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THE EFFECTIVENESS OF POLITICAL LINKAGE AS AN INSTRUMENT OF DIPLOMATIC POWER

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Abstract

In 1969, former Nixon Administration Secretary of State Henry Kissinger introduced a broad, overarching policy called political linkage. The idea of linkage attempted to link another country's behavior in one area of negotiations or foreign policy actions to their behavior in another unrelated area of policy. Since 1969, there has been considerable debate over the efficacy of linkage.

This study reviews the theory of linkage. In addition, four case studeis where linkage has been applied are presented: first, the Nixon Administration's attempt to link progress in SALT with overall Soviet foreign policy behavior; second, the linking of broad economic sanctions to South Africa's continuing policy of apartheid; third, the Carter Administration's linking the grain embargo and olympic boycott to its opposition to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan; and, finally, the Clinton Administration's relations with China linking the granting of Most Favored Nation trade status with Chinese observance of human rights. Finally, the application of linkage is examined in relation to U.S. core, middle, and long term foreign policy objectives in an effort to determine if implementing linkage is in the U.S. national interest.

From analysis of the events where linkage has been applied, it is apparent that the effectiveness of linkage is largely situational. Linkage appears to work best when three criteria are met: first, when issues linked operate on the same policy level; second, when there is a perceived need by the target country and a global consensus on action concerning the linked issues; and third, when the practice of linkage does not substantially harm the country applying the linkage.

In 1969, former Nixon Administration Secretary of State Henry Kissinger introduced a broad, overarching policy called political linkage. Linkage is an attempt to tie a country's behavior in one area of negotiations or foreign policy actions to their behavior in another unrelated area of policy. Secretary Kissinger defined his concept of linkage in this way, "when a diplomat deliberately links two separate objectives in a negotiation, using one as leverage on another" (Kissinger 1979, 129). Since 1969, there has been considerable debate over the efficacy of the concept of linkage.

Advocates of the theory argue that linkage provides both leverage and consistency to American foreign policy. They assert that leverage over behavior can be gained by linking policy in one area of the relationship to positive behavior in another unrelated area. Consistency can be gained by providing a more coherent and long term oriented foreign policy. Thus, proponents assert that linkage provides a more structured, overarching framework for foreign policy.

Opponents of linkage argue that the policy relationship with other countries should proceed on a case-by-case basis, and that applying linkage in either negotiations or foreign policy actions could be counterproductive. Usually, opponents advocate basing policy decisions on the merit (i.e., costs and benefits) of the particular issue in question. Thus, they assert that if the U.S. stands to gain from pursuing a particular policy, then proceed. If, on the other hand, the U.S. will not benefit from pursuing a

certain policy, then do not pursue it. Moreover, they point out that the problem of sovereignty can complicate the situation as the U.S. attempts to change or reinforce behavior in a particular area of another country's domestic or foreign policy. In spite of these differing perceptions on the advisability of pursuing linkage, it has been applied in every decade since its inception in the late 1960's (see Table 1).

Table 1: Major Occasions Where Linkage Has Been Applied

Date	Administration	Applied To	Linkage	Reason
1969	Nixon	U.S.S.R.	SALT Negotiations	Soviet Foreign Policy Behavior
1970s-80s	Numerous	South Africa	Economic Sanctions	Apartheid
1980	Carter	U.S.S.R.	Grain Embargo/ Olympic Boycott	Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan
1993-96	Clinton	China	MFN Status	Human Rights

It will be the contention of this paper that the practice of linkage is an effective use of power to influence actors in the current international system. In order to test this thesis, first, the theory of linkage will be examined. In addition, four case studies where linkage has been applied will be presented: first, the Nixon Administration's attempt to link progress in the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) with overall Soviet foreign policy behavior; second, the linking of broad economic sanctions to South Africa's continuing policy of apartheid; third, the Carter Administration's linking the grain embargo and Olympic boycott to its opposition to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan; and, finally, the Clinton Administration's relations with China linking the granting of Most Favored Nation (MFN) trade status with Chinese observance of human rights. Lastly, the application of linkage will be examined in relation to U.S. core, middle, and long-term foreign policy objectives in an effort to determine if implementing linkage is in the U.S. national interest. It is important to note that while linkage may have been applied on other occasions, these case studies represent the more prominent cases where linkage was applied and provide representative examples of its application from each decade since the concept was first advanced by Kissinger.

