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"A Hand upon the Throat of the Nation": Economic Sanctions and State Repression, 1976–2001

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While intended as a nonviolent foreign policy alternative to military intervention, sanctions have often worsened humanitarian and human rights conditions in the target country. This article examines the relationship between economic sanctions and state-sponsored repression of human rights. Drawing on both the public choice and institutional constraints literature, I argue that the imposition of economic sanctions negatively impacts human rights conditions in the target state by encouraging incumbents to increase repression. Specifically, sanctions threaten the stability of target incumbents, leading them to augment their level of repression in an effort to stabilize the regime, protect core supporters, minimize the threat posed by potential challengers, and suppress popular dissent. The empirical results support this theory. These findings provide further evidence that sanctions impose political, social, and physical hardship on civilian populations. They also underscore a need for improvements in current strategies and mechanisms by which states pursue foreign-policy goals and the international community enforces international law and stability.

In September 2007, democracy activists and Buddhist monks staged large-scale protests throughout Rangoon. The governing military junta responded by brutally repressing the demonstrations, killing as many as 138 protesters and detaining up to 10,000 in prison camps outside the capital. In response, the United States and several European nations threatened to tighten unilateral sanctions and urged the United Nations to impose multilateral sanctions on Burma. While a show of international support for the protesters and a strong symbolic condemnation of the regime were well-warranted, levying stronger economic sanctions against Burma is perhaps a paradoxical response. Recent political unrest in the country is driven largely by conditions of extreme poverty and chronic underdevelopment, conditions likely to worsen if additional sanctions were imposed on the fragile economy. Various sanctions imposed by the United States and EU since the mid-1990s have exacerbated the nation's economic deterioration and have ultimately contributed to the regime's unpopular economic policies, which

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recently sparked mass protests and the subsequent violent crackdown. Consequently, greater sanctions may simply induce greater levels of repression.

Economic sanctions are a common tool of foreign policy and have been increasingly employed by Western states to coerce recalcitrant leaders into improving human rights conditions, adopting or restoring democratic institutions, or respecting the rule of law within their borders. Yet sanctions often fail to achieve these goals (Hufbauer, Schott, and Elliott 1990a; Pape 1997; Weiss 1999). Moreover, sanctions frequently impose significant economic and social costs on civilians (Cortright and Lopez 2000, 2002; Weiss 1999; Weiss et al. 1997). They may also contribute to adverse changes in the domestic political climate and policy decisions of the target state (Drury and Li 2006; Kaempfer, Lowenberg, and Mertens 2004; Li and Drury 2004). Given that improving human rights is often a stated objective of economic sanctions, particularly those imposed by Western states, the human rights impact of sanctions is an important issue of policy. It is therefore important to determine whether sanctions improve the human rights practices in the target state or if they perhaps exacerbate an already problematic situation. Moreover, if sanctions unintentionally contribute to spikes in repression or undermine human rights conditions, policy makers should weigh this cost against the desired policy outcome. This article addresses these issues theoretically and explores empirically the relationship between economic sanction and changes in state repression.

The "Peaceful, Silent Deadly Remedy" Revisited

In a 1919 speech to the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Woodrow Wilson described economic sanctions as a ''peaceful, silent deadly remedy'' and an effective, nonviolent method of coercing policy concessions from other states (in Foley 1923, 71). Their track record, however, falls far short of Wilson's characterization. First, sanctions fail in as many as 95 percent of cases (Hufbauer, Schott, and Elliott 1990a; Pape 1997).[1] Second, they have failed as a ''peaceful'' alternative to armed conflict because they often generate significant collateral damage and impose severe costs on the target state's population (e.g., Bhoutros-Ghali 1995). These costs include increased unemployment, declining GNP, capital flight, lost foreign investment, reduced bilateral trade (Hufbauer and Oegg 2003; Hufbauer, Schott, and Elliott 1990a; Hufbauer et al. 1997)[2], increased corruption, drug and arms smuggling, and illegal trade syndicates (Andreas 2005; Heine-Ellison 2001; Joyner 2003), deteriorating public health standards (Ali and Shah 2000; Garfield 2002; Garfield, Devin, and Fausey 1995; World Health Organization 1996), and other humanitarian costs (Cortright and Lopez 2000, 2002; Crawford 1997; Faris 1997; Hoskins 1997; Weiss 1999). Thus, while Wilson's famous description of sanctions is in retrospect less than accurate, he correctly characterized sanctions as a ''hand upon the throat of the offending nation'' (in Foley 1923, 71).

Despite significant research into the economic and human costs associated with sanctions, scholars have devoted only limited attention to unpacking the relationship between sanctions and changes in regime repression. Kaempfer, Lowenberg, and Mertens (2004) suggest that when sanctions restrict target autocrats' access to the tools of repression (i.e., military and police equipment),

[1] Another vein of research contends that analyses of sanctions' success suffer from a notable selections bias and posits that threatened sanctions are more effective than imposed sanctions (Drezner 2003). This proposition, however, has proven difficult to test empirically. A few recent studies have also failed to support the success of threatened sanctions in improving human rights in potential targets (Drury and Li 2006; Li and Drury 2004).

[2] Hufbauer and Oegg (2003) suggest that the real GNP cost to a target state across all sanctions types is relatively minor, with half of sanctions events resulting in less than a 1 percent loss of GNP. However, their analysis also suggests that investment and financial restrictions may result in a 2.4–3.9 percent drop in GNP.

or where they enhance the cohesion of the political opposition, they reduce the incumbent's capacity to suppress dissent through violence. This effect depends on the extant power of the political opposition as well as the scope and severity of the sanctions. While insightful, this analysis is limited in two ways: First, the theory is not tested empirically. Second, it focuses specifically on the effect of sanctions on the relative *costs* of repression and loyalty to the target regime and does not directly address the *decision* to repress. The authors speculate that if sanctions raise the cost of both repression and loyalty, and if the public fails to support the targeted dictator, then her ''levels of power and repression unambiguously fall'' (45). While the formal models show that sanctions could lessen the *power* of the dictator, they cannot directly speak to the level of repression employed. That is, it is problematic to infer declining levels of repression from increasing costs or declining incumbent power because weak or destabilized autocrats are arguably the most likely to respond to threats with violence.[3]

By contrast, Li and Drury (2004) and Drury and Li (2006) show that U.S. sanctions threats against China following the Tiananmen Square massacre failed to improve human rights practices. According to their results, U.S. sanctions threats were not only ineffective but may have been counterproductive (2006, 321). They further speculate that constructive engagement by the United States may have proved more effective at improving Chinese human rights practices.[4] These conflicting arguments suggest that additional research is necessary to tease out the relationship between sanctions imposition and changes in regime repression, especially given Western states' reliance on sanctions as symbolic or punitive measures against repressive regimes.

A Theory of Sanctions-Induced Repression

I begin with two related assumptions informed by the literature on threat and regime-sponsored repression: (1) instability increases incumbent perceptions of threat and (2) increased threat perception contributes to increased repression. Sanctions threaten regime stability because they have the potential to alter economic structures and political alignments within the target state.[5] Specifically, sanctions threaten target regimes when they increase the relative power of the opposition, contribute to social upheaval and dissent, or encourage defections from the regime's coalition of supporters (Kaempfer and Lowenberg 1988, 1999; Kaempfer, Lowenberg, and Mertens 2004; Marinov 2005; Olson 1979). The threat of political instability leads incumbents to augment their level of repression in order to secure the regime. Relying on elements of both the public choice and institutional constraints literatures, I identify two key mechanisms through which sanctions can contribute to instability and generate threat to the

[3] A point likely exists at which the cost of repression exceeds the resources available to the autocrat. When this threshold is crossed, the targeted leader either acquiesces or is removed from office. Kaempfer, Lowenberg, and Mertens (2004), however, do not specifically address this issue, but rather assume that as the autocrat approaches that threshold the level of repression should fall. On a related note, I acknowledge that sanctions that oust the incumbent likely result in a reduction of repression ex post. I argue, however, that until the removal of the target regime, sanctions will contribute to an increase in the level of repression employed by the target regime—thus, changes in repression arise endogenously from this process.

[4] Hafner-Burton's (2005) work on the human rights effects of Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs) addresses an important related issue. Her research shows that positive engagement through PTAs, coupled with binding commitments in the form of ''hard'' human rights agreements, can improve state respect for human rights. If PTAs successfully deter human rights abuses, they lend support to the argument that constructive engagement is preferable to sanctions (e.g., Li and Drury 2004). However, the retraction of these benefits may have unintended consequences similar to traditional sanctions, an issue not addressed by this research.

