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Spies, Sanctions, and Single-Party States: How American Sanctions Influence Intelligence Operations

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SPIES, SANCTIONS, AND SINGLE-PARTY STATES:
HOW AMERICAN SANCTIONS INFLUENCE INTELLIGENCE
OPERATIONS

by

ANTHONY J. ANTA

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For the Honors in the Major Program in Political Science
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Thesis Chair: Kelsey Larsen, Ph.D.

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ABSTRACT

States have a diverse and unique set of available mechanisms to deploy when seeking to interact in the international community. Economic sanctions have long been one such tool available for states looking to coerce or incentivize a change in the behavior of another state. Likewise, states have historically sought to influence and gain unknown knowledge on another state or actor. Covert intelligence operations have changed forms, mechanisms, and techniques, especially since the expansive advancements in technology in the 21st century. This paper seeks to understand the influence that economic sanctions have on the ability for single-party states to conduct intelligence operations against the United States. A comparative case study, composed of a series of questions and deployed in a casebook method, explores these unique behaviors through the cases of Cuba and China. A better understanding between economic sanctions and intelligence operations can offer American foreign policymakers another avenue to consider when deploying economic sanctions.

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INTRODUCTION

On July 11th, 2021, Cuban citizens took to the streets in protest against the current government of Miguel Diaz-Canel. These were the largest, in terms of people and geography, such protests since the Cuban Revolution. A variety of topics were at the heart of the protests, but one thing was clear over the course of the days and weeks that followed. There was, to some degree, a segment of the population that was dissatisfied with the current regime of the Communist Party of Cuba, headed by Diaz-Canel. Whether this dissatisfaction was rooted in the suppression of political rights, such as the freedom of speech and of peaceful assembly, or issues of food shortages, inflation, and medical shortcomings, the events that unfolded on July 11th will certainly have an effect on the future of politics on the island. Conversations here in the United States ranged from total support for the protestors to unrelenting support for the current regime, and everywhere in between. A review of Cuba policy by the Biden Administration was prompted by both ends of the conversation. Yet, their policy recommendations and outcomes varied extremely, resulting in an inverse of proposals to the Biden Administration. One current that was constantly reappearing, whether in defense of or in opposition to, was the U.S. embargo against Cuba. Those in support of it demand a such a hardline stance against such autocratic regimes that economic exchange between the two countries, specifically between the two private sectors, can be sacrificed. Those in opposition to the embargo believe that renewed economic exchange between the two neighboring countries can improve the lives of everyday Cubans, leading to a domino effect that could see a democratic transition in the future.

Perhaps even more prominent in the news recently has been the uptick in the arrests of Chinese Communist Party spies lodged in many American sectors, whether it be in academia, the

private sector, or any other critical sector of American life. The intertwining of the U.S. economy and the Chinese economy is the focal point of the relationship between the two countries, and in many ways helps entice or to some degree offer a possibility of espionage in related sectors. Similarly, questions concerning the geopolitical implications of such a confrontation with China, not solely limited to the economic sector, complicates any conversation concerning China. Thus, it is for this reason specifically, amongst others, that causes the most concern over Chinese spying in the United States. The effectiveness of such operations, and the one's that the United States counterespionage community have been able to shut down, paint an alarming picture for the future of U.S.-China relations in both the short-term and the long-term.

The discourse in the days and weeks that followed the July 11th protests in Cuba and the rise of Chinese espionage in the United States spurred a question involving the effects of such an embargo, or economic sanctions writ large, on the intelligence operations states pursue against the United States. Both states have a storied history of pursuing intelligence operations against the United States that, in one way or another, have either continued into or have seen a rise in the 21st century. What dictates the conduct of states when it comes to covert intelligence operations, particularly when economic forces dictate the relationship between the two states? This is only one component of the overarching question that arises when focusing on the role that U.S. economic sanctions, when imposed on autocratic, single-party regimes, play in intelligence operations.

This thesis looks to better understand the relationship that economic sanctions have on the ability of a sanctioned, single-party state to engage in covert intelligence operations. A review of the literature will be compiled concerning economic sanctions, single-party state's

reaction to sanctions, America's historical and contemporary use of sanctions, and the two intelligence apparatuses observed. The compiled literature review will be utilized to inform the hypothesis that economic sanctions will have a demonstrable effect on how a single-party state conducts intelligence operations. Likewise, the tendency for a state to engage in such activities will not inherently be stopped due to implementation of such sanctions. The hypothesis will be evaluated via a comparative case study analysis between Cuba and the People's Republic of China. Conclusions and the potential for further research will comprise the final sections of this research thesis.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Economic Sanctions: Definition & Function

In order to fully understand the impact of economic sanctions, it is important to properly define economic sanctions and to differentiate between the many important functions of this tool of foreign policy. Galtung (1967) describes economic sanctions as:

Actions initiated by one or more international actors (the "senders") against one or more others (the "receivers") with either or both of two purposes: to punish the receivers by depriving them of some value and/or to make the receivers comply with certain norms the senders deem important. (p. 379)

Typically, sanctions are divided between the “sending” state, the one imposing the sanctions, and the “receiving” state, the state subject to the economic sanctions. For example, in the economic sanctions placed on Cuba, the United States is the sender, whereas Cuba is the receiver. The intended result of the coercion can range from a change in the foreign policy of the “receiving” nation to regime change. This wide array of policy objectives reflects the malleable nature of sanctions and the different ways they can be used to achieve different results. Pape (1997) expands on the concept of coercion in more depth when describing the main function of sanctions:

Sanctions can coerce either directly, by persuading the target government that the issues at stake are not worth the price, or indirectly, by inducing popular pressure to force the government to concede, or by inducing a popular revolt that overthrows the government, resulting in the establishment of a government that will make the concession. (p. 94)

Coercion is a part of the functioning of global politics. Economic sanctions are merely one method states can reinforce certain courses of action that they prefer or deter those they are against. Yet, during the course of the 20th century, the global system saw the rise in the implementation of sanctions, with notable examples being their usage against Cuba, Rhodesia,

and Iraq. This began a series of debates over the validity of their usage and their overall effectiveness in inducing change in the receiving state, as dictated by the sender. Two crucial journal entries in the literature of economic sanctions are at the core of this debate. For Hufbauer and Schott (1985), sanctions can effectively perform their job in achieving a policy objective but are more successful when used in certain circumstances. Five divisions were created to determine which scenarios garnered positive effects from sanctions. These divisions were derived from the policy objective or goal of the application of the sanction and read as follows: modest policy goals, destabilization, disruption of military adventures, impair military potential, and other major policy changes (Hufbauer & Schott, 1985). With these categories in mind, Hufbauer and Shott (1985) found that 36% of sanctions that they analyzed, a total of 106 sanction episodes, were successful with the most effective sanctions being those concerned with destabilization and modest policy goals (p. 730).

