Rhodesia was a direct result of the sanctions applied by other states, particularly Mozambique.

Finally there is the issue of guerrilla war. Was it the war 'instead of sanctions that brought majority rule? Or was it the war 'in addition to' sanctions? Or was the interaction between the two factors even more complex? Disentangling the interlocking strands requires a simultaneous investigation of the multiple political effects of sanctions.

The range of political effects

In maintaining that sanctions were not only ineffective but even counter-productive, a number of authors have noted the 'rally round the flag' effect on the white population. 'Isolation', runs one typical comment, 'encouraged insularity and reinforced unrealistically hard positions'.⁹⁶ Smith may indeed have been able to use the external opposition to rally the white community. But this factor needs to be placed in perspective. An extreme version of this argument, rarely made explicit, is that, without the effect of sanctions, moderate tendencies in the white community favourable

96. Jeffrey Davidow, *Dealing with International Crises: lessons from Zimbabwe* (The Stanley Foundation, 1983), p. 6.

to eventual majority rule could have prevailed, or even that Ian Smith himself would have been more ready to compromise. If this were true, then one might claim sanctions to have been counterproductive. But the argument faces two major difficulties.

First, political trends among white Rhodesians, even in the absence of sanctions, were to the right. It was the threat of losing power, whatever the mechanism, that provoked the increased solidarity of white Rhodesia. That would have been the case whether the pressures consisted of sanctions, of escalated internal unrest, or of a military threat. Second, during the period that sanctions were in effect, efforts to relax them, such as the Byrd Amendment or the influence of British Conservatives sympathetic to Rhodesia, encouraged recalcitrance, not moderation, on the part of the white regime. Concessions came precisely when sanctions intensified, after 1976.

Political reactions were far more complex than implied by the 'rally round the flag' image. Even within the white community, the effects were different for different groups and at different time periods. And for the majority African population, the outside pressure clearly reinforced opposition to the regime rather than promoting support for it. The range of effects, in addition to the impact on white and black opinion, ultimately also included erosion of the regime's capability to sustain the counterinsurgency war. At the heart of the matter is the fact that the core of the hard-line constituency for Smith's Rhodesian Front required little additional incentive to support him. It is hardly plausible to argue that they would have abandoned minority rule in significant numbers, with or without sanctions.

The old Rhodesian establishment, with its principal base in the business community, had, it is true, opposed UDI. They warned Smith that it would lead to economic sanctions. But few even among such opponents of UDI were willing to align with African nationalism. This strand of white opposition did favour a gradual movement towards African participation, restrained by a restrictive franchise. However, when forced to choose sides, they opted for support of the regime against its internal and external enemies. Including most of the local representatives of multinational corporations, they joined wholeheartedly in the campaign to evade sanctions.⁹⁷

Those few whites who dared to take opposition further, such as Garfield and Judith Todd, faced harassment and intimidation. Diana Mitchell, another outspoken critic of Smith and a prominent member of the liberal

97. Ian Hancock's *White Liberals, Moderates and Radicals in Rhodesia, 1953-1980* (London: Croom Helm, 1984) provides an account of the ineffective white opposition to the Smith regime. David Tapuwa Hatendi, *The Political Impact of Foreign Capital (Multinational Corporations) in Rhodesia, 1965-1979* (Oxford, D. Phil. dissertation, 1987) describes the cooperation of foreign capital in supporting UDI despite its disagreement in advance, and identifies the key shift in business policy towards the country's future as the pressures escalated in the 1970s.

Centre Party, recalled that friends and neighbours severed their relationships with her. Whites were warned to stand together to fend off the 'communist menace' and the 'black peril', she recalled.⁹⁸ This closing of ranks of white Rhodesia may perhaps in part be attributed to sanctions. Yet the basic cause was surely the fear of losing power, not the particular instrument (sanctions) which formed one component of the threat.

Sanctions, moreover, undermined the confidence of the white community. 'Sanctions had a very profound psychological effect within this country', maintained Judith Todd Acton. 'Sanctions helped to make the whites feel isolated. Some people would argue that when a group are isolated, they fight back more fiercely, but I don't think that was proved in our case . . . Whatever they are saying, all the time they were trying to be acceptable and trying to get back into a normal relationship with the world'.⁹⁹ Most significantly, the business community did begin to shift its position after 1973. Key business leaders began to talk with Africans, and to argue in private (and sometimes in public) that it was essential to compromise with moderate nationalism in order to outflank the radicals. Both escalation of the war and increasing economic difficulties contributed to this changing perception. The business community strongly encouraged settlement efforts (from the 1971 agreement between Salisbury and London to the Lancaster House agreement of 1979) which moved step by step closer to ultimate acceptance of majority rule.