The Theory of Linkage

In 1969, Henry Kissinger argued that the unpredictability and ever-changing nature of the international system called for the formulation and implementation of a consistent and broad-based foreign policy. To achieve this consistency, he presented a compelling case for pursuing the policy of linkage. First, Kissinger maintained that simply dealing on a case-by-case basis with other countries would not be effective. He made his point abundantly clear by declaring that "we (Kissinger and Nixon) saw linkage, in short, as synonymous with an overall strategic and geopolitical view. To ignore the interconnection of events was to undermine the coherence of all policy" (Kissinger

1979, 129). Thus, according to Kissinger, foreign policy ceased to be effective if the link between various issues was not recognized. In this sense, Kissinger argued that the foreign policy of the United States can be promoted and maintained best by practicing the concept of linkage. Second, Kissinger also maintained that in past foreign policy, the United States had exhibited "too much concern with atmospherics and not enough with substance" (Kissinger 1979, 127). Thus, he asserted that to achieve real substance, fundamental differences between countries must be addressed. Kissinger argued that when these differences are addressed, progress in relations with another country can be made on a broad front, and not merely within the context of one issue. Finally, linkage in practice is supposed to allow freedom of action for policy makers to implement a variety of different methods in negotiations. According to Secretary Kissinger:

> The absence of linkage produces exactly the opposite of freedom of action; policy-makers are forced to respond to parochial interests, buffeted by pressures without a fixed compass. Linkage, therefore, was another of the attempts of the new (Nixon) Administration to free our foreign policy from oscillations between overextension and isolation and to ground it in a firm conception of the national interest (Kissinger 1979, 130).

Through linkage, Kissinger maintained that policy makers would not be restricted to traditional interests and concerns. Moreover, linkage would provide the opportunity for innovative ideas and implementing new approaches to traditional diplomatic problems.

Even during the time period in which the idea of linkage was formulated, policy makers and diplomats were faced with an international system that was undergoing constant change. The dilemma of formulating a flexible and effective foreign policy to cope with this change was needed. Thus, linkage was devised to provide coherence and stability to U.S. foreign policy, able to withstand various international situations by virtue of its flexibility.

The Soviet Union: Linkage and SALT

In the late 1960s, the Soviet Union expressed an interest in beginning negotiations concerning the bilateral limitation of strategic nuclear arsenals. While the Johnson Administration initially expressed interest in pursuing such negotiations, the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 postponed any opportunity for substantive contact between Washington and Moscow. In early 1969, the incoming Nixon Administration had to contend with continuing repercussions from the Czech invasion as well as an increasingly aggressive overall Soviet foreign policy. While President Nixon wanted to pursue arms control negotiations, his administration set forth certain criteria in non-arms control areas for the Soviets to meet before the SALT talks could begin.

President Nixon began his administration by supporting Henry Kissinger's concept of linkage. He explained his administration's support for linkage on February 4, 1969 when he said, "I am convinced that the great issues are fundamentally interrelated... crisis or confrontation in one place and real cooperation in another cannot long be sustained simultaneously" (Kissinger 1979, 136). President Nixon maintained, according to Henry Kissinger, that "there were real differences between the United States and the Soviet Union, and these differences must be removed if there was to be a general relaxation of tensions" (Kissinger 1979, 127). Among these differences were

the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, Moscow's involvement in Vietnam and Southeast Asia, and the strict Soviet control over the Warsaw Pact whose close proximity to western Europe served as a source of concern for the United States and its European allies. As Henry Kissinger said in a conversation with KGB operative Boris Sedov on December 18, 1969, the United States was ready to talk about the limitation of strategic weapons, but:

> We would not be stampeded into talks before we had a chance to analyze the problem. We would also judge the Soviet Union's purposes by its willingness to move forward on a broad front, especially by its attitude on the Middle East and Vietnam. We expected Soviet restraint in trouble spots around the world (Kissinger 1979, 127).

Kissinger maintained that if the SALT negotiations proceeded without applying linkage, the United States would miss out on a unique opportunity to arrive at a more accommodating foreign policy vis-a-vis the Soviet Union. Such a policy would allow limitations on nuclear arms, while at the same time offering a check to Soviet power in various areas throughout the world.

