Assignment For the Course AVU 106
Instructor: Dr. Enes Bayraklı
Review of the Book: Economic Sanctions and Presidential Decisions- Models of Political Rationality - Author: A. Coper Drury
Reviewed by: Batuhan Çelebi (Student ID: 1681011108)

At a time when once again, the utilization of economic sanctions as a foreign policy instrument becomes prevalent among various actors in the international arena and the effectiveness of the imposition of economic sanctions is questioned, Drury's book contests the conventional wisdom on economic sanctions and presents a systematic analysis to evaluate the effectiveness of economic coercion policies and to find out what conditions lead the President of the United States to initiate and then modify an economic sanction.

In this comprehensive book "Economic Sanctions and Presidential Decisions, Models of Political Rationality", Drury investigates the presidential decisions to launch and revise a sanction policy. In his analysis he focuses on the selection of sanction types, whether a bias toward a type of country exists, the contrast between foreign policy sanctions and Section 301 sanctions (Section 301 of the United States Trade Act of 1974, which authorizes the President to take all appropriate action, including retaliation, to obtain the removal of any act of a foreign government that violates an international trade agreement or burdens United States commerce) and the differences in the patterns of sanctioning decisions between the Cold War and post-Cold War eras.

The book is structured into nine chapters. In the first three chapters, the author assesses the conventional wisdom regarding economic sanctions and in the remaining six, he performs his own analysis and attempts to create a more complete picture of the role of economic sanctions via using models of political rationality. To assess the conventional wisdom, the author reviews in chapter two the theoretical and empirical studies about economic sanctions. In his assessment, Drury finds the definition of economic sanctions in the previous studies unsatisfactory and argues that there are several characteristics of economic sanctions that are not mentioned by the literature. From the literature review, the author derives a general understanding of economic sanctions and their effectiveness. In the third chapter, he deals with the success and failure of the sanctions and finds out that current conventional understanding of economic sanctions contains substantial gaps, mainly because they barely assess the conditions under which sanctions are used. With the aim of closing this gap in the literature, Drury demonstrates the flaws of former studies via reanalyzing large data set collected by Hufbauer et al. (1990a, 1990b) and describes five conditions for sanctions to be effective:

1. *Distressed targets succumb to sanctions more often*
2. *Sanctions costly to the target tend to be more effective*
3. *When several nations cooperate to sanction a target without the help of an international organization, the sanctions are less effective*
4. *When the sender is concerned about national security when sanctioning, the effort is less likely to be successful*
5. *Economic coercion against a democratic target tends to be more effective than nondemocratic targets.*

In the first three chapters, the author challenged the assumption of existing studies about the goals economic sanctions, namely the assumption that the sanctions are imposed only to change the policies of the target, and emphasized the importance of understanding the conditions under which leaders use forms of coercive diplomacy to analyze economic sanctions better. Drury argues that economic sanctions can have a wide range of diverse aims such as improving human rights, hindering the spread of communism, calming down the domestic public outrage or punishing an international rival. In the subsequent chapters, he contributes to the literature with a comprehensive analysis, in which he develops a series of hypothesis to test his theories about the conditions under which leaders use forms of coercive diplomacy.

The authors search for conditions in which the president of the United States imposes and modifies an economic sanction begins with linking the decision making motives of use of military force and economic coercion. Since the usage of both military force and economic sanctions are foreign policy tools aimed at influencing another nation, they are both types of coercive diplomacy. Coercive diplomacy is defined as the efforts to use some sort of coercion (be it military, economic, diplomatic etc.) to compel another nation (Baldwin 1985; George 1991) While admitting that differences between two forms of coercive diplomacy are apparent (and even maybe more than their similarities), Drury suggests that economic sanctions and use of military force share multiple characteristics such as a common decision calculus. Therefore, he argues that theories seeking to explain the political use force have the potential to explain the use of economic coercion as well.

Subsequently, the author focuses three models of political rationality via making use of different levels of foreign policy analysis. Thus, he elaborates the explanations of why the president introduces economic sanctions. The first model is related with the general logic of coercive diplomacy. In this model, the president decides to impose economic sanctions based on the current and expected future relations with the target country. The model foresees that the president will impose sanctions when the benefit of their use outweighs its cost regarding the United States' relations with the target country. The second model deals with domestic political factors. With this model, the author argues that presidents do not decide to use economic coercion in a vacuum that isolates them from domestic politics and includes the impact of domestic political factors on that decision. The second model demonstrates that a president might use economic sanctions as a tool to placate public demands for action or to appear as an active and mindful president. It should be noticed that these two models derive their assumptions from rational choice theory. However, rational choice theory has not proven to be valid for all foreign policy decisions in the history of international relations. Drury is conscious of the fact that leaders and their belief systems matter in foreign policy decisions, especially under time pressures when presidents allocate minimal resources to make a decision. Therefore, in the last model, the impact of the leader's cognitive characteristics on economic sanction decisions is examined since presidents cognitive mindset is expected to influence his interpretation of the international and domestic situation. Also, president's choice of advisory system type (whether he builds a formal or informal advisory body) is investigated within this model because it has an impact on the quantity and quality of the information the president gets which will affect the options that he considers. The explanations that each of these models offer should not be seen as competing alternatives but rather complementary views of the incentives, imperatives and contexts that lead the president to use or modify economic sanctions.