The second journal article, a refutation of the previous article, was presented by Pape (1997) and focused on a flaw in the work of Hufbauer and Schott. Pape asserted that only 5% of the sanctions that were previously analyzed were successful, not the 36% number that Hufbauer and Schott asserted. This was due to two major factors: the inclusion of non-economic sanctions-specific instruments, commercial negotiations and economic warfare, and the failure to account for force in the implementation of sanctions. These two factors, specified categorization of sanctions and force, allow Pape to come to the conclusion that sanctions are not as effective at achieving policy goals as the previously mentioned article suggests.

There is great value in both articles when evaluating sanctions and the effects that coercion plays in the international system. Hufbauer and Schott (1985) describe nine

“commandments” (p. 730) that serve as policy recommendations for the future application of sanctions to improve the efficacy of these economic tools. Pape (1997) provides balanced and much needed pessimism on the future of sanctions, including if certain aspects of the implementation of sanctions are amended to improve their chance of successful coercion. One such example Pape offers is the potential for sanctions to inflict “higher levels of economic punishment” (p. 108) than they have previously.

Economic Sanctions and Autocracies: The Resilience of Single-Party States

Historically, economic sanctions follow different strategies of implementation. Some seek to solely affect the economy of the receiving state to induce change. Others, by way of harming the target state’s economy, seek to push the country’s citizenry to revolt against their current government. These results vary in success and rely predominantly on the status of the receiving country’s government. The receiving country’s regime type can be a strong indicator of success or failure. As such, the use of economic sanctions against autocratic regimes can be either incredibly successful or severely useless.

Which type of autocratic regime is more likely to withstand the brunt of sanctions, and which is most likely to crumble under the pressure, is the addition of Peksen to the literature. Peksen (2017) maintains the assertion that “target regimes will remain defiant against sanctions to the extent that they can withstand the possible economic and political burdens of the coercion” (p. 255). What is crucial in such a scenario is both the nature of the sanctions and the specific type of autocratic regime being targeted. For example, when compared to democracies and personalist autocracies, both single-party states and military dictatorships are better off surviving the effects of economic sanctions (Peksen, 2017). They ensure their survival by prioritizing their

political base, their center of political gravity and legitimacy, and protecting the base from being harmed by the ensuing sanctions. A distance is created between the political base in both single-party states and military dictatorships with the rest of the population. Regardless of the negative effects that the citizenry of the country face, as long as the political base is protected from these hardships, then the regimes are capable of surviving the sanctions. Through the allocation of resources and other financial methods, the political bases of both of these systems are supported by their autocratic regime.

Likewise, these two systems of governance, single-party states and military dictatorships, are experts at monitoring and suppressing internal dissent against the regime (Peksen, 2017). The suppression of dissent limits the ability of the citizenry to publicly display discontent and react against their government. Both of these factors, the protection of the political base and the suppression of dissent, allow single-party states and military dictatorships to shrug off any economic sanctions imposed on them by outside actors. In contrast, personalist regimes are more likely to crumble under the immense pressure of sanctions due to an overwhelming reliance on “foreign aid and natural resource rents” (Peksen, 2017, p. 257). Thus, we see the difference in autocratic regimes, and the different rates of success a sender state can expect when implementing sanctions against one of these regimes.

Implementation of Sanctions by the United States

With the end of the Cold War and the rapid globalization seen during the 21st century, new methods have arisen within the practice of economic sanctions. Most notably has been the rising implementation of “smart” sanctions in favor of widespread economic sanctions. This coincided with new sets of goals that states may seek when implementing sanctions. Smart

sanctions refer to the targeting nature of these sanctions, opting to focus specifically on either people, government entities, or corporations rather than the entirety of the receiving country's economy (Hufbauer & Jung, 2020). Deterrence, retribution, and rehabilitation have come to the forefront as new goals of smart sanctions (Hufbauer & Jung, 2020). For example, due to aggressive efforts being taken by Russia against their neighbors, smart sanctions have seen used most predominantly against Russian firms, which caused the Russian government to "shield" the firms from the full brunt of the sanctions (Ahn & Ludema, 2020, p. 3). This creates some burden on the citizens of the country, due to the fact that their government has chosen to take on most of the load imposed by these smart sanctions, effectively shielding the firms from economic ruin. As such, the methods of implementation of sanctions, as well as the ability for states to circumvent the given sanctions, have changed with the times.

The introduction of smart sanctions provides another chapter in the storied history of economic sanctions being used as a tool of American foreign policy. Yet, there are many roadblocks that exist, and must be addressed, in order to maintain the success of sanctions in the future. Of grave concern is the effects that sanctions may have on the effects of the U.S. dollar and the status our currency has as the world's reserve currency (Drezner, 2021). Sanctions can affect the purchasing power of the American dollar in the international system. This can have major repercussions on the global economy if a new currency is deemed more reliable to serve as the world's reserve. To improve the success of sanctions when new elements arise in the global system in the 21st century states must account for the growing new tools at their disposal, as well as the capabilities of other states to defend against the brunt of the sanctions.