This policy position was much different from past U.S. initiatives in the sense that it held the Soviet Union more accountable for its involvement in its activities around the globe. The policy also attempted to take advantage of many of the Soviet Union's shortcomings in international relations. According to Kissinger, "we would not ignore, as our predecessors had done, the role of the Soviet Union in making the war in Vietnam possible. Nor would we refrain from seeking to exploit Soviet anxieties (for example, China) to move it toward a more accommodating policy" (Kissinger 1979, 132-33). Furthermore, Kissinger argued that by separating these issues from the SALT negotiations, the United States would "encourage Soviet leaders to believe that they could use cooperation in one area as a safety valve while striving for unilateral advantages elsewhere" (Kissinger 1979, 129). According to Henry Kissinger, this would be counterproductive and unacceptable. Kissinger summed up the administration's position on the SALT talks by saying:

> The SALT agreement does not stand alone, isolated and incongruous in the relationship of hostility, vulnerable at any moment to the shock of some sudden crisis. It stands, rather, linked organically to a chain of agreements and to a broad understanding about international conduct appropriate to the dangers of the nuclear age (Kissinger 1994, 143-44).

While the Nixon Administration attempted to adequately articulate and explain the concept of linkage, the idea was immediately attacked from many sectors of American society. First, as Kissinger admits, the policy of linkage was not popular with the American people. This was the case because the entire idea of linkage went counter to the American character of impatience, and a near obsession with immediate and favorable results. Kissinger argued that Americans did not want to deal in abstracts or ideas, particularly when these ideas were tested in the context of nuclear weapons limitations. As Kissinger stated:

> American pragmatism produces a penchant for examining issues separately: to solve problems on their merits without a sense of time or context or of the seamless web of reality. The American legal tradition encourages rigid attention to the "facts of the case," a distrust of abstractions (Kissinger 1979, 129-130).

According to Kissinger, the American approach of incremental and pragmatic solutions to individual problems is an inherently different concept than that of linkage a great many different issues and problems together under one ideological umbrella. Furthermore, the American character of impatience can be seen in sharp contrast to the theory of linkage. While the diplomatic tool of linkage takes a great deal of time and pressure in order to achieve desired results, many Americans would rather see s positive end to an issue immediately. For these reasons, the concept of linkage for the most part, was not a popular one for the American citizen.

The news media in the United States also criticized the concept of linkage. An editorial by James Reston in the New York Times on February 18, 1969 pointed out the danger of applying linkage to the Soviet Union and SALT talks:

> The kind of across the board negotiation with the Soviet Union that he (Nixon) seems to have in mind, convening a number of East-West issues, undoubtedly would arouse concern in most West European countries when Mr. Nixon is seeking to gain their confidence (Reston 1969, 40).

As this article points out, while Western European countries would favor negotiations that would reduce East-West tensions, they also would be concerned over the settlement of a variety of East-West issues without being consulted first. Many European heads-of-state feared that Nixon may either grant too much in his negotiations with the Soviets, or miss out on a historic opportunity to move toward detente by applying such an ambitious concept as linkage. An editorial in the Washington Post on April 5, 1969 also attacked President Nixon's concept of linkage:

> President Nixon has got to stop dawdling and move quickly into missile talks with the Russians. The grace period allowed a new President to be briefed and to set his own tactics is over... The Russians have been ready (for talks) almost a year. Reality is too complex and sticky to permit any President to believe that he can line up so many ducks in a row. Arms control has a value and urgency entirely apart from the status of political issues. Moreover, the whole history of East-West relations warns against linkage (Kissinger 1979, 133-34).

As this article points out, there was a great deal of skepticism toward the Nixon Administration and the concept of linkage. Many viewed linkage as a tool used by Nixon to stall negotiations until a more structured policy could be constructed. Others maintained that Nixon and Kissinger had proposed an arrogant and unrealistic policy that would never be workable in East-West relations.

A number of influential members of Congress also opposed applying linkage to the Soviet Union. Some expressed concern that the Soviets would become frustrated at the lack of a substantive response to their proposals for arms negotiations, and would therefore withdraw their support for arms limitation talks. For example, in debate on the Senate floor on February 4, 1969, Senator Frank Church, (D) Idaho, argued against linkage:

The position and credibility of those within the Soviet Government who argue for missile talks will be damaged, and perhaps beyond repair, if President Nixon listens to those in the United States who argue against immediate talks on missile limitation (Kissinger 1979, 134).

Senator Church maintained that Soviet patience with the new administration was dwindling, as was the credibility of those in the Soviet leadership who advocated talks with the United States. In hearings before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Senator Albert Gore Sr., (D) Tennessee, also discussed the possibility of losing a unique chance to capitalize on the Soviets' willingness to negotiate over arms control:

> The hard fact is that we may never again expect to be in as favorable a position as we now enjoy for entry into talks about a freeze in strategic nuclear armaments. Technological developments may well make any arms limitation agreement more difficult to develop and enforce a year from now than it is today (Gore 1969, 165).