Even more significant were the political effects of sanctions on the majority population under Rhodesian rule. Such effects are often disregarded, since the majority had no political voice in the white regime. Sanctions, it was said in Rhodesia as it is said in South Africa today, would 'hurt those they were intended to help', since in a white-dominated society the burden of economic recession would fall most heavily on the blacks. Such economic effects were real, although their precise extent may be disputed. In political terms, however, sanctions contributed to majority rule by encouraging African opponents of the regime. Even the negative economic impact may have contributed by increasing support for guerrilla warfare, often seen as the 'primary factor' leading to majority rule.

Speaking to the United Nations sponsored World Conference on Sanctions against South Africa in June 1986, Zimbabwean Minister of Foreign Affairs Witness Mangwende claimed that sanctions were effective in Rhodesia, albeit to a lesser degree than they would have been had they not been violated by major Western countries. He added that, while Africans bore the brunt of UN sanctions against Rhodesia, 'at no stage did the blacks in Zimbabwe or the suffering neighbouring states ever ask for the lifting of

98. Interview with Diana Mitchell, Harare, Zimbabwe, 10 May 1986.

99. Interview with Judith Todd Acton, Harare, Zimbabwe, 13 May 1986.

those sanctions'. On the contrary, Mangwende maintained, they called for a more rigorous enforcement of sanctions by the West.¹⁰⁰ In a similar vein, while conducting an investigation in Rhodesia in 1972, the British government's Pearce Commission found that Africans strongly supported sanctions, in spite of the burden they imposed on the African population. The Commission reported that Africans were willing to make such sacrifices in order to achieve their objective of majority rule.¹⁰¹ The following year, Eddison Zvobgo, then director of the External Commission of the African National Council (ANC), pursued a different tack. Testifying before a US Congressional hearing in February 1973, Zvobgo claimed: 'It is not us who need sheets to sleep on or cars to come into the city, or spare parts to run the industries. We do not own the economy. Those comforts which have been siphoned off by sanctions are totally irrelevant to the African people. Over ninety per cent of the African people live on the land . . . They are fed by the very soil. So that to suggest that sanctions hurt the Africans and therefore in the interest of the African we ought to drop sanctions, is nonsense'.¹⁰²

Recalling his work as ZANU representative to the United Nations during the sanctions period, Tirivafi Kangai maintained that the liberation movement emphasized a two-pronged strategy: sanctions and the armed struggle. So seriously did ZANU consider sanctions that it took the United States government to court over the enactment of the Byrd Amendment, charging that the US was violating international law through its abrogation of mandatory UN sanctions. Kangai asserted that, while the war was the determining factor in the transition to majority rule, sanctions were critical in that they isolated the regime politically and economically, hastening its downfall.¹⁰³ In general terms, then, there is little doubt that sanctions undermined the legitimacy of the Rhodesian regime, thus bolstering the case for using violence to overthrow it. A more specific investigation of the connection, however, while verifying the general point, is likely to uncover a more complex picture.

As long as sanctions reinforced residual African faith in Britain's will to resolve the crisis in their favour, they likely served as a deterrent to escalation of guerrilla war. Although the Zimbabwean movements date the beginning of armed struggle to 1966, such action was limited prior to 1972–1973. Guerrilla attacks tended to be isolated and symbolic and recruitment

100. Quoted in: Tommy Sithole, 'West is Accused of Hypocrisy Over Sanctions on SA', *Herald*, 18 June 1986.

101. Lake, *The 'Tar Baby' Opinion*, p. 45; Renwick, *Economic Sanctions*, pp. 44, 89.

102. *Hearings before the Subcommittee on Africa and the Subcommittee on International Organizations and Movements of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, February 21, 22, and March 15, 1973*, p. 52, quoted in Lake, *The 'Tar Baby' Option*, p. 46. Eddison Zvobgo is currently the Minister of Justice, Legal, and Parliamentary Affairs in the government of Zimbabwe.