Intelligence Operations

As sanctions are an open function of the international system, it is imperative to discuss and analyze a function of the global politics that occurs under secrecy: covert intelligence operations. Covert action is “the secret manipulation of events abroad to advance a nation’s interests” (Johnson, 2003, p.12). This is perhaps best remembered in the popular culture psyche through such staples such as James Bond and the broader spy genre. While this may illustrate, in a rather over-the-top manner, one aspect of intelligence operations, in actual function covert intelligence operations can consist of a variety of methodologies from collecting human intelligence to the manufacturing of disruption in the opposing country (Johnson, 2003). Covert intelligence operations can serve a variety of policy objectives and have often times been referred to as a “third option” to conventional diplomatic measure or military usage (Kibbe, 2010, p. 2). There exist five categories of covert action, though the separation in categories does not imply the explicit use of the category. In many instances, a combination of one or more categories is applied to a given scenario. The five categories include propaganda, political action, paramilitary action, economic action, and information operations (Kibbe, 2010).

Propaganda is the process by which information is disseminated to “influence people’s opinions and behavior” (Kibbe, 2010, p. 3). Propaganda was heavily utilized during the Cold War and remains a strong element of intelligence operations to this day. Political action is a much more direct method of intelligence operations. In this instance, a direct measure is taken to influence the internal political order of a foreign country (Kibbe, 2010). This can include involvement in a foreign country’s elections, something that has become much more heavily analyzed in the media recently. Paramilitary actions constitute the use of military force, often

resulting in some covert military operation, such as in a coup d'état (Kibbe, 2010). Economic action, a recent addition, describes actions taken by a state to economically effect the other state. Sanctions do not fall under this category, as sanctions are an open function of the political system. Rather, subtler actions are taken, such as “spreading disinformation to raise fears of economic instability, trying to manipulate another country’s currency, or convincing companies and other countries not to invest in the target state and disrupting international lines of credit” (Kibbe, 2010, p. 4). Lastly, information operations, the most recent category recognized, involves the attacking of one’s “information and information systems” (Kibbe, 2010, p. 5). Recent examples of information operations exist, specifically concerning ones conducted by the Chinese Communist Party, Iran, and Russia prior to and during the recent United States elections.

Many problems arise in the international community that call for intelligence operations to be applied. Regime change and regime promotion serve as two potential motivators behind covert operations and their repeated association with covert intelligence operations has been extensively studied. Poznansky (2003) discusses the ways in which leaders choose to apply covert operations to a given scenario, or opt for more direct, overt operations. Ultimately the willingness of a state to employ such covert measures, or refrain from them, comes after careful consideration of two factors: risk aversion and risk acceptance. When faced with the daunting task of a “promotive goal like regime change” heads of state or policymakers will often choose covert operations, due to the fact that overt operations may raise the “the risks of intervention” (Poznansky, 2003, p. 352). In contrast, “preventative missions” invite the use of overt methods “to maximize the chances of success if necessary even when the risks of doing so are high”

(Poznansky, 2003, p. 352). Risk, either the risk of exposure or the risk of failure, must be accounted for and factored in when intelligence operations are presented as a viable choice for world leaders. Thus, much like in the case of sanctions, the timing and the nature of covert operations is imperative to the success of the operation.

Cuban Intelligence

Thanks in part to recent developments in the geopolitical sphere, there have been a growing number of call backs to the Cold War to explain the recent events that are unfolding in relation to America's position in the global order and the rise of China. This Cold War comparison is an interesting aspect, as it was during this conflict in the 20th century that espionage and covert intelligence operations were pushed to the forefront. One major actor in events of the Cold War, as well as the ensuing intelligence battle that was unfolding, was our neighbor to the south: Cuba. Cuba's intelligence capabilities are oftentimes overlooked when compared to their American or Soviet counterparts. Yet, even through to the 21st century Cuba has experienced many intelligence successes against the United States since the Cuban Revolution in 1959 (Lefebvre, 2009).

Inspired and assisted in their early development by their Soviet and Stasi counterparts, the Cuban offensive intelligence arm, the DGI, found much success due to the hands-on approach by leader Fidel Castro. It is important to differentiate between the offensive capabilities and the internal intelligence apparatuses used by the Cuban government. For domestic surveillance, the Cuban regime turns to their Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, which serve as elevated neighborhood watch made up of Communist Party informers and report on any and all suspicious activity directly to the Cuban government (Lefebvre, 2009). It was

under Castro's control that the Ministry of the Interior, MININT, which housed the DGI, be elevated to such a high position within the Cuban government (Lockhart, 2021). As such, the DGI was tasked with very important tasks crucial to the national security of the country and the affirmation of the Castro regime.

Specifically, the DGI was instructed to monitor Cuban exiles and to perform espionage against the United States (Lefebvre, 2009). The DGI was successful in both scenarios, as is evident through the literature that exists depicting the espionage successes against Cuban exiles living in the United States and other larger intelligence operations, such as the Ana Montes case. What is depicted by these events is the proficiency of Cuban intelligence to monitor the behavior of their former citizens, who are now political enemies, as well as engaging in intelligence gathering against their neighbor to the north. Effectively utilizing human intelligence became the hallmark of the Cuban DGI. Yet the government was not limited to this one level of collection. The military intelligence branch of the Cuban Ministry of Armed Forces, MINFAR, utilized signals intelligence collection to collect information against the United States (Lefebvre, 2009). Though there is a reliance on defected members of the Cuban intelligence community to relay the successes and failures of their involvement in intelligence operations, by sheer volume of what has already by open to the public there exists an undeniable level of effective intelligence gathering capabilities.

Chinese Intelligence

While Cuban intelligence was extremely proficient in both human intelligence collection as well as signals collection, this does not mean they were, or are, the sole perpetrator of these levels of intelligence operations against the United States. Perhaps no single state, outside of

possibly Russia, is given as much attention on this specific topic by experts and those in the media than the People's Republic of China. A proficiency in the traditional elements of intelligence collection is evident in China. However, there also exists other tools in the tool kit of China that are not as readily available to other countries. These play on two previously mentioned elements of intelligence operations writ large: information warfare, and economic espionage.