Senator Gore attempted to point out that the longer the delay in arms talks with the Soviets, the greater the chance for increased technologies and new weapons systems to be developed. If this happened, Gore argued that the United States could lose bargaining power in any future negotiations with the Soviet Union. In accordance with the theory of linkage, however, the response to both Church's and Gore's argument would be that there could be no lasting peace without a broader understanding on a variety of issues. Any short term advances that would be made in the area of arms limitations would be threatened by any future crisis that would arise between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Apart from the attacks by Congress and the national news media concerning the practice of linkage, members of President Nixon's own administration began to publicly denounce linkage as applied to the Soviet Union. On March 19, 1969, Gerard C. Smith, the Nixon Administration's Chief SALT negotiator, infuriated the president when he announced to Soviet negotiator Alexei Roshchin in Geneva that the start of SALT "need not be tied, in some sort of package formula, to the settlement of specific international problems" (Kissinger 1979, 137). The State Department, under the leadership of Secretary of State William Rogers, also found fault with the linkage initiative. While President Nixon maintained strong support for linkage with the Soviets, in an April 7, 1969 press conference, Secretary Rogers announced that, "there is nothing that stands in the way, and they (SALT talks) can go forward soon. We are in the process of preparing for them now, and we expect them to begin in the late spring or early summer" (Kissinger 1979, 137). The bureaucracy had begun to undermine a policy with statements that President Nixon had explicitly rejected weeks earlier.

Weeks of public, media, Congressional and bureaucratic attacks on the theory of linkage caused the Nixon Administration to reexamine its stance on applying linkage to SALT. Henry Kissinger voiced his frustration about the tactics of his opposition when he said:

> The cumulative impact of all the bureaucratic indiscipline, with media and Congressional pressures added, was that we had to abandon our attempt to use the opening of SALT talks as a lever for other negotiations. On June 11, we authorized (Secretary of State) Rogers to inform the Soviets that we were ready to start SALT-only to be met by four months of *Soviet* stonewalling (Kissinger 1979, 138).

Even though the Nixon Administration eventually was forced to abandon its linkage policy with regards to SALT, the concept of linkage became a debatable policy alternative and possible diplomatic tool in United States foreign policy.

South Africa: Apartheid and Economic Sanctions

As the atrocities against Africans in South Africa became more publicized, sentiment grew in the international community to take action against the South African government. Gradually, the international community began to support the plight of the African majority in South Africa. The U.S. eventually linked the continuation of the practice of apartheid by the South African government to the imposition of broad economic sanctions.

South Africa appeared to be particularly vulnerable to economic sanctions because of its reliance on foreign investment and trade for economic growth. South Africa's pursuit of modernization and industrialization required capital equipment and high technology. This is an area in which South Africa was perhaps the most vulnerable to economic sanctions. According to Janice Love, a scholar at the University of South Carolina:

> The root cause of South Africa's problems lie ... in the inability of its production process to develop sufficiently to be able to supply its industries with modern machinery and equipment (Love 1989, 102).

The objective for sanctions was to apply pressure to the white regime in South Africa to end its policy of apartheid. According to Love, "Presumably this would be accomplished by imposing economic hardships on the country as a whole, and especially on whites, in order to punish them and to raise the costs of perpetuating apartheid" (Love 1989, 97).

Over the objections of the Reagan Administration, Congress passed the Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986 which linked economic sanctions with the policy of apartheid. The United States initiated a wide range of economic sanctions against South Africa:

> The U.S. Congress banned the importation of gold Krugerrands, goods made by the South African parastatals. Embargoes were placed on the export of computers to agencies of the South African Government and oil, while exports of nuclear technology were also severely restricted. Congress banned new investments by U.S. corporations in South Africa, but allowed letters of credit, short-term financing, and debt rescheduling (Love 1989, 109).

In applying these sanctions, the United States joined others in the international community who desired an end to the policy of apartheid in South Africa. After a period of a few years, the economic sanctions began to adversely affect the South African economy, as well as the attitudes of the white government concerning the maintenance of the policy of apartheid. In response to these sanctions and increased diplomatic pressure, the South African government began gradually to dismantle apartheid, leading eventually to its elimination. In this case, the policy of linkage ultimately was successful.