103. Interview with Tirivafi J. Kangai.

of guerrilla cadres from inside Zimbabwe was slow.¹⁰⁴ After the debacle of the Pearce Commission, when Africans overwhelmingly rejected a proffered British-Rhodesian settlement which would have consolidated white minority rule, little faith remained that outside pressure would be sufficient. If Britain and the US had dramatically escalated sanctions enforcement at that point, confidence might have been revived. Instead, the Byrd Amendment became a symbol identifying the West with the minority regime. Thus, while international sanctions continued to deny legitimacy to the Smith regime, their failure to bring about majority rule by the early 1970s increasingly encouraged Africans to turn to armed struggle.

A number of scholars also contend that the economic effect of sanctions, by increasing unemployment and poverty among Africans, led to increased support for guerrilla warfare. The absolute gap in average wages between whites and blacks grew by about 40 per cent between 1965 and 1972, writes Losman, while real African farm income dropped 16 per cent between 1963 and 1971.¹⁰⁵ A careful evaluation of this relationship would require micro-level studies of economic conditions and guerrilla recruitment in particular areas of Zimbabwe. To sustain such an argument one would also need proof that African economic deprivation would have been significantly less without sanctions. It seems plausible, however, that deteriorating economic conditions did contribute to African support for the war.

Finally, there was the effect of sanctions on the white regime's capacity to wage a prolonged war. Ian Smith and his colleagues, although they eventually negotiated surrender, for the most part never abandoned their belief in white minority rule. What was decisive was their inability to pay the price. That failing was clearly the result of *both war and* sanctions. It was during the period of increased sanctions effectiveness, after 1975, that the war began to escalate significantly. By 1979 the war was consuming more than one-third of the national budget, costing the regime approximately R\$1 million a day. Between 1975/76 and 1979/80 the budget deficit increased five-fold, primarily as a result of the war and oil import costs.¹⁰⁶

The war also took its toll in other ways. 'The relentless [military] call-up of all white men under 50 . . . had a devastating impact on morale', according to Tony Hawkins, an economist who taught at the University of Rhodesia during UDI.¹⁰⁷ Eddie Cross recalled that he personally spent six months a year in the army, and that out of a white male population of about 110,000,

104. See, for example, Callistus N. Ndlovu, 'Recruitment and Obstacles to Recruitment in the Zimbabwean Liberation Movements', in David Wiley and Allen F. Isaacman, (eds.), *Southern Africa: society, economy and liberation* (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1981), p. 5-17.

105. Losman, *International Economic Sanctions*, p. 116; also see Baldwin, *Economic Statecraft*, pp. 197-198.

106. Renwick, *Economic Sanctions*, pp. 51, 54; Zimbabwe Conference on Reconstruction and Development, Salisbury, 23-27 March 1981, *Conference Documentation*, p. 9.

107. Hawkins, 'The Rise and Fall'; interview with Tony Hawkins, Harare, Zimbabwe, 19 May 1986.

approximately 60,000 were in the armed forces at any point in time. 'People got very fed up with having to go into the army for longish periods very frequently' (often six weeks at a time, four to five times a year), John Graylin claimed.¹⁰⁸ In the long run, therefore, the efficiency and productivity of the economy suffered from the frequent and prolonged absence of skilled personnel.¹⁰⁹ The fact that employers were required to pay men who were doing their military service ultimately became such a financial burden that the government was forced to subsidize the operation.¹¹⁰ 'We were running out of domestic revenue and foreign currency', one businessman summarized, 'in addition to which the permanent call-up was wrecking what was left of the economy. The cost of the war was too high domestically'.¹¹¹ In 1976, for the first time since the post-UDI panic a decade earlier, more white people emigrated from Rhodesia than immigrated to it. More than 7,000 whites left that year, further draining the country of professional, technical, and military manpower.¹¹²

The war was 'the final nail in the coffin', concluded one businessman. 'But there were a lot of other nails. . . . The state of war, the state of economic sanctions, could not go on forever without a total collapse'.¹¹³ The inability of the country to finance both the war and the economy 'was in part attributable to sanctions', maintained one of his colleagues formerly involved in the covert exportation of minerals. 'If we had been able to continue our economic strength', he concluded, 'the political side of the thing would have continued the war longer'.¹¹⁴ Thus, in the long run, sanctions lessened the bloodshed by reducing the regime's ability to carry on the war. The war was an essential factor in the downfall of white minority rule. But sanctions, despite the inconsistency in enforcement and vagaries of political will of the major powers, also made a substantial contribution to that result. Judged by this criterion, the general conclusion is well supported: in the case of Rhodesia, sanctions worked.

Lessons for South Africa?