As stated previously, information warfare is the latest development in the world of intelligence operations. Social media, and the internet as a whole, offers new capabilities that were absent in the global order at the turn of the century. Barrett (2006) conveys ten stratagems that the People's Liberation Army, hereafter PLA, may utilize in order to successfully conduct information warfare against their adversaries. Examples of such stratagems include, but are not limited to "thought directing", "intimidation through momentum building", "using fictitious objects to hide the true picture", and "all-encompassing deception" (Barrett, 2006, pp. 690-691). These examples, four of a total of five, illustrate the thought-out manner in which the PLA will attempt to utilize elements of information to achieve their policy objectives and goals. These pose a series national security threat to the United States in the present, as many of these stratagems are being used by the PLA against the United States.

Information warfare, though an integral part, is not the only threat that China poses when it comes their intelligence capabilities against the United States. China has classified economic espionage "as a moral prerogative" (Lefebvre, 2011, p. 47). The capacity for the PLA to effectively obtain key economic and trade secrets concerning developments in both the American private and public sectors is well established. These secrets concern information regarding

private American companies, the development of key technologies, as well as the ongoing research into new military equipment (Lefebvre, 2011). The manner in which China goes about obtaining such information shows the true capabilities of their intelligence gathering capabilities. A reliance on Chinese citizens and dual citizens was a preference by the PLA to obtain information regarding sensitive topics, playing on culture and heritage or other familial ties (Lefebvre, 2011). This is an effective tool at bringing in potential intelligence gathering personnel. Likewise, China, through their Thousand Talents Program, utilizes American citizens in a variety of ways to gain access to secret information. This can include those within academia, the public sector, or private enterprises. Coercion, such as through financial compensation, can be utilized to bring forward classified information (Lefebvre, 2011). This method of intelligence collection has been perhaps the most highlighted element of Chinese espionage against the United States.

Economic Sanctions & Intelligence Operations

Upon review of the relevant literature, there exists much overlap in the studies of both economic sanctions and intelligence operations. Many of the same policy/objective-oriented questions must be asked before either are pursued. The prevalence of both activities in the international system suggest that further questions are necessary to understand both elements, separately and in their relationship to one another. Therefore, the gap in the intersection between economic sanctions and intelligence operations must be explored further. Another such gap that will be explored during this research is the capacity for single-party states to conclude that intelligence operations are the modus operandi for their policy towards the United States in the face of economic sanctions. How states are driven to make such determinations, and even more

importantly from the United States' point of view, how the United States views the effect of sanctions on the receiving state will be highlighted.

The exploration of how the implementation of economic sanctions, or lack thereof, may influence intelligence operations is one viable question that must be addressed to gain a stronger understanding of these two elements of the global system. Does the presence of sanctions deter a state from pursuing, or continuing already active, intelligence operations against their sender? Does the mere threat of sanctions deter the potential receiver from continuing intelligence operations, or are these perceived as empty threats? To what extent does the existence, or nonexistence, of economic sanctions limit the methods of intelligence collection or covert intelligence operations, given that such operations are present? The answers to these questions will help further the understanding of both sanctions and intelligence operations, and can assist in the further preference for either when the opposite variable is present.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Thesis

At the core of this research thesis is the role that United States economic sanctions, specifically imposed on single-party regimes, play in intelligence operations. Broadly speaking, the question this thesis will be looking to answer is whether or not economic sanctions influence the nature of intelligence operations against the United States, and if so, how? Limitations are placed in the observed states in which sanctions are being applied to. Over the course of this research, single-party autocracies will be examined for their relationship between the two variables.

Expectations

After reviewing the relevant literature on both economic sanctions and covert intelligence operations, it can be deduced that the presence of economic sanctions will have a demonstrable effect on how intelligence operations are executed. The extent to which these operations are influenced, whether it be through a change in available methodology or the complete abandonment of intelligence operations as a whole, must be further addressed. Available literature does not suggest a complete abandonment of intelligence operations when sanctions are present. It is evident though that a state targeted with sanctions will have limited capabilities to exploit their sender through. An example of an unavailable method would be economic espionage. It is for this reason that an inference can be made regarding the lack of proficiency that economic intelligence operations maintain while under economic sanctions. Thus, the presence of sanctions will not necessarily eliminate the chance of intelligence operations from

being pursued. Rather, the available avenues a state can seek to exploit another state by, via intelligence operations, will be modified and restricted. In contrast, where there is an absence of sanctions, or an interaction between the economies of two states, a broader approach will be available to potential intelligence operations. This circumstance would allow for the presence and utilization of economic espionage. Similarly, single-party states interpret economic warfare, and subvert sanctions, differently than other autocracies. Thus, intuition may prove that single-party states may be willing to engage in more provocative measures, such as intelligence operations, against sender states.

Hypothesis 1: Economic sanctions will have a demonstrable effect on the ways in which intelligence operations are conducted but will not entirely deter a state from engaging in such covert operations.

Variables

There exist two variables within the scope of this thesis: intelligence operations, the dependent variable, and economic sanctions, the independent variable. The relationship between both variables will be analyzed to determine the effect that the presence of economic sanctions on intelligence operations.

Methodology

A comparative case study will be conducted to effectively compare how the presence, or absence, of economic sanctions influences intelligence operations against the United States. The two countries to be subjected to a focused case study comparison will be Cuba and the People's Republic of China. These two states both function as autocratic, single-party states with a

recorded history of engaging in intelligence operation against the United States. Likewise, a strong segment of the U.S.'s relationship with both states is dictated by their economic preferences to either country. The economic sector, whether it is through the open connection of both the American and Chinese economies or the closed-door policy that is experienced between the Cuban and American private sectors, is of paramount importance in relation to both countries. In the analysis of both case studies there exists other relevant variables and points of interest that must be considered and carefully accounted for. These elements include: the status of U.S. economic condition between the two states, the intelligence apparatuses (functions, organization, and priorities/objectives) and capabilities of the respective countries, the preferential method(s) of collection (human intelligence, signals intelligence, etc.), a displayed proficiency of the respective intelligence apparatuses to effectively collect intelligence against the United States (both historically and contemporarily) and known examples of covert operations against the United States that have been either successful or unsuccessful. These examples may be of past intelligence operations that were discovered through defected participants or through declassified documents. When accounting for unsuccessful operations, operations that were stopped by counterintelligence officials will be utilized if and when the relevant information is found for public conception.