The Soviet Union and Afghanistan: Grain and the Olympics

After the December 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, U.S.-Soviet relations experienced a marked downturn. In response to the invasion and subsequent Soviet occupation, the Carter Administration attempted to punish the Soviet Union for what it considered to be an unwarranted act of aggression. President Carter initiated a multifaceted response to the Soviet invasion linking U.S. policy initiatives to a Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. Most notably, the U.S. terminated American exports of grain to the U.S.S.R. and sponsored an attempted worldwide boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympics.

In the beginning, the grain embargo appeared to be a sound policy since Moscow had a dire need for grain. A food crisis earlier in the 1970s, coupled with more recent crop failures in the U.S.S.R., left the Soviets searching for other avenues of grain supply. According to Charles Kegley, Professor of International Relations at South Carolina, and Eugene Wittkopf, Professor of International Relations at Louisiana State University, "the Soviets quietly set up contracts to purchase 28 million tons of grain--mostly from the United States--in the largest commercial transaction in history" (Kegley and Wittkopf 1987, 223). Furthermore, according to Glen Hastedt, Professor of Foreign Affairs at James Madison University, "in 1979, Soviet grain production fell 21% below the figure set by planners and 25% below the level of the record 1978 harvest" (Hastedt 1991, 254) Besides the nutritional quality of this grain, much of it was earmarked for livestock feed which ultimately could threaten Soviet meat production. The Carter Administration apparently concluded it had found an avenue whereby sanctions could be effective.

After the grain embargo was initiated, a fierce debate began in the United States over the usefulness of such a measure. The first signs of dissent came from the American Farm Bureau that charged Carter with breaking his promise to "protect the American farmer from the negative financial consequences of the embargo" (Hastedt 1991, 248). The Soviet Union represented a large market for American grain, and without access to this market the American farmer began to suffer. In response to changing public sentiment and pressure from American farmers, Congress also began to question the wisdom of the embargo (Hastedt 1991, 248). The embargo came to an end in 1981 when President Reagan fulfilled his 1980 campaign promise of no more embargoes.

There were many reasons for the apparent failure of the grain embargo, the greatest of which was the alternate source of supply of grain to the Soviet Union. As Kegley and Wittkopf pointed out:

> The failure of the American experiment can be attributed to many factors. Domestic political situations in the United States and the inappropriateness of the change in Soviet behavior were among them. The critical fact, however, was the "leakage" in the embargo caused by the willingness and ability of others to make up the difference in Soviet food imports caused by the American action. Argentina in particular greatly expanded its exports to the Soviet Union, thus largely negating the intended effects of the American embargo (Kegley and Wittkopf, 1987,226).

With a large supply of grain from other countries such as Argentina, the Soviet Union was able to weather the punitive measures of the United States.

Other than the grain embargo, the United States attempted to embarrass the Soviet Union by leading an international effort to boycott the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games. According to Dan Papp, Professor of International Relations at Georgia Tech, President Carter justified this initiative by maintaining that "the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was proof positive that the U.S.S.R. did not adhere to Olympic ideals" (Papp 1991, 123). Like the grain embargo, there was a potential chance for success in the Olympic boycott. The Soviets placed a great deal of national pride in hosting the Olympic games. It was the Soviet Union's chance to "showcase not only its athletes, but its social system" (Papp 1991, 122). Carter believed, that when faced with the possibility of losing this unique chance for exposure, the Soviet Union would acquiesce to U.S. objectives with regard to Afghanistan. This optimism quickly faded when

no global consensus could be achieved on the need to boycott the Olympics in Moscow. According to Papp, "Other Western nations, including most of America's NATO allies, believed that Carter had overreacted and did not support the boycott of the Olympics" (Papp 1991, 142). As Papp points out, even the "British Olympic team went to the Moscow Olympics and won four gold medals" (Papp 1991, 123). While some countries supported the boycott, there was not a sufficient number to cause the great embarrassment on behalf of the Soviets that President Carter had hoped for. This initiative certainly did not have the desired results for the Carter Administration.

China: Human Rights and Most-Favored Nation Trade Status

Over the years, the granting of MFN trade status has been a routine practice. In fact, most countries in the world today are now accorded MFN trade status by the United States. However, since the unfortunate conclusion of the Tiananmen Square incident in 1989, a debate has raged in Washington on how to best respond to China's human rights violations. One way that American policy makers have attempted to address this problem is by linking the granting of MFN trade status to the observance of human rights by Beijing.