[5] Note that this does not imply that sanctions typically succeed in removing target incumbents. Rather, it simply assumes that sanctions often result in political realignments within target states and/or generate tensions between the regime and the population that increase the likelihood of regime instability (see Marinov 2005).

incumbent regime. First, sanctions constrain the target leader's budget and restrict the flow of resources to supporters, thereby increasing the likelihood of defection from the incumbent's winning coalition to a challenger. Second, they may embolden political opposition groups and/or generate public dissent. In response, targeted leaders increase their level of repression in order to deter threats and stabilize the regime.

Sanctions Success and Regime Stability

A number of scholars have posited that sanctions succeed by creating political instability or rifts among factions within the target state (Kaempfer and Lowenberg 1988; Marinov 2005; Nossal 1989). Olson (1979, 474) argues that sanctions are expected to ''foster divisions between elements of the elite, or between the elite and the general populace, or both.'' Such divisions promote instability within the regime and pressure leaders to alter policies. Sanctions therefore achieve the sender's policy goals either by destabilizing the regime to the point that the incumbent is removed and a more ''pliant'' leader is installed, or by undermining the political stability of the regime enough to open the bargaining range between the target and sender (Marinov 2005, 567).

The success and duration of sanctions events are linked to the distribution of sanctions costs across groups within the target state. Past research suggests that the most effective sanctions generate costs for the groups who benefit most directly from the regime's policies (Kaempfer and Lowenberg 1988; Major and McGann 2005), or that provide support to the domestic political opposition in the target country (Kaempfer and Lowenberg 1988; Kaempfer, Lowenberg, and Mertens 2004). Successful sanctions therefore threaten to destabilize governments because they harm the interest groups that support the target regime and encourage defections to a challenger. Likewise, sanctions may create an opportunity for political opposition to challenge the regime, especially if the sanctions generate significant public dissent (Allen 2007). These mechanisms also encourage incumbents to increase their level of repression. In order to prevent challenges from within their own coalition and to deter external challenges from opposition groups, targeted leaders augment their level of repression (see Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003; Davenport 1995; Gartner and Regan 1996).[6]

Sanctions could thus succeed both in attaining policy concessions *and* result in increased repression—that is, repression might increase in the immediate only to fall after sanctions succeed in altering the policies of target regimes or in ousting targeted leaders. However, given their low success rate (Hufbauer, Schott, and Elliott 1990a; Pape 1997), sanctions are arguably more likely to contribute to increased instability and repression in the immediate while failing to achieve significant policy concessions in the long run. This scenario is particularly likely given that observed sanctions generally fall on the hardest cases (Drezner 2003; Marinov 2005).[7]

[6] Numerous studies have shown that states increase their repression in response to real or perceived domestic threat (e.g., Poe and Tate 1994; Poe, Tate, and Keith 1999). For more specific analyses of the relationship between dissent and repression see Gurr and Moore (1997), Lichbach (1987), and Moore (1998), among others.

[7] On a related note, sanctions often target states that have already begun a downward spiral of instability and repression. Senders may purposely select targets that appear unstable if they perceive that it will increase the probability of success, particularly if the removal of the target regime is the desired outcome. Because of these selection effects it is difficult to tease out whether increased repression is part of a ''natural'' path, the result of sanctions imposition, or an interaction of the two. I argue that in most cases the latter is the most likely scenario. While a preliminary test of this proposition is conducted below, this issue cannot be fully addressed herein and deserves greater scrutiny in the future.

Sanctions, Repression, and the Winning Coalition

The first element of the theory constructed herein is that sanctions contribute to state-sponsored repression by constraining the resource flows of target leaders. In short, I argue that as sanctions reduce the ability of incumbents to provide resources to supporters, the likelihood of defections increase. In order to deter defections and maintain stability, target incumbents in turn augment their level of repression. This effect is significantly influenced however by the political institutions of the target state. Political structures influence the probability that a state is the target of a sanctions event (Cox and Drury 2006; Lektzian and Souva 2003), as well as their duration (Bolks and Al-Sowayel 2000; McGillivray and Stam 2004).[8] They likewise affect the ability of incumbents to use repression as a strategy to compel cooperation from a civilian population (Davenport and Armstrong 2004). Finally, institutions determine incumbents' ability to allocate resources and redistribute costs (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 1999, 2003).

Incumbent survival is in large part a function of the ability to maintain a flow of resources to core supporters. Failing to maintain the flow of goods to the winning coalition threatens the stability of the regime because the incumbent must credibly promise more to her winning coalition than can any potential challenger (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 1999, 2003). Costly sanctions make the credible promise of continued resources more difficult, which helps explain why costlier sanctions are more likely to destabilize target regimes (Dashti-Gibson, Davis, and Radcliff 1997; Marinov 2005). As the pool of available resources diminishes, sanctioned leaders must choose between conforming to the preferences of the sender and redistributing resources in a manner that protects supporters. If incumbents concede, the flow of resources presumably returns to normal and they can more easily reaffirm the stability of the regime. Often, however, targeted leaders—already the most recalcitrant regimes (Drezner 2000; Marinov 2005)—refuse concessions and instead opt to redistribute available resources in the hope of weathering sanctions and waiting out their adversaries. Such redistributions result in net losses for some members of the winning coalition (as well as those excluded from the coalition), thereby reducing their loyalty to the incumbent. Falling loyalty degrades the stability of the regime and raises the incentives for incumbents to use coercion to prevent defections.

The level of coercion necessary to prevent defections varies according to the severity of the sanctions as well as the domestic political institutions of the target.[9] Institutional constraints determine the ability of leaders to redistribute costs. In democracies, leaders must spend resources on public goods rather than reserving goods for private consumption or transferring them to their supporters. If economic sanctions reduce the level of goods available for public consumption, voters are increasingly likely to defect from the incumbent to the challenger, raising the probability that the incumbent is removed from office. Indeed, sanctions imposed on democrats are generally both shorter and more likely to prompt concessions or promote regime change compared with those imposed on autocracies (Bolks and Al-Sowayel 2000; Marinov 2005). Autocrats, on the other hand, maintain power explicitly through the support and loyalty of a coalition of key political elites. Incumbents therefore have an incentive to

[8] For an alternative view see Hafner-Burton and Montgomery (2008). According to their analysis the ''democratic economic peace'' is driven almost entirely by the United States.

[9] The need to resort to repression in order to deter defection also depends on the ability of the incumbent to locate alternative sources of revenue. Collusion between organized crime and the government of the sanctioned state allows the incumbent regime to collect significant rents through smuggling, illegal trade, and sanctions busting (Andreas 2005; Kaempfer and Lowenberg 1999, 44–5; Kaempfer, Lowenberg, and Mertens 2004, 38–9; Woodward 1995). These resources would arguably prevent the defection of regime supporters. Yet given that sanctions rents are unevenly distributed, public dissent and opposition mobilization are still likely responses.

shield these political elites from the adverse effects of sanctions. When faced with resource constraints, autocrats attempt to transfer costs away from key political elites and onto other groups within the state. Often, this means shifting costs downward to the majority non-elite population. Hence, sanctions costs are typically unevenly distributed across groups, leading to suffering for some and minimizing the costs to (or even benefiting) others (Kaempfer and Lowenberg 1999; Olson 1979; Rowe 2001). Such was the case in Rhodesia where the Smith regime increasingly shifted the costs of sanctions away from key supporters and onto the black community, further exacerbating its deprivation (Rowe 2001, 19).

Transferring costs downward may not, however, be a viable option (if for example, this strategy has already been exhausted). In these cases, the incumbent may selectively manipulate the application of sticks and carrots in an attempt to enforce loyalty. Under British- and UN-imposed sanctions, the Rhodesian government increasingly tied access to sanctions rents to loyalty in an effort to prevent the defection of core business and political elites. In addition to selective exclusion from rents, moderate members of the white minority government faced harassment, censure, and intimidation if they challenged Smith's policies (Rowe 2001, 84–5, 169). Milosevic employed a similar strategy in Yugoslavia, making access to sanctions rents contingent on support for the regime (Woodward 1995). In the direst circumstances, incumbents may even attempt to reduce the size of the coalition, thereby reducing the amount of resources it requires, and enforcing loyalty through coercive violence (see Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003). Faced with the increasing likelihood of defections and rising instability, Hussein executed dozens of top-ranking Republican Guard officers in 2000, including the General of the Guard's second brigade (Amnesty International 2001).