To achieve the highest degree of analysis possible, the two case studies will be divided into individual time periods. For Cuba, 1958 through 1963 will be observed. These years were selected based off the initial implementation of the Cuban embargo, as well as the vary nascent intelligence operations seen in the early years after the Cuban Revolution. 1992 through 2000 is also analyzed, as these years show a concerted effort by the United States to strengthen the

Cuban embargo. At the same time, some of the most well-known Cuban intelligence operations were in motion during these years. Therefore, an omission of the 1990s in any analysis of Cuban intelligence operations would be improper. China will be observed from 2000 through 2021, as these were the years where China's growing role in the global economy pushed them to the near-peer competitor status that they currently hold with relation to the United States.

Information for the analysis of both countries will be compiled through the utilization of open-source information found in peer-reviewed academic journals, think tank reports, published books, and declassified government documents. A case codebook will be implemented to effectively address the variables and rate of change depicted in the relationship of both case studies. This codebook will be aimed at assuring that both cases will be equally addressed, assessed, and kept to a consistent level of comparative analysis. Though not answered in the order in which the questions appear, each question will be answered fully throughout the individual case study reviews. The following questions comprise the codebook that will make up the qualitative analysis of this research:

Codebook Questions:

1. What was the historical economic relationship between the U.S. and "country x" prior to the observed time period?
2. How long after an economic policy has been set (i.e., embargo or economic cooperation) is there evidence for intelligence operations?
3. Are the intelligence operations observed limited to public or private sectors? Both?
4. Who was the primary target of the intelligence operation? Government? Exile Communities? Private businesses?

5. To what degree were economic avenues exploited in the execution of intelligence operations?
6. From what is openly available, has the rate of success been higher than the rate of apprehension?
7. What has been the response of the U.S. gov. in instances of successful or thwarted intelligence operations? (weak, moderate, or intense response)
8. What is the preferred method of collection? HUMINT? SIGINT?
9. What are the goals of “country x” in pursuing intelligence operations?

CASE STUDIES

Cuba, 1958-1963

President John F. Kennedy's foreign policy stance towards Cuba is perhaps the administration most associated with American-Cuban relations, and for good reason. Many defining moments occurred during the prematurely ended presidency of John F. Kennedy. However, the genesis for many of the decisions taken by President Kennedy can be found in the foreign policy of the previous administration. Under President Dwight D. Eisenhower, American foreign policy towards Cuba reflected the growing changes that would define the post-Second World War, and ensuing Cold War, world, as well as the increasing animosity between both the United States and Cuba. This animosity would continue fermenting well beyond the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 and continue to this very day.

In 1958, an arms embargo was placed on the regime of Fulgencio Batista, the then-leader of Cuba who was subsequently thrown out of power by Fidel Castro and his revolutionaries following the Cuban Revolution. This arms embargo was put into effect in hopes that American weapons would not be used by the Batista regime in his fight against Castro and his 26th of July movement (Wiskari, 1958). It was imperative for the Eisenhower administration to keep American-made guns out of the hands of the Batista regime forces. Therefore, with this minute and specific embargo in place, it was under the Eisenhower presidency that we see the willingness of the United States to disrupt the once thriving economic, and diplomatic, relationship between the two.

Full disruption would eventually come, however, approximately four years after the arms embargo. With Castro and his revolutionaries victorious against Batista and his regime, and with

the Castro policy of nationalizing American businesses on the island starting in 1960 (Allison, 1961, p. 49), President Kennedy enacted Proclamation 3447 stating that: “I, John F. Kennedy...acting under the authority of section 620 (a) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961...Hereby proclaim an embargo upon trade between the United States and Cuba...” (Proclamation No. 3447, 27 FR, 1962). This presidential proclamation pushed the limits of economic sanctions far beyond any measures that were pursued up until that point, many of which were in place due to the previously mentioned nationalization.

It became the prerogative of the Kennedy administration to remove Fidel Castro from power, and these economic sanctions were just the tool to which these ends would be realized. As such, “the initial primary objective of the US sanctions was to remove Castro from power, demonstrated most visibly by the abortive Bay of Pigs invasion (Central Intelligence Agency, 1982, p. 3). Thus, the United States, at the direction of President Kennedy and continuing along the same lines as his predecessor President Eisenhower, placed an all-encompassing embargo on the island of Cuba.

The pushing of Cuba away from the United States created the perfect scenario for Cuba to be welcomed into the framework of the Soviet umbrella. This extended lifeline was not solely limited to economic assistance in the wake of the American absence. The ability for the Soviet Union, in conjunction with the Cuban intelligence apparatus, to create an intelligence collection machine 90 miles away from the United States’ homeland was too great of an opportunity to miss for either state. Though the long and storied relationship between Cuba and the Soviet Union is beyond the scope of this research, especially well-known events like the Cuban Missile

Crisis, it is important to highlight the intelligence capabilities assisted in part by the infrastructure and guidance of the Soviet Union.

The Cuban DGI, Cuba's main intelligence branch, was founded in 1961 and soon found itself to be a worthy adversary to the United States (Lefebvre, 2009). It was during these initial years that the Cuban intelligence apparatus began operating signals intelligence (SIGINT) collection towards the United States. The proximity between Cuba and the United States created the ideal scenario, and distance, for a large-scale effort at collecting signals intelligence. In a 1986 report by the Central Intelligence Agency, titled "The Soviet Brigade in Cuba" the Agency retrospectively looked at the Soviet presence in Cuba, and their close association to the Cuban intelligence agency, specifically during the early 1960s. During these early years, Cuba and the Soviet Union directed the creation of the Lourdes signals intelligence complex (Central Intelligence Agency, 1986), with the sole purpose of collecting SIGINT from the United States.