There has been considerable debate over the efficacy of such linkage since a deterioration in U.S.-Sino relations could adversely impact U.S. economic and political interests. As Immanuel Wallerstein, Director of the Ferdinand Braudel Center at Binghampton University explains, the United States needs China "as a market, as a production zone, and as a force for political stability" (Wallerstein 1993, 155).

The United States and China already experience a comprehensive trade relationship. While China currently enjoys a substantial trade surplus with the United States, opponents of the linkage concept point out that the primary goods that the United States exports to China will be in greater demand as Chinese markets begin to open up. For example, the demand for motor vehicles, telecommunications equipment, precision instruments, specialized machinery, and oil in China will continue to increase as China begins to further industrialize and develop its economy. Moreover, according to Barber Conable, President Emeritus of the World Bank, good relations with China gives the United States an entree into "the world's most rapidly growing major economy today" (Conable 1993, 145). To lose these markets to a policy of neglect would have an adverse effect on the U.S. balance of trade, overall economy, as well as its international economic prestige.

> Some argue that the United States also needs a friendly China for political reasons. According to former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger: stability in East Asia demands a closer political relationship between Japan and the United States and that in turn requires a constructive Sino-American relationship. Without both of these elements, America's Asian policy will falter (Kissinger 1993, 1).

While many pundits have perceived China's political and strategic value to have diminished since the end of the Cold War, Barber Conable maintains that if disagreements between the United States and China "deteriorate into a U.S. policy of benign neglect or outright hostility, the damage could be widespread to the United States' economic future, its relations with other countries, and its hopes for cooperation on global problems" (Conable 1993, 133-34). Also, because of China's position as a permanent member on the United Nations Security Council, it behooves the United States to pursue a constructive relationship with China. China's possession of veto

power could halt any American foreign policy initiative that requires UN approval. According to Conable:

> the United States would not have forged an internationally sanctioned coalition during the Gulf War had China sought to obstruct the Security Council's actions in early 1991, nor would subsequent U.N. actions concerning Libya, the Balkans, Iraq or Cambodia have been feasible (Conable 1993, 142).

If the United States is to maintain its prestigious position as world leader, the assistance of China on the Security Council will be necessary on a variety of fronts--most notably in security matters.

There has been considerable debate within the U.S. over the efficacy of linking trade and human rights. While some influential members of Congress and various human rights interest groups clearly have supported the linking of human rights and trade, many other foreign and domestic actors have opposed the idea. For example, some businesses have lobbied Congress to vote against tough Chinese sanctions. Senator Max Baucus, (D) Montana, agreed with business leaders when he argued that the United States should "avoid an unnecessary and unwarranted confrontation with the world's largest country and the world's fastest growing economy" (Cloud 1994c, 1372). Thus, opponents of linkage have maintained that by imposing sanctions, the United States would lose out on an important economic opportunity.

As expected, the Chinese government also has opposed the idea of linking human rights abuses and trade. China sees the U.S. position on human rights not as a political or economic issue, but one of interference in internal sovereignty. According to the Beijing Review, the "United States is using trade relations to impose its own will upon China and meddle in China's internal affairs" (Zhengao 1993, 8). Moreover, China also points to internal problems in the United States to argue its position against linkage:

> The United States has its own serious social problems, such as racial prejudice culminating in the Los Angeles riots, and the violent murders of thousands of innocent people. If China had put forward conditions stating that unless the United States solves all these problems, China would not buy American airplanes and wheat, would Americans think that fair?" (Zhengao 1993, 8-9).

The Clinton Administration has vacillated in its approach to the issue. Initially, Clinton supported linking the granting of MFN trade status and Chinese human rights observance. In fact, candidate Clinton criticized President Bush during the 1992 presidential campaign for granting China MFN status in lieu of its human rights record. After the election, however, President Clinton began to modify his position in granting China MFN trade status because of the potential adverse impact on U.S. interests. In early 1993, for example, President Clinton issued a statement that required China only to demonstrate "progress" in human rights in order to renew MFN. David Cloud, from the Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report described the predicament in which the administration had found itself:

> For Clinton, it is a conundrum. Outright withdrawal of MFN would almost certainly result in a major loss of trade to and from China, provoke an outcry from U.S. businesses that operate there and eliminate MFN as a diplomatic lever with Beijing. It could also cost the United States China's assistance on other issues, including

> North Korea. But maintaining trade status without real progress would make a mockery of U.S. threats and show the Chinese that token steps are all that is needed to preserve their access to the U.S. market (Cloud 1994a, 1054).