Cost Distribution, Dissent, and Repression

The uneven distribution of costs in autocratic or weakly democratic regimes in response to sanctions contributes to increased inequality and often worsens the aggregate economic situation within the state. As costs are redistributed downward, the negative consequences of sanctions fall disproportionately on vulnerable segments of the society (Haass 1998, 202–3; Preeg 1999, 7). The unequal redistribution of economic costs and the relative depravation it creates emboldens dissent and increases the incentive for opposition groups to challenge the regime (Gurr 1970). The response of domestic political opposition and the public to sanctions alters incumbent's cost for repression as well as its incentive to employ repression.

Citizens can respond to sanctions *either* by increasing their support for the sanctioned regime or by withdrawing their support for the incumbent in favor of a challenger. If the incumbent successfully shifts blame for deteriorating economic conditions to the sender nation, a ''rally round the flag'' promotes loyalty to the regime (Cortright and Lopez 2000; Galtung 1967). Yet sanctions often generate tensions between the public and the incumbent, providing the opposition with opportunity and incentive to challenge the status quo (Allen 2007; Kaempfer and Lowenberg 1999, 48–51; Rowe 2001). In this case, citizens challenge the incumbent regime or shift their support to political opposition groups rather than rallying in support of the embattled leader. Often sanctions are intended to spur exactly this response. Senders are sometimes acutely aware of the negative impact of sanctions on either elite supporters or the general population and attempt to exploit domestic political tensions created by the uneven distribution of sanctions costs through public dissent, coup, or revolution in order to achieve policy goals (Nossal 1994, 263; Olson 1979). Thus, as relative depravation increases and the economic distance between elites and citizens widen, the more intense the repression the regime must employ to maintain stability.

The decision (and ability) of the regime to resort to repression rather than concede to the senders demands largely depends on the relative power of the opposition and how they utilize that power. Economic sanctions may raise the cost of repression for the regime (Kaempfer, Lowenberg, and Mertens 2004). However, they may also increase its desire to employ repression. If the regime has successfully captured sanctioned rents it is more capable of employing repressive strategies against challengers. Yet opposition groups often participate in sanctions-busting activities as well, which may provide previously unavailable resources with which to challenge the incumbent regime. Sanctions may also embolden opposition groups to challenge the status quo, either by tangibly increasing their power relative to the regime (i.e., through constraints imposed on the incumbent, access to sanctions rents, or increased public support). For example, Rhodesia's deteriorating economic situation constrained the regime and helped fuel a guerrilla conflict as poor, unemployed blacks increasingly turned to revolutionary activity (Rowe 2001, 9).

Sanctions may also signal foreign support for opposition groups (Nossal 1989). The perception of foreign allies raise the opposition's perceived likelihood of success and may encourage it to work harder to promote its goals; similarly, the resulting increase in ''expected utility'' can encourage the mobilization of previously uncommitted citizens to the opposition (Kaempfer and Lowenberg 1999, 48–51). Thus, sanctions place pressure on the target regime by helping opposition movements gain support among the populous, and by enhancing their legitimacy. For instance, the African National Congress in South Africa, black opposition groups in Rhodesia, Solidarity in Poland, and the Sandinistas in Nicaragua all benefited from the imposition of sanctions in this way, allowing them to sustain or increase their challenge to the incumbent regime (51). If sanctions increase opposition mobilization or increase support for the opposition, they augment the power of opposition groups relative to the incumbent regime. Changes in the balance of power influence the strategies of the incumbent, and as the power of the two groups approach parity, the likelihood of violence increases accordingly (Benson and Kugler 1998). Consequently, an upswing in support for the opposition—such that its power increases relative to the incumbent regime—is expected to result in higher levels of repression as it raises the threat perception of the regime.

Rally or Dissent

The argument presented above assumes that sanctions increase the probability of regime defection and/or popular dissent. While there is evidence that sanctions increase dissent (Allen 2007; Rowe 2001), rallies are not uncommon in sanctioned states (Cortright and Lopez 2000). By strategically stoking nationalist sentiment the incumbent may successfully shift blame to the sender. This strategy shores up support for the regime and may permit it to effectively undermine opposition groups (Cortright and Lopez 2000; Galtung 1967). A rally effect therefore would presumably not lead to increased repression, and in fact might lower repression as loyalty to the regime, and therefore stability increases (Kaempfer, Lowenberg, and Mertens 2004).[10]

While unpacking public response to sanctions is important to understanding regime response and sanctions effectiveness, addressing it herein is problematic

[10] It is also possible that a target regime might take advantage of the temporary increase in popular support to root out potential challengers as the cost of repression would decline (Kaempfer, Lowenberg, and Mertens 2004). In this case, repression would likely be more selective. Available data does not allow me to test this hypothesis, but investigating changes in incumbent repression strategies in response to changes in regime support is a potential area for future research.

for a number of reasons. First, whether a sanctions event results in a ''rally round the flag'' effect or increases support for political opposition depends upon a variety of factors that are idiosyncratic to presanctions domestic and economic conditions within the target state. A patriotic response is more likely when sanctions are imposed against leaders who enjoy broad popular support and those that rely on loyalty rather than repression to maintain their positions (Kaempfer, Lowenberg, and Mertens 2004, 40). Rallies are also more likely when sanctions are imposed during episodes of extreme ideological rivalry or ethnic conflict—that is, when political and economic returns are already tied closely to ideological or ethnic loyalties. For instance, Castro had successfully blamed U.S. sanctions for many of Cuba's economic woes, a strategy that had not only helped preserve his tenure in office but had made him into something of an ''anti-imperialist hero'' to many Cubans (Schreiber 1973, 404). Similarly, Milosevic's manipulation of nationalist sentiment among Serbs, demonization of the United States and its allies, and dissemination of propaganda about imperialist schemes ''set upon suffocating the FRY economy'' contributed to an initial upsurge in popular support for the regime following U.S. and UN sanctions (Heine-Ellison 2001, 98).

Second, rallies arise endogenously and are heavily influenced by the distributional effects of the sanctions event (Kaempfer, Lowenberg, and Mertens 2004, 40). Sanctions that negatively impact broad swaths of the population may be perceived as targeting ''the nation'' as opposed to the leadership and generate a backlash against the sender and a surge of support for the incumbent. Public response is therefore tied to the redistributive policies of the target regime. If leaders choose to distribute costs evenly, then rallies are presumably more likely; on the other hand, uneven distributions of sanctions costs are more likely to fuel resentment in some segments of the population and result in increased dissent. Sanctioned leaders interested in generating public loyalty should therefore be expected to spread out the costs of sanctions. However, as discussed above, autocrats are constrained by the need to divert costs away from key supporters, thus forcing them to concentrate costs within select segments of the population. Rallies in favor of autocrats are thus either unlikely or are likely to be short-lived.

Finally, public response is seldom static and varies based on the duration, severity, and scope of the sanctions. Sanctions that result in significant aggregate economic decline or that negatively affect large segments of the population can be expected to increase public dissent and decrease support for the incumbent. The public may initially rally behind their embattled leader in a show of nationalism only to defect to the political opposition once their own economic situation declines. For instance, while Milosevic's skillful manipulation of Serb nationalism initially increased his popularity and power, the mounting cost of domestic conflicts and ongoing sanctions eventually contributed to his ouster by opposition forces that saw the nation's deteriorating economic situation as an opportunity to challenge the regime—but only after years of harassment, intimidation, and repression.

Hypotheses on Sanctions and State Repression

Based on the theory above I generate a series of hypotheses regarding the relationship between economic sanctions and changes in state repression. Sanctions, however, are imposed by both individual nation-states as well as international organizations, and it is therefore theoretically useful to distinguish unilateral sanctions and multilateral sanctions imposed by international and multinational organizations. Furthermore, sanctions vary in both scope and severity. Each of these dimensions theoretically affects the threat perception of the target regime and therefore influences its decision to resort to repression against its citizens.

The following hypotheses reflect these differences among sanctions events. The first hypothesis assesses the effect of sanctions generally; subsequent hypotheses assess differences in sanctions events in terms of the origins of the sanctions as well as their scope and severity.