Signals intelligence was not the only discernable, and effective, intelligence collection technique utilized by the Cuban intelligence apparatus during the early stages of the Cuban embargo. Though discussed in greater depth in the subsequent subchapter, human intelligence (HUMINT) was the primary method of collection by Cuba. It also was its most proficient and successful. During this early period of observation, the best example of a HUMINT operation conducted by Cuba came during the buildup to the failed Bay of Pigs invasion. Due to infiltration of the planning stages, Cuban assets assisted the Castro government in learning about the operation (Central Intelligence Agency, 2018). This example shows the Cuban DGI's capabilities at infiltrating American groups and institutions, even in its infancy as an intelligence apparatus. As will be seen in later detail in the subsequent subchapter, much of this HUMINT

collection will be targeted towards exile community activities. However, there exists evidence that efforts have been, to varying degrees, targeting the United States government itself.

As indicated in the two examples above, the Lourdes SIGINT collection and the Bay of Pigs infiltration, a discernable effort from the Cuban government to target the public sector was witnessed, specifically in the targeting of the U.S. government. However, as is the inherent nature of Cuban intelligence operations, the private sector must be considered, especially when considering actions taken by the Cuban government against the anti-Castro, Cuban exile community. A confluence of targets exists within the Bay of Pigs example, where the United States government instructed Cuban exiles in an invasion of Cuba. Thus, by targeting two birds with one stone, the Cuban government was able to keep their sights on both the United States government and the Cuban American exile community. As observed, these two targets were the primary targets of Cuban intelligence during this period.

Cuba, 1992-2000

During the 1970s and 80s, American policy towards Cuba yo-yoed between attempted reproachment and the strengthening of hostilities. The Carter administration sought closer ties with Cuba, but no such change came to fruition. Out of office, Carter's successor sought a diametrically opposite course of action regarding Cuba. Though at this point in time the intended and original outcome of the economic sanctions had not been realized: the overthrow of Fidel Castro. A report published by the Central Intelligence Agency during the Reagan years stated that "the Cuban embargo, in its early years, was significantly damaging to Cuba's growth and general development" (Central Intelligence Agency, 1982, p. 4). Thus, the impact of the sanctions was less on the political elite and Castro himself but felt more so by the brunt of

everyday Cubans. The imposition of the embargo may have had an adverse political impact as American sanctions “implied a grave external threat, which Castro exploited to carry out the radicalization of all Cuban political, economic, and social institutions” (Central Intelligence Agency, 1982, p. 6). A rally-around-the-flag effect was seen as a result of the sanctions, with Castro pushing all economic woes onto the sanctions. This allowed for widespread abuses, such as the persecution of political opponents, to be conducted under his regime as a justification for standing up to the sanctions. Restriction of dissent and the protection of the political base from the impact of sanctions are key features evident in single-party states abilities to withstand sanctions.

Legislature following these Cold-War level hostilities began first under the George H. W. Bush administration but reached its height under the Clinton years. The Bush presidency saw the passing of the Cuban Democracy Act in 1992. Under President Clinton, the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act of 1996 sought to tighten the sanctions on the Cuban government even further. These pieces of legislature, both the Cuban Democracy Act and the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act of 1996, came at a time when tumultuous intelligence operations against the United States saw their direction from Cuba.

In 1992, the Cuban Democracy Act was passed by the United States House of Representatives to apply even more pressure to the Cuban regime to seek a democratic path forward for the country. These increased sanctions would be reversed if and when “the President reports to the Congress that Cuba has met conditions established under this Act concerning democracy, human rights, and a free market economy” (H.R.5323, 1992). This major push to reinforce the Cuban embargo was only the first in the decade. A similar, broader piece of

legislation was moved forward during the Clinton administration. The Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act of 1996 sought to “seek international sanctions against the Castro government in Cuba, to plan for support of a transition government leading to a democratically elected government in Cuba, and for other purposes” (Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act, 1996). Combined, the 1990s, irrespective of American political party in power, saw a strong signaling from the United States to directly tie human rights improvements with the lifting of sanctions. Though it can be interpreted as a hard-hitting policy attempting to promote democracy in Cuba, these policies came at a trying time for Cuba as a state. The 1990s saw Cuba live through their “Special Period”, a period dominated by severe economic distress as a result of the fall of the Soviet Union. Large protests were staged in Cuba, but no such change came at the governmental level. The Special Period was one of the few times where Castro’s, and the Cuban Communist Party’s, control on the country faced tangible and intense civilian pressure.

The ramping up of hostilities between the two states was reflected in the manner by which Cuba conducted their intelligence operations throughout the decade. As stated in the previous subchapter, Cuba had, and potentially still has, incredibly strong human intelligence collection capabilities. As the decades progressed since the institution of the Cuban embargo, these capabilities only increased in scope, effectiveness, and penetration power. Highlighting two of the more prominent examples of Cuban intelligence seen in this decade are the cases of Ana Montes and the Red Avispa, known as the Wasp Network in English. These specific intelligence cases were selected due to their targeting of both the actions of United States government and the actions of the Cuban American exile community. The Wasp Network operation saw its deployment and downfall throughout the observed time period. However, the Ana Montes case

was started in the mid 1980s and concluded in 2001. Her inclusion in this study is justified based on the knowledge that a majority of her collection came from 1992-2000, as well as her ascent up the ladder of the Defense Intelligence Agency (D.I.A.), a staple agency of the American intelligence community.

Montes' case shocked many when it was revealed that, after sixteen years, she had been collecting and forwarding information on behalf of Cuban intelligence (Lefebvre, 2009). An astute intelligence analyst, Montes rose the ranks of the D.I.A., even becoming a top Cuba analyst for the agency towards the end of her espionage career (Lockhart, 2019). Having someone as senior as Montes inside of the American intelligence community was a strong asset for the Cuban regime. Penetrating a leading American institution of the caliber of the D.I.A. was troubling to many throughout the American intelligence community. Apprehended and sentenced in 2001, Montes serves as the premier example of a Cuban intelligence success and a warning sign in American counterintelligence, at the time.