Addressing a meeting of the Zimbabwe–Mozambique Friendship Association in June 1986, Lieutenant-Colonel Clemence Gaza, director of public relations of the Zimbabwe National Army, declared: 'We know from our own experience in the struggle that sanctions can be a powerful economic and psychological weapon, that, linked to the armed struggle, helped to

108. Interviews with E. G. Cross and John Graylin.

109. Interview with Tony Hawkins; Hawkins, 'The Rise and Fall'; Hawkins, 'Rhodesian Economy Under Siege', p. 23.

110. Anonymous interview, Harare, Zimbabwe, 14 May 1986.

111. Anonymous interview, Harare, Zimbabwe, 20 May 1986.

112. Losman, *International Economic Sanctions*, pp. 121, 135–136; Strack, *Sanctions*, p. 89; Renwick, *Economic Sanctions*, p. 50.

113. Anonymous interview, Harare, Zimbabwe, 13 May 1986.

114. Anonymous interview, Harare, Zimbabwe, 20 May 1986.

bring the Rhodesian regime to its knees'. Likewise, he noted, sanctions are an essential weapon against South Africa.¹¹⁵

South Africa is, of course, a distinct case, and the ongoing sanctions debate is complex. But the general framework of the argument is similar, and some comparative reflections from Rhodesia are worth suggesting. South Africa is, in different respects, both a less vulnerable and more vulnerable target than was Rhodesia. White minority rule in South Africa, first of all, is more deeply entrenched. This is reflected not only in the greater percentage of whites, but also in the existence of a large capitalist class and a powerful national security state. South Africa's larger, more industrialized economy gives it flexibility in resisting potential sanctions. So, too, does the income from gold exports, a commodity that is particularly difficult to embargo. Moreover, the price of gold tends to rise in response to global and national economic difficulties, to some extent compensating for them. Afrikaner nationalism, despite its increasing internal disarray, provides a cultural and social base for resistance to pressure.

On the external front, Pretoria's strong international links work against the adoption of comprehensive mandatory sanctions, and would undermine the political will of much of the Western industrialized world to enforce such sanctions should they be adopted. Since 1984 Western powers have been forced to enact stronger and stronger sanctions, but opposition to comprehensive measures is still firm in key countries such as the United States, Great Britain and the German Federal Republic. The 1986 Anti-Apartheid Act passed by the US Congress over presidential veto is being implemented by an administration determined to minimize rather than maximize the impact of its sanctions provisions. In short, the issue of international political will is even more problematic than it was in the case of Rhodesia.

If the political will were present, however, there are aspects of South Africa's situation that make it more vulnerable to economic sanctions than was Rhodesia in the 1960s. 'Sanctions have the capacity to really damage the South African economy', according to Eddie Cross. South Africa is more vulnerable than was Rhodesia, he continued, 'because they are so much more sophisticated, so much more dependent on access to technology, so much more dependent upon exports of sophisticated products'.¹¹⁶ Like Rhodesia twenty years ago, South Africa today relies heavily on international trade and investment. In November 1985 the *Standard Bank Review* noted that, 'as a small, relatively open economy, the country's prosperity is based to a great extent on its ability to freely sell materials and products abroad. In turn, South Africa depends on the outside world for

115. Speech by Lieutenant-Colonel Clemence Gaza to the Zimbabwe-Mozambique Friendship Association (ZIMOFA), Harare, Zimbabwe, 1 June 1986.

116. Interviews with E. G. Cross.

many essential inputs'. Foreign trade constitutes approximately 55 per cent of South Africa's gross domestic product, compared to 17 per cent for the United States. Capital goods (e.g. advanced technology, transport equipment, power generators) comprise 40 per cent of all South African imports.¹¹⁷ Petroleum products and military goods constitute another one-third of the total import bill.¹¹⁸ Agricultural machinery and certain essential fertilizers and pesticides are imported, as are computer systems, aircraft, and railway engines. South Africa does not have the capability to produce most advanced machinery, components, and spares, either on the scale needed, or at all.¹¹⁹

Unlike Rhodesia in 1965, South Africa has long since passed the shallow phase of import substitution involving the manufacture of consumer goods. Hence, sanctions will not serve to stimulate the manufacturing sector as they did in Rhodesia. Furthermore, South Africa's massive foreign debt, equivalent to more than one-third of its GDP, makes it one of the world's top debtor nations. International lending has helped Pretoria to finance huge infrastructural and industrial projects and to cope with massive military expenditures, which have more than trebled since 1976.¹²⁰ The high import requirements of these projects have given rise to severe balance of payments difficulties and a rapidly increasing inflation rate.¹²¹