Hypothesis 1: *Sanctions contribute to an increase in state-sponsored physical repression within the target state.*

Variations in the scope and severity of sanctions likely shape the response of incumbent regimes with respect to their chosen level of repression. As the severity of the sanctions increase in terms of the limitations on commodities or economic exchanges, and as the number of countries participating in the sanctions increases, the greater the threat to the incumbent regime and the greater the likelihood that the regime resorts to repression. For example, small-scale or symbolic unilateral sanctions may embolden opposition groups to challenge the incumbent, resulting in government crackdowns on opposition activities or the detention of opposition activists. However, multilateral economic embargoes deprive the leadership of the resources necessary to pay supporters and provide public goods and thus may destabilize the incumbent by increasing the probability of loyalist defection and promoting public support for the opposition. In such circumstances, the incumbent either acquiesces to the demands of the sender or increases their level of repression in order to discipline supporters and suppress public dissent.

Thorough qualitative data on all sanctions events occurring during the time period of this analysis are not readily available. However, detailed data are available for both U.S. and United Nations-imposed sanctions. Focusing on these entities allows me to disaggregate among different categories of sanctions (discussed below) as well as to differentiate between the effects of unilateral and multilateral sanctions events. There is also a theoretical basis for the focus on the United States and the UN. The United States is a major trading partner for most of the world's states; moreover, it has consistently been the most frequent imposer of economic sanctions, representing more than 70 percent of the sanctions years included in this data set (Institute for International Economic 2005). Furthermore, recent research suggests that the United States specifically targets nondemocratic states, while other states impose sanctions for a variety of reasons unrelated to regime type (Hafner-Burton and Montgomery 2008). For its part, the United Nations has the capability to impose sanctions that are binding on all member states, making them the most extensive multilateral sanctions. Based on this logic, I generate a set of testable hypotheses on the effects of U.S. and UN sanctions on incumbent repression. I also generate a set of hypotheses assessing the effect of changes in U.S. and UN sanctions severity on regime repression.

Hypothesis 2: *U.S.-imposed sanctions contribute to increased state-sponsored physical repression within the target state.*

Hypothesis 3: *Multilateral UN-imposed sanctions contribute to increased state-sponsored physical repression within the target state.*

Hypothesis 4: *Multilateral UN-imposed sanctions contribute to greater physical repression compared with unilateral U.S.-imposed sanctions.*

Hypothesis 5: *More severe U.S.-imposed sanctions contribute to greater physical repression in target states compared with less severe sanctions.*

Hypothesis 6: *More severe UN-imposed sanctions contribute to greater physical repression in target states compared with less severe sanctions.*

Given the theoretical and empirical basis for observing fewer sanctions events (though not necessarily fewer threats of sanctions) against consolidated democracies compared with nondemocratic states (Cox and Drury 2006; Lektzian and Souva 2003), as well as past research indicating the pacifying effect of developed democratic institutions on state-sponsored violence (Davenport and Armstrong 2004; Poe and Tate 1994; Poe, Tate, and Keith 1999), it is also useful to examine the conditioning effects of democratic institutions on regime response to sanctions. The theory suggests that democratic states will be less likely to respond to sanctions by escalating their level of repression compared with autocratic regimes. Consequently:

Hypothesis 7: *Sanctions are less likely to increase repression in democratic regimes compared to nondemocratic regimes.*

Methodology and Data

The unit of analysis is the country year. The data set contains information on sanctions events and political repression for 157 countries for the years 1976–2001. I test two sets of models in order to assess the relationship between sanctions and changes in state repression. The first set consists of ordered probit models that serve as primary tests of the seven hypotheses. The second set is a series of interconnected linear regressions that examine the causal mechanisms outlined in the theory section.

Maximum Likelihood Estimation (MLE) offers the most appropriate means to gauge the probability that a change in sanctions severity contributes to a categorical change in the severity of repression. It likewise permits easy substantive interpretation of the results by calculating the predicted probability of sanctions on changes in the level of repression from $t-1$ to t. MLE methods, however, produce both substantive and methodological problems in this analysis. Time-series analyses of human rights conditions have typically employed a lagged-dependent variable to control for autocorrelation and to account for temporal dependence and bureaucratic inertia (Beck and Katz 1995). The lagged-dependent variable is substantively important in human rights studies as it demonstrates the influence of recent history on human rights practices (Poe and Tate 1994; Poe, Tate, and Keith 1999). Because lagged-dependent variables are not well-suited for MLE models, I create a series of lagged binary indicators to account for path dependence and control for autocorrelation (see Hafner-Burton 2005).

An additional problem with traditional MLE methods in this analysis is that they do not necessarily tap the specific causal mechanisms that theoretically drive target regimes to augment levels of domestic repression. The theory presented here posits a causal chain of events leading from sanctions onset to changes in regime repression. An ordered probit model, however, only tests the relationship between the initial action (sanctions imposition) and the observed outcome (repression) without verifying the accuracy of the theoretical pathways discussed above. Analyzing these steps requires a system of equations model that can demonstrate the individual effects of these mechanisms as well as account for their reciprocal nature. I therefore test a Seemingly Unrelated Regression (SUR) model to examine these linkages. Ordered probit models use Huber (1967) and White (1980) robust standard errors clustered on the country to control for heteroskedasticity. The SUR model is discussed in greater detail in a subsequent section.

Measuring State Repression and Sanctions Severity

While a number of measures of repression exist, I focus on physical repression: a subset of repression that includes abuses such as torture, extrajudicial killings, disappearance, and political imprisonment. The dependent variable is the Political Terror Scale (PTS) (Gibney and Dalton 1996; Poe and Tate 1994). The PTS measures state-sponsored violations of physical integrity rights using a five-point categorical index. A country scoring ''1'' is under the secure rule of law and rarely commits acts of torture or political execution against its citizens (i.e., Canada or Costa Rica for most years), while a nation scoring ''5'' on the scale places no limits on the ''means and thoroughness'' with which it pursues its goals (i.e., Cambodia, 1976–1977 or Rwanda, 1994–1995). Political executions and/or torture are commonplace, and all citizens, regardless of their interest or involvement in political or civic life, are subject to sever violations of their physical integrity.[11]

The independent variables of interest are sanctions episodes. The list of sanctions events is derived from Hufbauer, Schott, and Elliott (1990a, 1990b) and the Institute for International Economic (2005). Information on U.S. sanctions events is taken from these sources as well as from Hufbauer (1998) and Hufbauer and Oegg (2000).[12] I compile information on UN sanctions from the Web page of the Office of the Spokesman for the Secretary General (United Nations 2005).[13] Sanctions severity ranges from diplomatic wrist-slaps such as travel bans on specific persons to arms or fuel restrictions to comprehensive economic embargoes. As such, differentiation among the various types of sanctions events provides significantly more information than a simple dichotomous indicator. I therefore construct a 4-point categorical scale of the severity of U.S. and UN sanctions. Table 1 provides descriptions of sanctions categories. Sanctions variables are lagged for 1 year.[14]

Control Variables

Control variables included in this model are similar to those used in previous analyses of state respect for human rights and include dissent, civil war, democracy, economic development, economic growth, and population size. Each has shown a substantive and statistically significant effect on human rights conditions

[11] The PTS presents two measures, one based on Amnesty International *Annual Country Reports*, the other on the U.S. State Department *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices*. I use scores based on the State Department data because it offers more consistent coverage and covers more countries over the time period of analysis compared with the Amnesty International data. See Poe and Tate (1994); Poe, Tate, and Keith (1999); and Poe, Vasquez, and Carey (2001) for a comparison of coverage and variation between Amnesty International and U.S. State Department Annual Human Rights Reports.

[12] This sanctions set has been the subject of much scrutiny and criticism, especially over the authors' coding of ''successful'' sanctions episodes. However, it is the most widely used data set for research on sanctions. For coding purposes, I also use supplemental information obtained from the United States Treasury Office of Foreign Asset Controls (2005). Some sanctions dates may differ slightly from those in the source documents. I date the onset of sanctions to the date restrictions are *implemented* or go into effect rather than the date the decision to sanction or the threat of sanctions was made. In general, these variations are extremely minor and do not affect the results presented herein.

[13] In some cases, UN sanctions are imposed against nonstate or quasi-state groups. This analysis includes a few such cases (e.g., UNITA in Angola). In each of these cases the sanctioned group controlled significant territory and functioned as the de facto government in the area they controlled. As such, it is reasonable to assume that sanctions affect such groups in similar ways to state governments.