HUMINT collection by the Cubans did not crescendo solely with Montes. The 1990s also saw the Cuban regime continue their sights on the exile community. Known in Spanish as Red Avispa, the Wasp Network was a collection of Cuban individuals tasked with penetrating, collecting, and influencing elements of the Cuban American exile community centered in South Florida (Lefebvre, 2009). Before their apprehension in 1998, these Cuban agents were involved with providing information to the Cuban government that resulted in the death of four Cuban American men, members of the exile community's Brothers to the Rescue (Lefebvre, 2009). This exile group was known to rescue stranded Cuban migrants in the Florida Straits but were shot down over international water by Cuban forces once they began dropping anti-Castro

propaganda onto Cuban soil. Though successful in their attempts at undermining the Cuban exile community, the Wasp Network was unsuccessful in their attempt at penetrating American institutions, such as U.S. Southern Command, located in Doral, Florida (Lockhart, 2019). This, however, could be balanced out with the position that Ana Montes held within the D.I.A.

While much of this nine-year period was marked by reinforcements in American policy towards Cuba, there was also a tangible veracity in the way the Cuban regime recruited and deployed intelligence agents on American soil. All of this, it is important to highlight, without the expressed assistance of the recently defunct Soviet Union. This provides important insight into the capabilities of the Cuban government, and their intelligence apparatuses proficiency to stand on its own two feet and deliver successful intelligence operations.

China, 2000-2021

Moving from a country whose relationship with the United States can be crudely boiled down to the existence of an embargo, China offers an interesting parallel with America's neighbor to the south. Both states, Cuba and China, have ebbed and flowed in both positive and negative extremes with the United States, though no one state can be depicted as America's greatest geopolitical rival except China. This revival of great power politics on the international stage comes at a time when the United States and China have partaken in profoundly intense economic cooperation and entanglement.

1972 saw the Nixon administration deviate from prior American policy towards China. With the assistance of Henry Kissinger, Richard Nixon sought to reestablish diplomatic negotiations with the People's Republic of China. Following a meeting in Beijing with leaders from the Communist Party of China, including Mao Zedong, Nixon and China began the process

to reestablish a connection between the two states (State Department, 2019). Despite a hiccup in the wake of the Tiananmen Square massacre in 1989, tensions between the two countries stabilized around economic openness. What followed was a series of developments that led to the contemporary political issues that are seen. These specific issues are most prominently manifested in the intelligence operations conducted by the Chinese Communist Party on American soil.

A bulk of the highly publicized Chinese intelligence operations come in the form of human intelligence collection. A report published by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) compiled 160 cases since 2000 that showed the extent to which the Chinese Communist Party of China pursued HUMINT operations against the United States (CSIS, 2021). This study of intelligence cases can be divided between those directed at the United States government, including the military, and economic espionage. During this time, commercial technology was targeted fifty one percent of the time (CSIS, 2021). Similarly, economic espionage and the illegal export of “sensitive dual use technology” accounted for half of the 274 espionage cases observed, as of 2018, by area expert Nicholas Eftimiades (Eftimiades, 2018).

The diversity of sectors targeted by the Chinese government offers a strong delineation from other cases observed. Via the Thousand Talents Program, and other Chinese intelligence-collecting initiatives, the Chinese government looks to use espionage techniques to gain both a geopolitical and economic edge against the United States. According to current director of the F.B.I. Christopher Wray, the Thousand Talents Program is an attempt by the Chinese government to “entice scientists to secretly bring our knowledge and innovation back to China—even if that means stealing proprietary information or violating our export controls and conflict-

of-interest rules” (Wray, 2020). This poses an intense risk to American economic innovation, and has implications in all elements of American society. These implications range from the American university system, STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, and math), the American military, and other likeminded sectors and institutions that are of paramount importance to America.

Success has followed the Chinese intelligence apparatuses, even in the face of American apprehension. Dr. Charles Lieber, a professor at Harvard University and a recruited asset of the Thousand Talents Program, was indicted for attempting to steal biological research on behalf of the Chinese government (CSIS, 2021). In the same year, Zhengdong Cheng, another professor at an American university, this time Texas A&M, was arrested and charged “with wire fraud for concealing his affiliation with Chinese universities and enterprises while accepting a NASA grant” (CSIS, 2021). These two cases can be interpreted as successful apprehensions by the United States government, however the fact that the Chinese Thousand Talents Program was able to penetrate two major American universities depicts only a small picture of the capabilities of this intelligence collection program. Both of these aforementioned examples showcase a knack for the Chinese government to attempt to collect scientific and technological research for their own gain. A prime example of economic espionage, though there are many, comes from 2020 as well. Hao Zhang was arrested and convicted “of economic espionage and theft of trade secrets” (CSIS, 2021). The secrets being stolen consisted of designs for semiconductors, some of the most sought-after technologies of the modern era.

While professors and faculty members at American universities may seem like traditionally exploitative positions within academia, another target of Chinese intelligence

operations exists within the American university system. Students, at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, have been utilized by the Chinese government to gain a technological advantage against the United States, as seen in the previous example. Speculations over the usage of Chinese foreign exchange students in the collection of intelligence and technologically sensitive material has been rampant for much of the 21st century, with many such speculations coming to fruition. One such manner of collection has involved Chinese students seeking employment in technologically relevant industries and reporting the information back to the Chinese government (Lefebvre, 2011). A specific example arose in 2019, when a Chinese student at the Illinois Institute of Technology was arrested after attempting to recruit others for Chinese intelligence agencies (Dilanian, 2020). Students offer the Chinese government the capacity to engage in economic and traditional means of intelligence collection.