After introducing the models of political rationality, perhaps the most important and interesting part, the empirical analysis of economic sanctions, begins in chapter five. Two specific types of decisions are analyzed empirically. First type is when the sanctions are initiated against a target at the first place. Second, once sanctions are in place, the president decides whether to lift, lessen, maintain or increase them. The analysis begins with developing ten hypotheses that fit into the theoretical models of political rationality, introduced in the previous chapter. Drury retrieves data from World Event Interaction Survey and Integrated Data for Event Analysis databases and creates two separate cross section time series data sets, one from 1966 to 1992 and the second ranging from 1991 to 2000. The data covers 28 nations that were sanctioned by the United States within this 35 year long period and another 22 randomly selected nations that were never sanctioned by United States. Before entering into more details about the empirical analysis, it needs to be mentioned that Drury has integrated various hypothesis that represent the international conditions, domestic political factors and cognitive constraints adroitly in the three models that he derived from coercive diplomacy, diversionary, public choice, and poliheuristic theories. His smooth and easily cognizable way of combining theory with empirical analysis makes the book very reader-friendly and interesting.

Drury develops three hypotheses to test the model of coercive diplomacy theory (a), four hypotheses to test the model about domestic political factors (b) and another three for testing the model of cognitive constraints and bounded rationality (c). These are:

a.1. The president is more likely to initiate an economic sanction against a target when the dyadic tension between the United States and that target increases

a.2. The greater the rate of increase in the tension level over time (denoting increased escalation), the more likely the president will be to enact economic sanctions.

a.3. If the target acts in a provocative, bellicose manner toward the U.S., the president will be less inclined to initiate economic sanctions.

b.1. The lower a president's public job approval rating, the more likely he is to enact economic sanction.

b.2. As the proximity of an election increases, the president will be more likely to initiate economic coercion.

b.3. As inflation and unemployment increase, the president is more constrained and less likely to use economic coercion.

b.4. A trade surplus (deficit), then, will decrease (increase) the probability that the president will commence an economic sanction.

c.1. Informal advisory systems should make the president more likely to enact economic sanctions than presidents with formal advisory systems.

c.2. Presidents who have a more friendly view of the political universe will be less likely to initiate an economic sanction.

c.3. Presidents who approach goals more cooperatively will be less likely to initiate an economic sanction.

The results of the tests demonstrate that international factors play the most significant role in the POTUS' decision to use economic coercion during both the Cold War and the post–Cold War periods. Tension between the United States and target states increase the possibility that sanctions will be utilized, but extremely provocative targets inhibit the White House from acting. Domestic politics and cognitive constraints also have a significant impact, although the effect is rather small. Presidential approval and economic performance influence the decision of imposing economic sanctions only at the margins. The trade relationship with the target becomes important, but mostly for sanctions aimed at foreign economic goals. Sanctions aimed at foreign economic goals (sanctions that are affiliated with the Section 301 of the United

States Trade Act of 1974) are influenced more by domestic imperatives while sanctions directed at political goals are more the result of international pressures. Finally, the president's advisory system does not have a significant impact on sanction decisions, but his strategy preferences do. As hypothesized, presidents who prefer more hostile or coercive tactics, use economic sanctions more easily. This finding indicates that sanctions are not a cooperative or a softer version of military force—they are non-cooperative and coercive as well. Drury also focuses on the different patterns of the economic coercion strategies of the United States between the Cold War and post-Cold War era. It is observed that presidents of the United States are less likely to economically coerce a democracy in the post–Cold War era. During the Cold War, such a restriction was not observed and the United States did not hesitate to engage in economic coercion to maintain a pro-American bloc. In general, the econometric models of Drury perform quite well and have both statistical and theoretical significance even though some of his theoretical approaches to the topic have not been accurate as he claimed to be.

Once sanctions are applied, the presidents have the options to maintain, increase, decrease, or lift the coercive policy. In chapter seven, Drury assesses the decision patterns of presidents to modify an economic sanction and the results of his time series analysis show that domestic political factors become significantly less important once sanctions are imposed. The author accounts the low saliency of foreign affairs in the American public for these results. American people pay very little attention to foreign policy, therefore a continuing sanction policy is very unlikely to find any coverage in public discussions and the president is unlikely to consider domestic concerns when deciding to modify a sanction policy. So, according to Drury, it is up to the (bounded) rationality of each president to continue or lift sanctions against a target nation.

Overall, Professor Drury shows that understanding the presidential decisions on imposing and/or modifying economic sanctions is essential to comprehend the process of economic coercion and foreign policy decision making. While the claim of the author that the conventional wisdom in the existing studies about economic sanctions is significantly limited by its narrow focus on effectiveness is very convincing and promising, his empirical findings are not always supporting his arguments. However, the comprehensive approach that Drury has taken to decision making, which includes different levels and models of political rationality, provides a complete theoretical explanation of how presidents of United States use economic coercion against other nations. One of the major shortcomings of this book is its limited coverage of post-Cold War era. Drury's dataset begins from 1966 and continues until the end of 2000.Therefore, it leaves many game-changer events, that happened after 2000 but lead to a substantial increase in international economic sanctions out of his empirical analysis. President Bush's sanctions to "state sponsors of terrorism" or President Obama's sanctions to Russia after the annexation of Crimea, to name a few. Another drawback of the empirical part of this study is the fact that it only takes the economic sanctions of United States into consideration. Sanctioning has gained more importance as a foreign policy instrument in the recent years. Not only western powers impose sanctions against their targets, but also non-Western powers (see Europea Union's sanctions on Russia, Russian sanctions to Turkey, Chinese sanctions to both parts of Korea and Taiwan etc.) Therefore, including the sanctioning decisions of different countries with different historical backgrounds to its analysis with a different cross-section time series analysis would give a deeper insight to the issue. Nevertheless, Drury's rigorous work makes a great contribution to the literature on economic coercion and his models of political rationality have important implications for future research. Therefore, especially the theoretical part of this book, has the potential to be credited for being an academic reference to the next generation of research on why, when and how governments utilize economic sanctions to achieve their goals in foreign policy as well as economic policy.

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