[14] The 1-year lag accounts for the temporal delay between the onset of sanctions and economic decline, public dissent, and regime response. In addition, sanctioned states are not selected at random; rather, they typically exhibit a history of behavior deemed unacceptable by the sender state(s), in some cases a history of human rights abuse. Lagging the sanctions variables and including a lagged dependent variable help control for the likely endogenous relationship between human rights conditions in the target state and the sanctions event (see Finkel 1995).

TABLE 1. Description of Sanctions Categories

Sanctions Level	*U.S. Sanctions*	*UN Sanctions*
0: None	Normal economic relations	Normal economic relations
1: Mild	Retractions of foreign aid, bans on grants, loans, or credits, or restrictions on the sale of specific products or technologies (not including primary commodities embargoes)	Restrictions on arms and other military hardware (typically include travel restrictions on a nation's leadership or other diplomatic sanctions as well)
2: Moderate	Import or export restrictions, bans on U.S. investment, and other moderate restrictions on trade, finance, and investment between the U.S. and target nation	Moderate sanctions such as fuel embargoes, restrictions on trade in primary commodities, or the freezing of public and/or private assets
3: Severe	Comprehensive economic sanctions such as embargoes on all or most economic activities between the U.S. and the target nation	Comprehensive economic sanctions such as embargoes on all or most economic activities between UN member states and the target nation

in previous studies (e.g., Poe and Tate 1994; Poe, Tate, and Keith 1999). In addition, I include a number of controls pertinent to the impact of economic sanctions on the target state. In the interest of space I only discuss variables not typically included in quantitative analyses of repression. Variable descriptions are included in Table 2.

Trade and foreign aid variables are both theoretically and methodologically important to an analysis of the impact of sanctions on the target state. The theory delineated herein argues that economic shocks, revenue loss, and economic decline resulting from sanctions lead incumbent leaders to resort to more repressive strategies. A measure of the preexisting economic and financial relations between the sender and target states is therefore necessary. As such, I include variables representing the level of bilateral trade between the United States and the target state (Gleditsch 2002), the amount of U.S. foreign assistance given to the country (United States Institute for International Aid 2006), and aggregate levels of international trade (Gleditsch 2002). In order to avoid autocorrelation with the 1-year lag of the sanctions measure and still account for this historical economic relationship, these values are lagged for 2 years. All measures are log transformed.

I also include a control for the Cold War years. United States policy decisions regarding sanctions were driven during the Cold War period by its rivalry with the Soviet Union, and thus the United States may have been more likely to sanction Soviet allies and other socialist-leaning states compared with its capitalist allies. Similarly, the limited number of sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council before 1990 (Rhodesia and South Africa) is attributable to the U.S.–USSR rivalry. A related issue is the bias that existed in both U.S. State Department and Amnesty International annual human rights reports during the Cold War. While the United States was systematically less critical of its allies, Amnesty International was less critical of socialist regimes by comparison. These differences converge by the end of the 1980s, and through the 1990s there is little systematic difference between the scores (Poe, Vasquez, and Carey 2001). This variable helps control for any possible bias in sanctions policy and accounts for difference in the measures of the dependent variable. Cold War is a dummy variable coded 1 for all years prior to 1991.

Finally, Hypothesis 7 posits that democratic states are less likely to adopt repressive strategies in response to the onset of sanctions. In order to test this corollary hypothesis, I generate an interaction variable using the lagged sanctions

TABLE 2. Summary of Variables

Variable	*Description*	*Source*
Dependent Variable		
State Repression	5-point categorical indicator of state violations of physical integrity rights	Political Terror Scale (PTS) (Gibney and Dalton 1996; Poe and Tate 1994)
Independent Variables		
Sanctions	Binary indicator of all sanctions events	Institute for International Economic (2005)
U.S. Sanctions	Author-coded 4-point categorical indicator of U.S.-imposed sanctions	Hufbauer, Schott, and Elliott (1990a,b); Institute for International Economic (2005); Hufbauer (1998); Hufbauer and Oegg (2000)
UN Sanctions	Author-coded 4-point categorical indicator of UN-imposed sanctions	Hufbauer, Schott, and Elliott (1990a,b); Institute for International Economic (2005); United Nations (2005)
Control Variables		
Civil War	Binary indicator for internal conflicts that resulted in at least 25 battlefield deaths per annum and at least 1,000 over the duration of the conflict	International Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO) conflict data set version 3-2005 (Gleditsch et al. 2002; Strand et al. 2005)
Dissent	Count of antigovernment protest, riots, or strikes involving more than 100 persons	Banks (2002)
Democracy	Binary indicator of democracy coded as 1 if Polity 2 ≥ 7	Polity IV (Marshall and Jaggers 2003)
Economic Development	Natural log of GDP per capita	Gleditsch (2002)
Economic Growth	Percentage change in GDP from previous year	United Nations (2006)
U.S. Foreign Aid	Natural log of U.S. foreign aid to target	United States Institute for International Aid (2006)
U.S. Trade	Natural log of bilateral trade U.S.-target trade	Gleditsch (2002)
Total Trade	Natural log of international trade	Gleditsch (2002)
Population Size	Natural log of population	Gleditsch (2002)
Cold War	Binary indicator of Cold War years coded 1 for years prior to 1991	

variables and the lagged democracy indicator. As discussed above, these variables are necessary because domestic institutions condition the ability and incentive of incumbents to resort to physical repression rather than acquiesce to the demands of the sender.

Analysis and Discussion

Results from the ordered probit models that serve as the primary tests of the seven hypotheses are presented in Table 3. In the first model, the sanctions variable is a lagged binary indicator of all sanctions occurring between 1976 and 2001. In the second model, the sanctions variables are included as categorical measures of U.S.- and UN-imposed sanctions severity. The results of this model

TABLE 3. Ordered Probit Regression

	Model 1	*Model 2*	*Model 3*
$\text{Sanctions}_{(t-1)}$	0.236 (.069)***		
$\text{U.S. Sanctions}_{(t-1)}$		0.184 (.046)***	
$\text{UN Sanctions}_{(t-1)}$		0.309 (.099)**	
$\text{Minor U.S. Sanctions}_{(t-1)}$			0.221 (.085)**
$\text{Moderate U.S. Sanctions}_{(t-1)}$			0.382 (.117)***
$\text{Severe U.S. Sanctions}_{(t-1)}$			0.522 (.196)**
$\text{Minor UN Sanctions}_{(t-1)}$			0.233 (.196)
$\text{Moderate UN Sanctions}_{(t-1)}$			0.557 (.211)**
$\text{Severe UN Sanctions}_{(t-1)}$			1.241 (.453)**
Civil War	0.885 (.086)***	0.933 (.092)***	0.935 (.093)***
Dissent	0.020 (.006)***	0.018 (.006)**	0.017 (.006)**
$\text{Democracy}_{(t-1)}$	−0.489 (.094)***	−0.539 (.091)***	−0.538 (.092)***
$\text{Democracy *Sanctions}_{(t-1)}$	−0.112 (.145)		
$\text{Democracy * U.S. Sanctions}_{(t-1)}$		0.277 (.149)	0.270 (.149)
$\text{Democracy *UN Sanctions}_{(t-1)}$		−0.731 (.226)***	−0.775 (.292)**
$\text{Economic Development}_{(t-1)}$	−0.156 (.060)**	−0.141 (.058)*	−0.144 (.059)*
$\text{Economic Growth}_{(t-1)}$	−0.006 (.003)*	−0.006 (.003)*	−0.006 (.003)*
$\text{U.S. Foreign Aid}_{(t-2)}$		0.007 (.004)	0.007 (.004)
$\text{U.S. Trade}_{(t-2)}$		0.017 (.010)	0.016 (.010)
$\text{Total Trade}_{(t-2)}$	−0.030 (.038)	−0.049 (.038)	−0.046 (.039)
$\text{Population}_{(t-1)}$	0.110 (.039)**	0.105 (.038)**	0.103 (.038)**
Cold War	−0.263 (.050)***	−0.228 (.052)***	−0.230 (.053)***
n	3,437	3,437	3,437
Log pseudo-likelihood	−2,748.9764	−2,722.8875	−2,722.2916
χ^2	1,618.96	1,526.19	1,581.93

Note. Huber and White robust standard errors in parentheses. All calculations conducted using Stata 9.0 (StataCorp, 2005). ***$p \leq .001$, **$p \leq .01$, and *$p \leq .05$ (two-tailed test).

show the general relationship between changes in U.S. and UN sanctions severity and changes in state-sponsored physical repression. I am also interested in the specific effects of sanctions of different types and severities. As such, in the third model each category is converted to a binary indicator in order to assess the effect of each level of sanctions severity independently.