Combining scientific and technological espionage with economic espionage, the case of Mo Hailong perfectly synthesizes the balance between an intelligence operation that looks to supply China with an economic as well as a geopolitical edge against the United States. In 2011, Hailong was arrested for attempting to pass on the genetic makeup of a hybrid corn seed designed and produced by DuPont Pioneer and Monsanto (Hvistendahl, 2016). The successful extraction of this information by Hailong could have exponentially increased China's food production capacity, having untold economic and geopolitical ramifications on the country who is currently attempting to challenge the United States as the major global hegemon. Due to a rare form of cancer, Hailong was only sentenced to 36 months of jailtime, yet his case is one of the best examples of the high-level research sought after by the Chinese government. Likewise, it shows to what ends, and by what means, they are willing to deploy to gain such edges. These

means include the deployment of Chinese nationals to the United States, as well as the enlistment of Chinese dual nationals to conduct intelligence operations on American soil (Lefebvre, 2011). A strong tie between ethnic and cultural identity is exploited by the Chinese Communist Party to achieve their end goals. These end goals have the potential, if not already, to become America's biggest intelligence and geopolitical threat of the coming years.

FINDINGS

Results

After careful review of the literature, the individual case studies, and the application of the casebook questions, several deductions can be drawn. The initial intuitions offered, reflected in the hypotheses presented in the expectations subchapter, indicate a strong and observable correlation between economic sanctions and intelligence operations. Specifically, the nature in which a single-party state chooses to conduct intelligence operations will be severely impacted by sanctions. This was evident in the Cuba case study, where we see a preference for direct intelligence operations being conducted against American governmental institutions and Cuban American exiles, without the ability to exploit American economic avenues. This may seem contrary to the obvious, but there was not an explicitly obvious example of Cuban intelligence seeking to gain overt economic advantages by targeting the United States. This does not totally exclude its possibility, rather it indicates that this was not a primary target of the Cuban regime. Instead, with the limitations placed on Cuba by the embargo, the Cuban government was forced to rely on SIGINT collection directed towards the United States and on HUMINT collection coming from Cuban nationals or those sympathetic to the regime. In contrast, the case of China shows the willingness of a state to exploit open economic conditions, specifically by way of directly targeting American enterprises and stealing intellectual property. In tandem with directed efforts towards the United States government, the Chinese government has shown a demonstratable capacity to diversify the targets of their intelligence operations, thus creating a wider net to catch important pieces of information.

These two case studies reinforce the hypothesis that states will not inherently be dissuaded to conduct intelligence operations on the United States when sanctions are in place. Rather, necessity breeds innovation, and this innovation is applied to directing the efforts of the receiver state's intelligence apparatus against the United States. This can be done to great effect when concerning a single-party state, as both case studies are. As depicted in the literature review, single-party states have a strong capacity to withstand sanctions. Thus, by consolidating power to a select few, party members and loyalists, single-party states are evidently able to finely direct resources to their intelligence operations. A state as effected by the onset of economic sanctions as Cuba was in the early stages of the 1960s was still able to turn out strong intelligence collecting victories against the United States. The combative nature between single-party states and the United States may offer better insight into this caveat, though the studied cases show, without a reasonable doubt ,that single-party states will certainly conduct intelligence operations against the United States, even considering the impact of economic sanctions.

Limitations

There inherently exist several limitations when conducting research on intelligence-related matters. Declassification is perhaps the most evident of such obstacles. Yet, the findings in this research are not compromised by this issue. A clear picture has been painted, to a degree, of both the Cuban and Chinese intelligence services from declassified sources by scholars and subject-matter experts. Thus, while an entirely complete overview of both cases can never truly be done unless all classified documents were to be released, this research reflects a strong understanding of the available resources in the public domain.

Time becomes another limitation apparent in a comparative case study that seeks to answer important questions regarding elements of statecraft that are ongoing. Many intelligence operations are still pursued by these intelligence apparatuses, with the process of planning and executing intelligence operations against the United States continuing. Similarly, as depicted under the Obama administration, sanctions are subject to review by presidential administrations and can be lessened or increased depending on the circumstance. Thus, the timing of this research reflects the current and historical relationships concerning all the addressed parties. In a year, a decade, or a century these economic conditions may transform into a completely different norm. This is the same for intelligence operations that are acknowledged by the United States, due to their successful apprehension or other basis for declassification.

These limitations do not compromise the integrity or validity of this research. Rather, they offer important distinctions that are evident in intelligence-related research that may not be as prominent in other areas of study. As discussed in the next subchapter, these limitations may offer greater opportunity for future exploration of this topic. As certain roadblocks get eased and documents get declassified, this will allow scholars and researchers to dive even further into the respective intelligence apparatuses of these states.

Further Research

Upon completion of this research, there exists an abundance of potential further research opportunities. This particular research topic opens the doors to a future study that could highlight more cases of single-party states that conduct intelligence operations against the United States, such as North Korea. Likewise, a comparative study could be done to analyze the differing behaviors of states, subjected to economic sanctions, that reflect other autocratic regime-types,

such as military dictatorships or personalist regimes. Intelligence operations offer another important avenue for exploration. Their deployment in foreign states is largely dependent on the relationship between the two states, as is evident in this research. Understanding the impact that other tools of statecraft have on the implementation of intelligence operations is an interesting avenue to explore.

CONCLUSION

With the recent imposition of sanctions on the Russian Federation, we can see the contemporary relevance that sanctions still have on the international community. The reluctance for states, especially the United States, to leave sanctions out of the toolbox of statecraft indicates that sanctions will play a substantial role in all future, major American foreign policy decisions. Similarly, intelligence operations have shown the capacity to improve their efforts at subverting American counterintelligence capabilities. Though the United States has been more than capable of apprehending many such intelligence operators from a variety of countries, such as Cuba and China, as great power politics continue to dominate the global stage there can only be an anticipated increase in these such activities. How the United States responds to such activities can have a profound impact on America's geopolitical dominance, as well as our economic strength vis-à-vis the global market. Politically motivated espionage, best seen through the actions of Cuba, and economic espionage, witnessed in part by China, are two such avenues that can, and will, be exploited in the future.

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