The vigorous Rhodesian economy in 1965 helped to soften the sanctions blow. South Africa, in contrast, is in the depths of its worst economic recession in 50 years. Since 1980, the rand has lost two-thirds of its value. Inflation reached a 66 year high in January 1986, running at more than 20 per cent.¹²² Record unemployment among blacks, surpassing six million, means that one out of two black workers may be jobless.¹²³ South

117. *Standard Bank Review*, November 1985; C. W. Davids, 'The Impact of Economic Sanctions Against South Africa on the SADCC States', Harare, 17 February 1986, p. 28; 'SA Frantic Steps to Block Sanctions', *Herald*, 8 August 1986. Also see: John S. Saul and Stephen Gelb, *The Crisis in South Africa*, 2nd ed. (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1986), p. 75.

118. Neva Makgetla, 'Why We Call for Sanctions', *Sechaba* (September 1985), p. 10.

119. Saul and Gelb, *The Crisis in South Africa*, p. 75; Chris Child, 'Apartheid, Economic Collaboration, and the Case for the United Nations Comprehensive Mandatory Sanctions Against South Africa', *Notes and Documents*, 6/84 (United Nations Centre Against Apartheid, July 1984), p. 28; J. H. Cooper, 'Economic Sanctions and the South African Economy', *International Affairs Bulletin*, 7, part II (1983), p. 37.

120. Makgetla, 'Why we call for Sanctions', p. 12; Davids, 'The Impact', p. 32; 'Many Ingredients Have Contributed to South Africa's Economic Crisis', *Financial Gazette* (Zimbabwe), 19 July 1985.

121. Saul and Gelb, *The Crisis in South Africa*, p. 75.

122. 'US\$10 Billion Bank Deal Bails Out Apartheid', *Herald*, 6 March 1986; 'Urban Foundation Head Urges Foreign Investment', *Business Day*, 14 March 1986; Harry Anderson *et al.* 'The Squeeze on Pretoria Gets Tighter, Sanctions as a Fact of Life', *Newsweek*, 30 June 1986; 'South Africa: is there life after sanctions?', *Economist*, 26 July 1986; Alexander Camargue, 'Save Now and Subsidise the Borrowers', *Weekly Mail*, 9-16 October 1986; 'SA Polls Signal White Shift to Support Blacks', *Herald*, 26 June 1986.

123. Anderson, 'The Squeeze'; 'SA Unemployment Budget Headache', *Herald*, 19 March 1986; Phillip Van Niekerk, 'Every Second Black Worker May be Jobless', *Weekly Mail*, 12-18 September 1986.

Africa in the late 1980s bears a far closer resemblance to Rhodesia in the mid-1970s than to that country when sanctions were imposed.

In South Africa, moreover, the political mobilization of opposition is far broader than it was in Rhodesia. The relative weakness of guerrilla struggle is to some extent compensated by trade union, community and student organization, and by extensive inroads of the opposition into sectors of the white community. Unlike Rhodesia, South Africa has no strong sympathetic neighbour to buffer the impact of sanctions. While neighbouring countries will undoubtedly be used to evade sanctions, the Frontline States and the members of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) support the goals of sanctions, and will work to maximize the pressure on the apartheid regime.

During 1985–1987 the political effects of limited sanctions were already apparent. The business community's increased willingness to talk with the African National Congress followed directly on the shock of suspension of overseas loans in 1985. The 1987 defection of the 'New Nats' from Botha's National Party was undoubtedly related to increased international pressure as well as to internal stalemate.

Comprehensive mandatory sanctions against South Africa on the Rhodesian model are unlikely in the near future, given Western opposition. If they should be adopted, however, they are likely to be at least as effective as in Rhodesia. *Optima*, the journal of Anglo-American Corporation, has warned that the overseas sanctions lobby is extremely 'threatening' to South Africa. If those advocating economic pressures are ignored, it admonishes, they may achieve their objective, which is 'to cripple [South Africa's] economy as a vital step in achieving its total political isolation'.¹²⁴ For South Africa today, as for Rhodesia in the past, comprehensive sanctions would take time to work. But they could make a decisive difference.

124. William DeGenring, 'The US Disinvestment Campaign', *Optima*, 32, (1984), pp. 135–137.