The results of the probit models offer support for the theoretical arguments delineated herein.[15] The binary variable for all sanctions events is statistically significant and the coefficient is positive, indicating that the imposition of

[15] Robustness checks using Amnesty International-based PTS scores produce similar results. Models substituting the CIRI (Cingranelli and Richards 2007) scores for the PTS return slightly different results. In the first and second models, both sanctions variables remain significant, but the coefficient for the U.S. and UN sanctions variables are nearly equal, which would fail to provide significant support for Hypothesis 4. In the third model, the variable for the lowest level of U.S. sanctions is only marginally significant ($p \leq .10$). The coefficient for the most severe U.S. sanctions is also larger than that of the highest level of UN sanctions. These differences may be driven by variations in the coding schemes between the two scales. Categories in the CIRI data set are based on event counts for abuses of each type that are then summed to generate a total, ''multidimensional'' repression score. The PTS is a one-dimensional scale based on ''categories'' of repression rather than event counts. For example, coders are instructed to scale the violence to the size of the population—100 political killings in India would generate a different score than the same number occurring in Equatorial Guinea because the risk to any individual person would be much lower in the former country (see Gibney and Dalton 1996). The PTS is also less restrictive in terms of which actors' violence is coded and may include violence that is disregarded by the CIRI data set given their operational definitions. There are tradeoffs to relying on either measure. Given that some sanctions events are against quasi-state actors, using the PTS data seems more appropriate. In addition, CIRI scores are absent for countries during periods of government transitions or collapse (i.e., Bosnia and Somalia in the 1990s and Lebanon until 2001). In many of these cases sanctions were imposed against the de facto government of the state or on group(s) that exercised control over a significant portion of the population, and it is reasonable to assume that these groups were affected by sanctions.

economic sanctions contributes to increased violations of physical integrity rights in the target country. This offers preliminary support for Hypothesis 1 and the overall theory.[16] The second model examines the effects of U.S. sanctions more explicitly and also includes a variable to account for multilateral UN sanctions. The results of this model demonstrate that the imposition of U.S. and UN sanctions at time $t - 1$ are positively correlated with increased state repression in the target state at time t. They likewise suggest that repression increases in tandem with increases in the severity of these sanctions. This supports Hypotheses 2 and 3. Furthermore, the coefficient for sanctions imposed by the UN is larger than the coefficient for those imposed by the United States. Given that both variables are coded according to the same scale, this suggests that UN sanctions are, in general, more likely to contribute to increased violations of physical integrity rights compared with unilateral U.S. sanctions. The result is consistent with Hypothesis 4, which posited a greater increase in repression as a result of multilateral UN sanctions events compared with unilateral U.S. sanctions. Under unilateral sanctions, even those imposed by the United States, the target state generally retains access to economic relationships with other states—even if substitute trade partners cannot fully compensate for the loss, some recoup of revenue is likely. For instance, when the United States imposed extensive sanctions on Iran during the 1980s, European firms assumed much of the trade in oil previously conducted by U.S. companies. On the other hand, UN-imposed sanctions apply to all member states. The target state thus has few practical alternatives and few legitimate substitutes for lost economic partners. This arguably imposes greater restraints on the leader's budget and is more likely to result in aggregate economic decline. The former induces defections while the latter raises the likelihood of dissent, both of which are likely to trigger a repressive response from the target incumbent.

These results are revealing and substantively important. However, it is also important to determine if this relationship occurs at different levels of U.S. and UN sanctions severity. Model 3 shows the effects of the disaggregated sanctions variables. As in the previous model, these results demonstrate that the imposition of U.S. and UN sanctions increases the likelihood of violations of physical integrity rights. In general, the results show that as the severity of sanctions increase, the severity of repression also increases. However, this relationship is not consistent between U.S. and UN sanctions. Sanctions imposed by the United States contribute to increases in human rights violations at all levels of severity, from the retraction of previously allocated foreign aid and other minor sanctions to complete economic embargos. In addition, the coefficients for each category increase as the severity of sanctions increase. This result is congruent with Hypothesis 5, which suggested that the more severe the sanctions imposed by the United States, the greater the level of repression employed by the sanctioned regime.

[16] Recent empirical work suggests that the United States is more likely to target nondemocracies (Hafner-Burton and Montgomery 2008), which may be more prone to employing repression and arguably more likely to resort to repression when faced with sanctions. It is therefore possible that U.S.-imposed sanctions drive the results of the first model, particularly given that U.S. sanctions constitute some 70 percent of the sanctions years included herein. Preliminary statistical analysis likewise points in this direction. The inclusion of a dummy for U.S.-imposed sanctions weakens the relationship between the general sanctions variable and repression. While this is an important issue to be fleshed out in future analyses, it is not feasible to take it up here because of space constraints. Thorough analysis of this issue requires further theorizing regarding the criteria by which senders select their targets. In addition, the relationship between democracy and repression is not linear; rather, repression only diminishes at particularly high levels of democracy (Davenport and Armstrong 2004). It is therefore problematic to assume that because the United States is more likely to sanction nondemocracies it is more likely to target abusive regimes specifically, though the relationship is highly probable. Finally, results from the two models that more explicitly examine U.S. sanctions suggest that they may worsen human rights conditions in democratic states as well. These observations provide a number of avenues for future research and a bridge to the burgeoning literature on the ''liberal economic peace'' that should be pursued by sanctions scholars.

The relationship between UN sanctions and repression, on the other hand, depends on the level of sanctions imposed. For the first level of UN sanctions—arms embargos—the coefficient is positive, but its *p*-value fails to achieve statistical significance. Consequently, there is no evidence that UN-imposed arms embargos and similar sanctions are systematically related to changes in levels of state-sponsored repression. This is perhaps not surprising as arms embargos and similar sanctions directly impact the incumbent regime's coercive capabilities but do not constrain their ability to distribute public goods or provide side payments to allies. In some cases, arms restrictions may decrease repression by reducing the coercive capacity of the government while simultaneously creating a political opportunity for opposition groups (Kaempfer, Lowenberg, and Mertens 2004). Alternatively, arms embargoes may constrain opposition groups at least as much as incumbents. During the civil war in Bosnia–Herzegovina, UN arms embargoes against the former states of Yugoslavia prevented Bosnian Muslims from adequately defending themselves against the better equipped, Yugoslav-backed Serb militias, thus contributing to the ability of these militias to carry out campaigns of ethnic cleansing and genocide. This relationship deserves greater scrutiny given that arms embargoes are a popular and inexpensive sanctions tactic.

The coefficients for moderate and comprehensive UN sanctions are both positive and significant, suggesting that fuel embargoes and trade restrictions on commodities as well as full economic embargoes by the international community contribute to an increase in the level and scope of repression employed by the target regime. This is likely the result of such sanctions significantly reducing the resources available for public distribution and for maintaining the loyalty of the incumbent's coalition. In addition, the value of the coefficient for UN sanctions more than doubles between the two levels of severity, revealing a significant increase in the magnitude of effect between moderate and comprehensive sanctions. This supports the theory explicated herein and provides partial support to Hypothesis 6—more severe UN sanctions generate more severe state repression. Multilateral embargoes backed by international mandate have the effect of virtually locking the target state out of the international economic and diplomatic system, thereby placing significant constraints on the leader's ability to preserve resource flows. The few high-level sanctions regimes imposed on states during the past 30 years included in the analysis (e.g., Southern Rhodesia, Yugoslavia, and Iraq) stripped the target states of most forms of development and military aid, barred the states from most international trade, and cost the states even strategic diplomatic and military partners. Under the austere trade conditions they imposed, GDP growth slowed or reversed, prices increased, wages fell, and unemployment rose. The impact of these economic constraints was felt by all strata of society, and eventually exerted significant pressure on political elites.

Finally, the results of the interaction terms for sanctions imposed on democracies provide partial support for corollary Hypothesis 7 on the mitigating effect of democratic institutions. The results suggest that democratic and autocratic states respond differently to sanctions events. In addition, the origins of the sanctions may influence democratic targets in different ways. In the first model, the interaction term for all sanctions is negative but not significant. The variable for U.S. sanctions imposed against democratic states, on the other hand, is positive but exceeds conventional thresholds for statistical significance, suggesting only a marginal relationship between U.S. sanctions against democracies and increases in state repression. UN sanctions, on the other hand, unambiguously contribute to a net decrease in the use of physical repression. This result likely reflects the economic leverage UN sanctions exert as well as the power of international opinion to alter the behaviors of democratic regimes.

