



Reality Check: Will Sanctions Against North Korea Really Work?

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The Russian envoy to North Korea warned President Trump not to place any further sanctions against North Korea or Kim Jong-un surrounding “supplies of oil”.

To do so, he says, would be perceived as a declaration of war. But if we’re going to be honest, aren’t all sanctions an act of war? And why are we putting sanctions on North Korea in the first place?

Forget all the talking points you’ve heard over the past year — because this is a Reality Check you’re not going to get anywhere else.

Alexander Matsegora, Moscow’s envoy to North Korea says that any more sanctions on the country’s oil supply would be perceived as a declaration of war.

He went on to tell President Trump, *“If the supplies of oil and oil product are stopped, it would mean a complete blockade of the DPRK (North Korea).”*

According to Newsbreakouts.com, *“Before Christmas, the UN Security Council unanimously voted to cut exports of gasoline, diesel and other oil products by 89 per cent.”*

And The Express UK reports that, *“Right now, the current UN sanction that caps oil supplies to 540,000 tons from China and 60,000 tons of refined oil from other nations was labelled as ‘a drop in the ocean’”*

You know that the war of words between president Trump and Kim Jong-un has been intensifying for almost a year, and so have actions by the U.S.

For instance, in November of last year, President Trump and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson argued that North Korea deserved to be back on the list of state sponsors of terror.

Why? Because the North Korean government is reported to have assassinated a North Korean citizen—Kim Jong-Un’s own half-brother.

Of course, that says nothing about Washington's own program to assassinate U.S. citizens like Anwar al-Awlaki and his 16-year-old son under Obama, and later Awlaki's eight-year-old daughter under Trump.

And like Kim's half brother, Awlaki and his two children were never tried or convicted of any single crime before being killed by their own government. They were living in Yemen but were still full U.S. born citizens.

The Ron Paul Institute points out:

“So North Korea is officially a terrorism-sponsoring nation according to the Trump Administration because Kim Jong-Un killed a family member.” Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia has killed 10,000 civilians and injured 40,000 more since 2105 and *“no one says a word. In fact, the US government has just announced it will sell Saudi Arabia \$7 billion more weapons.”*

The bottom line? In reality, a “state sponsor of terrorism” designation has little to do with actual support for global terrorism.

As bad as the North Korean government is—and no doubt the North Korean government is terrible—the government of North Korea does not invade other countries, nor do we have reports of North Korea funding terror attacks around the world.

The designation is a political one, allowing Washington to ramp up more aggression against North Korea.

And part of that aggression are sanction, which are in and of themselves an act of war. But truthfully, sanctions aren't a war on military or government. They are war on the people.

During this year's State of the Union address, President Trump said this:

“North Korea's reckless pursuit of nuclear missiles could very soon threaten our homeland. We are waging a campaign of maximum pressure to prevent that from ever happening. Past experience has taught us that complacency and concessions only invite aggression and provocation. I will not repeat the mistakes of past administrations that got us into this very dangerous position.”

And there was an moving moment with a North Korean defector.

So—aggressive sanctions against North Korea are the way to go?

According to Arie W. Kruglanski from the National Center for the Study of Terrorism:

- *Extensive sanctions imposed on India and Pakistan didn't deter them from acquiring a nuclear capability.*
- *Economic pressure by the U.S. in the 1970s did not convince Turkey to remove its troops from Cyprus.*
- *U.S. sanctions against Russia under the Obama administration didn't seem to phase the country.*

In fact, according to the CATO Institute, “...*the most comprehensive study of sanctions found, they fail to achieve their goals in 66 percent of cases, and they fail 79 percent of the time when designed to discourage military misadventurism.*”

And why that is, is what you need to know. Because in reality, sanctions don't hurt the most powerful, most connected and wealthiest people in a nation who, by the way, are the ones who control militaries.

No. Cutting off oil, crashing economies, weakening finance, creating a lack of food import—all that those sanctions truly do is bruise and harm the people in that country who have no real control over whether there is a war or not.