Finally, after weeks of discussion and national debate, the Clinton Administration decided to sever the link between human rights and trade by extending MFN status to China. The President argued that the evaluation of the trade status with China based on human rights had "reached the end of its usefulness" (Cloud 1994c, 1372). Clinton added that while China had not improved human rights conditions, "'remaining engaged in China was a better policy than cutting off billions of dollars in trade.' He said his new policy would 'nurture democracy, maintain a strategic relationship with Beijing, and over time, achieve more progress in human rights'" (Cloud 1994c, 1372).

Why the change in policy? First, China would not be the only country to suffer if the United States removed MFN. China could be expected to take retaliatory measures against the United States for such a sanction. According to a Congressional Research Service study in 1993:

> The annual loss in U.S. exports to China could be $2 billion to $3 billion, depending on what extent China would retaliate against imports from the United States. If the United States loses the Chinese market, the American people will lose 100,000 jobs a year. More importantly, if U.S.-China relations are worsened because of a change in MFN status, the loss of American strategic and political interests will be much greater (Zhengao 1993, 8).

Withdrawing MFN status from China could also result in slowing the modernization process within China, while at the same time slowing the growth of market reforms. According to Robert Oxnam, from the East Asian Institute at Columbia University, "most Chinese entrepreneurs in Asia, whether inside the P.R.C. or not, would be sharply hit by a negative MFN decision" (Oxnam 1993, 67). On the economic side of the issue, both countries would sustain a serious financial setback due to reduced trade if MFN status was withdrawn.

Next, according to Michael Posner, the Executive Director of the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, the Clinton Administration's decision to delink human rights and trade does not mean that human rights improvement in China cannot be pursued in the future, "or that long-term international pressure on the human rights front will be ineffective" (Posner 136). In fact, peaceful relations through trade could lead to increased human rights observance by China in the future. The United States could have a greater influence on Chinese policy as a friend rather than an enemy. If MFN status had been withdrawn, not only would the United States be hurt economically, but according to Barber Conable, applying linkage in this instance would also "retard the ongoing processes that over the long run will produce the kinds of social change more compatible with basic American values" (Conable 1993, 147).

Thus, policy makers concluded that good relations with China were necessary to insure future cooperation on political, strategic, and diplomatic initiatives. These benefits could not be gained through a policy of neglect, arrogance, or hostility. In an international economic system that is growing evermore interdependent, the Clinton Administration concluded that extending MFN to China would better promote U.S. interests.

Linkage and Core, Middle, and Long Term Foreign Policy Objectives

In examining the practice of linkage as a diplomatic tool, it is appropriate to discuss the ways in which linkage impacts on the core, middle and long-term foreign policy objectives of the United States. Core objectives are those objectives that are vital to United States national interest. Examples of core objectives are national security issues such as territorial integrity and sovereignty. Middle level objectives are goals that are important, but not vital to the United States. Examples of middle objectives are exploiting major economic markets abroad, and increasing diplomatic, military, or political prestige throughout the world. Long-term objectives are those objectives that the United States should strive to meet in the future such as the spread of democracy abroad, human rights observance, minor economic markets and environmental protection.

Linkage has been levied by recent American administrations on four major occasions, involving all three levels of foreign policy objectives (see Table 2). In 1969, the linking of SALT talks and Soviet foreign behavior involved linking a core foreign policy objective (national security and nuclear weapons) to a middle range policy objective (limiting Soviet activity throughout the world). As the first case study demonstrated, this type of linkage policy was not effective. Most of the opponents of linkage during this time period argued that arms limitation agreements were more important than other Soviet concessions; thus, the benefits for the United States would be greater without applying linkage. Also, arms limitation talks could give immediate and positive results to U.S. policy makers, while there was no guarantee that the Soviets would allow other political issues to be linked to nuclear arms. There was neither the political will, nor the patience to allow linkage a chance to be successful.

Table 2: Linkage and Core, Middle and Long Range Objectives

Linkage Applied To	For What Reason	Level of Foreign Policy Objectives Involved
U.S.S.R.	Arms Control/Soviet Foreign Policy Behavior	Core/Middle Range
South Africa	Apartheid/Human Rights	Long Range/Long Range
U.S.S.R.	Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan/Grain Embargo and Olympic Boycott	Middle Range/Middle Range
China	MFN/Human Rights	Middle Range/Long Range

In terms of South Africa, in this case, linkage involved long range objectives (e.g., Apartheid/human rights and minor economic markets). The United States realized that bringing about an end to the policy of apartheid would take many years, and that the best way to influence the Pretoria regime was to engage in long-term economic sanctions. In this case, linkage also worked because there was not only a perceived need on behalf of South Africa for goods, but there was a consensus in the international community that sanctions should be applied and maintained. As seen in the case of South Africa, applying linkage to long-term foreign policy objectives in cooperation with other countries around the world, will aid in the effectiveness of linkage as a diplomatic tool.