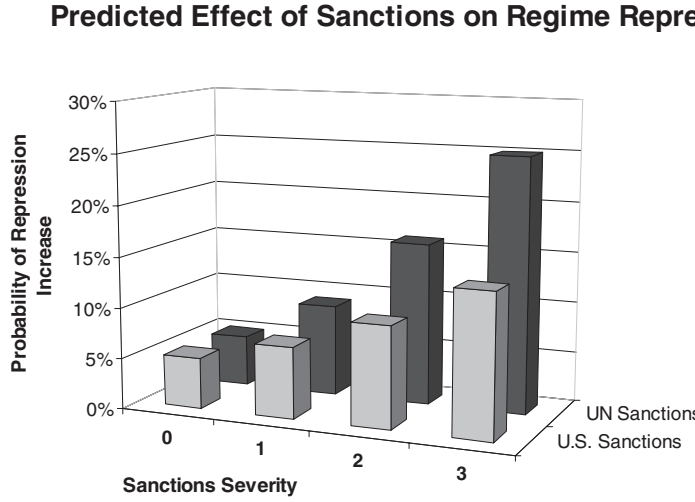

FIG. 1. Predicted Probability of 1-Category Increase in Repression Following U.S. and UN Sanctions. Civil War, Democracy, and Cold War Variables Set to 0. All Other Variables Set to Mean or Median Values. Simulations Conducted Using Clarify Version 2.1 (Tomz, Wittenberg, and King 2003)

In order to illustrate the substantive impact of sanctions, I compute predicted probabilities for model 2. Figure 1 shows the predicted change in the severity of repression from time $t - 1$ to t for each level of U.S. and UN sanctions when they are imposed on significantly repressive regimes ($y = 4$). Significantly repressive regimes serve as the sample category because they are comparatively more likely to be the target of sanctions as well as those most likely to respond with repression in the face of resource constraints and rising dissent. These predictions illustrate that when sanctions are imposed, and as sanctions severity increases, the probability of an already repressive state further ratcheting up repression during the next year increases accordingly. For example, the baseline probability of a significantly repressive regime moving to the most severe category of repression ($y = 5$) in the following year is roughly 5 percent. The imposition of sanctions, however, significantly increases this probability. Minor, moderate, and comprehensive U.S. economic sanctions raise the probability that a state moves to the most severe category of repression to 7 percent, 10 percent, and 14 percent, respectively. For UN sanctions, the probability increases to 9 percent, 16 percent, and 25 percent, respectively. These predictions are consistent across levels of repression, suggesting that the imposition of economic sanctions systematically and substantially increases the probability that a state resorts to greater repression during the following year.[17]

The two control variables of specific concern to the theory presented here—dissent and recent economic growth—function as expected and provide some additional support for the theory delineated above. The dissent variable, which captures antigovernment strikes, riots, and demonstrations, is statistically significant and positively related to regime repression. Thus, as a regime faces greater opposition activity and rising dissent, it becomes more likely to increase repression. This is consistent with the proposition that as threat perception

[17] States falling into this category of repression begin with a base probability of 53 percent that they reduce repression by one category during the subsequent year. The imposition of U.S. sanctions reduces the likelihood of such a reduction in repression to 47 percent, 41 percent, and 35 percent, respectively. UN sanctions reduce this to 43 percent, 33 percent, and 24 percent.

increases so too does repression. The variable accounting for recent economic growth is negative and significant, suggesting that as aggregate national wealth increases, repression decreases. This follows from past research and is congruent with the theory. While not a direct test of this proposition, it is reasonable to infer that economic growth both increases the resources available for distribution to regime supporters and diminishes the likelihood of public dissent—both of which should reduce the incentive for the regime to repress its citizens.

The other typical control variables function as expected. The binary variables accounting for the previous level of repression (not reported to save space) are significant, and the coefficients decline in value with each category of repression, indicating that past behavior influences present respect for human rights standards. Also, in line with past research, civil war is a significant predictor of increased repression and has a large substantive impact. Democratic institutions, by contrast, contribute to greater respect for physical integrity rights. Lastly, both the level of economic development and population size are significant and congruent with past research. On balance, as development increases, repression decreases; conversely, as population size increases, repression is more likely to increase.

The Cold War variable is both negative and statistically significant. This result suggests that states were comparatively less likely to resort to physical repression during the Cold War. Several possible explanations for this observation exist, including bias in the U.S. State Department human rights reports, the dramatic increase in UN and unilateral sanctions during this post-Cold War period, political instability, and violence in the new states of the former Soviet Union, or a general decline in international security brought on by the collapse of the Cold War bipolar order. This result is interesting, and, given the significance of the effect, reveals the need for further research into the relationship between the pre- and post-Cold War international system and human rights conditions.

Finally, the control variables for foreign aid, U.S. trade, and total international trade are not significant at standard statistical thresholds. The results show a positive and weak relationship between past U.S. foreign aid and trade, and increased state repression. The coefficients for the trade variables, however, do not approach statistical significance and are therefore not systematically related to changes in levels of repression.

Identifying and Testing Causal Pathways

The results of the ordered probit models support the testable hypotheses presented herein. They do not, however, provide any information regarding the specific elements of the causal chain explicated in the theory section. Nor do they account for the reciprocal relationship between past state repression and sanctions onset. Accounting for these causal mechanisms requires a series of independent regressions or a system of equations. While the relationships described above might appear simultaneous they are not because the theory suggests a temporal lag between the sender's decision to impose sanctions and the regime's decision to alter its level of repression. This delay exists because the mechanisms through which sanctions eventually induce changes in regime repression do not occur all at once, but rather in a sequence. Each stage in this sequence introduces some temporal delay; therefore, some explanatory variables must be lagged. These lagged variables are considered exogenous ''because for determination of the current period's values of the endogenous variables they are given as constants'' even when the variables are endogenous in their nonlagged form (Finkel 1995; Kennedy 1998, 169). Although a simultaneous model is not

entirely appropriate, a series of independent regression equations is likewise unacceptable because the error terms for the dependent variables are in part a function of the same processes and are likely to be correlated (Kennedy 1998).[18] One way to address this problem, as well as to tap the steps in the causal chain, is to estimate a SUR model. This model estimates disturbance correlations and diagonal elements ''by using the residuals from each equation estimated separately'' (Kennedy 1998, 175).

Using the SUR model, I test the following relationships: (1) the overall effect of sanctions on regime-sponsored repression; (2) the effect of sanctions on the target state's economic health; (3) the effect of sanctions and economic change on dissent; and (4) the effect of past repression on the imposition of sanctions. As previously mentioned, the equations include lagged values of dependent variables from some equations as independent variables in order to account for the real-world delays in decision-making and policy implementation. For example, the sanctions variables in the *dissent* equation must be lagged in order to account for the changes in political structures that create political opportunities for opposition groups to challenge the government and to allow for the accumulation of economic grievances that contribute to popular mobilization. In the *sanctions* equation, repression is lagged because the United States and UN are likely to target states with recent histories of violence against their citizens. This lag reflects the temporal delay that often results from political wrangling within the United States government or the UN Security Council over the appropriateness and/or the severity of sanctions as well as other delays common to the bureaucratic process.

Sanctions variables are not lagged in the *economic change* equation. The dependent variable—change in GDP—reflects change in GDP from the previous year to the current. It is reasonable to assume that the exogenous shock caused by sanctions begins to take effect during the year they are imposed. Thus, the cumulative effect of sanctions over the course of the first year (t) should be obvious when compared with the previous year ($t - 1$).[19] As a final note, the UN sanctions variable in this equation has been rescaled to reflect purely economic sanctions. Arms embargoes should have little direct economic impact on the state and as such have been dropped from the measure. The measure remains the same in other equations because arms embargoes and diplomatic sanctions may still signal foreign support for domestic opposition and therefore generate dissent and consequently regime repression. Measures of all other variables remain unchanged. To capture opposition support I use a yearly count of antigovernment protests, riots, and strikes (Banks 2002). I use the yearly change in GDP (United Nations 2005) to measure changes in the economic health of the state and as a proxy for incumbent access to resources.[20]

[18] See Drury and Li (2006, 316) for a discussion of this method as it pertains to sanctions threats.

[19] A model that assumes the effects of sanctions originating at $t - 1$ would also arguably overlook the ability of target incumbents to locate alternative trade or investment partners or establish black markets during this temporal lag. Such responses are common and would likely deflect the direct economic effects of sanctions in the long term; however, modeling sanctions' costs in this way would obscure the immediate economic effects that drive dissent in the subsequent period. The effects of sanctions likely reverberate in the domestic economy prior to the state locating alternative resources and would therefore contribute to domestic unrest in the interim.

[20] This construction assumes that incumbent resources are a direct function of aggregate economic health and ignores the real possibility that leaders can offset budget constraints by tapping sanction rents. Furthermore, GDP growth may not reflect all important economic dynamics in the target state. Sanctions may devastate some sectors of the economy while leaving others relatively unharmed. Depending on the sanctions design, a state could suffer notable disinvestment yet not suffer substantial reductions in other economic areas, affecting different elements of society in very different ways. While this variable is far from ideal, there are few alternative measures that would adequately account for changes in incumbent resource pools.

The results of the SUR model offer further support for the theory, including the roles of the causal mechanisms detailed earlier.[21] The lagged sanctions variables in the repression equation unambiguously correlate to higher levels of regime repression. As with the probit models presented above, UN sanctions exert a larger substantive effect on state repression than U.S. sanctions. Likewise the dissent variable is significant and positive, which demonstrates that increased dissent generates regime repression. The variable for recent economic growth is negative but insignificant when included in a system of equations in which it also serves as a dependent reciprocal variable. This result is interesting as it suggests that change in economic performance does not in itself alter regime repression, but is one factor in a complex relationship. In accordance with this theory, it shows that economic changes affect repression through changes in the domestic political climate. This supports and clarifies the assumptions and findings of earlier research that as the size of the ''pie'' changes, it influences the relationship between the population and the regime (Poe and Tate 1994).[22]

The dissent and economic change equations clarify the causal linkages driving the results of the first model. The results show that both U.S. and UN sanctions result in increased antiregime activity in the year following their imposition. This supports recent research that shows that sanctions may provide both an incentive and a political opportunity for opposition groups to challenge the regime (Allen 2007). Importantly, the severity of dissent depends on the origin of the sanctions. UN sanctions contribute to significantly more antigovernment activity compared with U.S. sanctions. The results also demonstrate the inverse relationship between economic growth and domestic unrest. As sanctions reverse economic growth, states lose a significant deterrent to public unrest and are more likely to face increased public mobilization or challenges from domestic political opposition. It is likewise reasonable to infer from these results that economic growth reduces the risk of regime defection by allowing incumbents to rely on carrots rather than sticks. Finally, the effect of the interaction term for level of democracy and sanctions suggests that dissent is more likely in sanctioned democracies. This result further explains the relative success of sanctions in achieving policy concessions from democratic targets and is congruent with past research that showed that target democrats were at comparatively greater risk for destabilization (Marinov 2005).

The results of the economic change equation suggest that both U.S. and UN economic sanctions exert a negative impact on the aggregate economic performance of the target. The coefficients of both variables are negative; however, the U.S. sanctions variable is only marginally significant ($p \leq .10$).[23] In substantive terms, U.S. sanctions result in approximately a 0.4 percent decline in GDP while UN sanctions cause a decline of approximately 2.3 percent per level. The larger impact of UN sanctions is expected because such sanctions typically prevent the target from recouping economic losses by locating substitute trade and investment partners, whereas unilateral sanctions leave this possibility open. Because the impact of sanctions on a nation's economic welfare depends on the extent to which the sanctions limit the target's total access to trade (Bayard, Pelzman, and Perez-Lopez 1983), multilateral sanctions should have a more profound effect on aggregate economic growth compared with unilateral sanctions.

[21] Full results are available from the author upon request.

[22] It is important to note that in this system of equations, the coefficients for the lagged values of total international trade and U.S. trade become significant. In this model, U.S. trade is correlated with increased repression, while higher levels of overall international trade are correlated with reduced regime repression. Again, this result suggests the need to further explore this complex relationship.

[23] A 1-year lag of the sanctions variables returns an insignificant result for U.S. sanctions, while the coefficient for UN sanctions is significant at the .10 level and suggests an aggregate economic decline of 1.5 percent annually.

These results may help explain the difference between the effects of U.S. and UN sanctions on both protest and repression. UN-imposed sanctions often diplomatically and economically isolate the target regime, causing negative aggregate economic growth and potentially emboldening the opposition by signaling the ''world's'' support for their antiregime activity. U.S. sanctions, however, exert a less severe negative aggregate economic impact on the target and signal only the support or opinion of a single—albeit powerful—state. In turn, as shown in the results from the dissent equation, they contribute to comparatively less domestic dissent than do typically more severe UN sanctions. Sanctions that generate fewer domestic threats are less likely to promote regime repression, a proposition supported by the repression equation.

Finally, both models show that U.S. and UN decisions to impose sanctions are in part driven by a state's past history of repression.[24] This result is important because it confirms the reciprocal nature of the sanctions-repression relationship. States are not selected for sanctions at random; rather, they have usually violated some international norm or have a history of violence against their populations. This dynamic has received little attention from either sanctions or repression scholars and could further inform the ''liberal economic peace'' research agenda (Cox and Drury 2006; Hafner-Burton and Montgomery 2008; Lektzian and Souva 2003). The results thus beg greater attention to the role of human rights in sanctions decision-making from researchers interested in the correlates of economic sanctions.

Conclusion

This article has demonstrated that the imposition of U.S. and UN sanctions contributes to increased state-sponsored repression. I have argued that this increase in repression results from incumbent efforts to prevent the defection of core supporters and to stifle dissent in the face of declining economic conditions or growing opposition support; preliminary assessment of these causal mechanisms supports the theory. The results also reveal important information regarding the differing effects of sanctions by type and by sender. Specifically, this article suggests that multilateral UN sanctions contribute to greater increases in repression than do unilateral sanctions from states such as the United States. UN-backed weapons embargoes, however, do not appear to be systematically related to changes in repression. Furthermore, the preliminary tests of the causal mechanisms explicated herein reveal how U.S. and UN sanctions contribute to regime repression.

These issues have not gone unnoticed by academics and policy makers. In response to the unsuccessful sanctions imposed on Iraq, then-UN Secretary-General Bhoutros-Ghali openly questioned the ethics of economic sanctions. The ''blunt instrument'' of sanctions, he stated, hampered the work of humanitarian and human rights groups, contributed to long-term reversals in economic development, unjustly injured neighboring states, and inflicted suffering on vulnerable groups within the target state (Bhoutros-Ghali 1995; paragraphs 70–1; see also Cortright and Lopez 2002). Moreover, recent efforts to reform sanctions illustrate a growing awareness of the detrimental impact of sanctions on civilian populations. A series of international conference and policy reviews conducted by international organizations and state governments evaluated the impact of current sanctions and have worked to develop more accurately targeted sanctions

[24] These results suggest an endogenous relationship between sanctions onset and past repression. To account for this relationship I also tested a treatment model (Maddala 1983). In this model, the first stage accounts for selection into the ''treatment group,'' and the second stage estimates the predicted effect of the ''treatment.'' These models identified an endogenous relationship between recent repression and sanctions onset; both sanctions variables however remained significant, suggesting that despite the endogenous relationship, sanctions contribute to state repression.

that lessen the extent of civilian casualties (Collins and Bowdoin 1999; Cortright and Lopez 2002; Johnston and Weintraub 1999; Stockholm Process 2003; United Nations 1999).

Finally, this article provides additional evidence of the need to develop new strategies of coercive diplomacy that better shield civilians from sanctions fallout. Consequently, a wealth of opportunity exists for research into alternative tools for promoting state respect for human rights or other changes in target state policies without endangering civilians. For instance, while traditional tools of economic statecraft may result in significant collateral damage, noneconomic sanctions tools such as arms embargoes or bans on participation in international sporting events—such as those imposed on South Africa and the former Yugoslavia—may contribute to alterations in regime policy preferences without harming civilians. However, if such sanctions trigger domestic dissent they may yet result in an unintended regime backlash. To that end, constructive engagement offers a more incentive-based approach to convincing states to respect international law and human rights and may prove more effective in achieving policy outcomes (Drury and Li 2006; Hafner-Burton 2005).

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