In the case of President Carter and his linking of grain exports and Olympic participation with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the policy of linkage was a noticeable failure. By attempting to check Soviet behavior in an area not vital to U.S. interests and protect U.S. international prestige, this incident of linkage dealt primarily with middle range objectives. However, because the Soviets had alternative sources of grain, the policy was counterproductive since U.S. farmers were harmed the most. Moreover, the lack of a global consensus in this area led to a miserable failure for linkage since few other countries agreed to join the United States in the grain embargo. The refusal of the Carter Administration to allow U.S. athletes to compete in the 1980 Moscow Olympics was largely symbolic, and provided no substantive amount of diplomatic leverage. This policy also was not supported by a large number of countries.

Finally, applying linkage to China through human rights and trade was not effective because the United States stood to lose a large market for American exports, and a needed ally in the United Nations. First, applying linkage in this case caused a conundrum by pitting a middle range (develop major international markets for U.S. goods and promote U.S. geopolitical interests) and a long-term objective (promoting human rights worldwide) against each other. Thus, it would be reasonable to expect that the middle range objectives would take precedence over the long term objective. While the United States would prefer to improve human rights in China, sanctioning China would have meant the loss of U.S. money, jobs, and economic prestige. When linkage is applied, it should not harm the original country as much as or more so than the country that is the target of the policy.

Conclusions

The practice of linkage as a diplomatic tool has been utilized by the U.S. on several occasions in recent years. In some situations, the practice has been more successful than in others. Generally, linkage has not been an effective tool of U.S. foreign policy. In spite of the theoretical advantages of linkage as advanced by Kissinger, its practical application generally has not achieved the desired results. Thus, the original thesis of this paper that the practice of linkage is an effective use of power to influence actors in the current international system is not supported by analysis of its application in the international arena.

From analysis of the events where linkage has been applied, it is apparent that the effectiveness of linkage and the lack thereof is largely situational. Linkage appears to work best when the following criteria are met (see Table 3):

(1) When issues being linked operate on the same policy objective level (i.e., core/core, middle range/middle range, long range/long range)

(2) When there is a perceived need by the target country and a global consensus on action concerning the linked issues

(3) When the practice of linkage does not substantially harm the country applying sanctions (e.g., jobs, trade).

Table 3: The Effectiveness of Linkage Applied

Country Sanctioned	Linkage Applied	Success	Reason
U.S.S.R.	SALT/Soviet Foreign Policy Behavior	No	Clash in Levels of Foreign Policy Objectives
South Africa	Economic Sanctions/ Apartheid	Yes	Perceived Need/ International Consensus
U.S.S.R.	Grain Embargo & Olympic Boycott/ Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan	No	Lack of International Consensus/Grain Embargo Hurt U.S. Farmers Significantly
China	MFN Trade Status/ Human Rights	No	Clash in Levels of Foreign Policy Objectives/Sanctions Would Harm U.S. Significantly

Thus, before linkage is implemented, U.S. policy makers should apply the three-part test as outlined above. If all three parts of the test are not met, then linkage should not be applied. When all three parts of the test are met and linkage is applied, periodic evaluations of the linkage policy should be undertaken to ensure that continued compliance with the three-part test is maintained.

In detailing arguments against the thesis, linkage has a divisive quality that ultimately may be counterproductive to long-term foreign policy goals. As seen in the case studies, both China and the former Soviet Union viewed this practice as not only arrogant, but also as an attempt by the United States to interfere in the sovereignty of their respective countries. In retaliation, the Soviet Union threatened to walk away from the SALT negotiations, and China threatened to respond with its own trade sanctions against the United States. Thus, if linkage is applied, it should be used in such a way that avoids the appearance of arrogance and hypocrisy. While the United States must take advantage of the new international system and its numerous chances for leadership, U.S. decision makers must avoid policies that ultimately will be counterproductive to U.S. interests or divisive. It is important to note that the current international system, more than ever, relies on a global consensus to achieve foreign policy goals.

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