1 | *States of grace*

In June 1999, 35,000 protesters descended upon Cologne, Germany, the site of that year's G-8 summit of advanced industrialized countries. Most came from across Germany, called by the country's church-linked development advocacy groups. Others came from countries farther afield, such as the UK, with a smattering of campaigners from as far away as Africa. Advocates converged downtown in the shadow of the famous cathedral that somehow survived the ravages of World War II. They formed a human chain around the city center; another 15,000 mobilized in a parallel protest in Stuttgart. The actions in Germany followed a similar protest of 70,000 the previous year in Birmingham, England. The campaign was Jubilee 2000, which drew on scripture for inspiration. The imagery of bondage was symbolic: external debts were seen as a new form of slavery, and advocates asked rich creditor governments to forgive the external debts of developing countries in time for the new millennium. In Cologne, prompted in large part by advocates, rich governments agreed to significantly expand the scope of debt reduction available to poor countries. Then US president Bill Clinton hailed the agreement as "an historic step to help the world's poorest nations achieve sustained growth and independence."[1]

More than a year later, however, the campaign's political success remained in doubt. The United States Congress had yet to honor the financial commitments President Clinton had made in Cologne. Transnational advocates supportive of debt relief sought to engage congressional gatekeepers directly, including North Carolina's Senator Jesse Helms, the conservative head of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. In September 2000, the Irish rock star Bono met with Helms and urged him to support developing country debt relief. Helms was known for equating foreign aid with throwing money down "ratholes." However, after their meeting, Helms embraced debt relief

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[1] Quoted in Babington 1999.

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and, later, also supported funding to combat AIDS in the developing world. How can we explain this change? Bono claimed that Helms wept when they spoke: "I talked to him about the Biblical origin of the idea of Jubilee Year . . . He was genuinely moved by the story of the continent of Africa, and he said to me, 'America needs to do more.' I think he felt it as a burden on a spiritual level."[2] Of his meeting with Bono, Helms said, "I was deeply impressed with him. He has depth that I didn't expect. He is led by the Lord to do something about the starving people in Africa."[3] The story of Helms' tears may be apocryphal, but it speaks both to the peculiar religiosity of the United States and more generally to the power of a compelling argument to persuade key veto players or "policy gatekeepers" to support a morally motivated policy.

Jubilee 2000 was but one of a number of advocacy movements that emerged in the 1990s and early 2000s that made celebrity activists a familiar presence as champions of aspirational causes and star interlocutors to decisionmakers. The campaign's human chain was also one of many audacious actions contemporary movements have inspired among their passionate supporters in this era of low-cost travel, information technology, and ubiquitous media. The human chain became one of the iconic images of late twentieth-century advocacy, rivaled by the large papier mâché puppets of world leaders and elaborate costumes of turtles that became familiar, even notorious, in the wake of the 1999 World Trade Organization (WTO) protests in Seattle and the following year's International Monetary Fund (IMF)/World Bank protests. Together, the chains and the puppets joined the ranks of earlier protest imagery, of environmental protesters rappelling off the roofs of skyscrapers with unfurled banners, of small inflatable rafts intercepting Japanese whaling boats, and, earlier still, of stoic marchers being run down by dogs and sprayed with water hoses in the American South and suffragettes marching in front of the White House. It is easy to romanticize the protests of advocates and credit their success to the boldest actions in their repertoire or to the flexibility of their coalition structure in an era of networked communication. As superficially satisfying as these stories of pluck may be, they do not tell us why

[2] Quoted in Dominus 2000, 6.   [3] Quoted in Wagner 2000.

some international mass movements work and others fail, why some campaigns succeed in some places and fail in others.

In the post-Cold War era, states increasingly came under pressure to adopt policies championed by transnational advocacy groups. The cases were distinctive because the primary advocates were motivated not by their own material self-interest but by broader notions of right and wrong. These "principled advocacy movements" were different from many of the kinds of social movements of old where groups with local and parochial grievances and perceptions of injustice (workers, women, African-Americans, gays and lesbians) organized to extend their rights and the spheres of politics in which they were entitled to participate.[4] In the late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century context of deepening economic interdependence and reach of global media, the world witnessed a surge in campaign activity by groups motivated primarily if not exclusively by concerns about the effects on distant others (Darfur, AIDS in Africa, Tibet) or the world as a whole (climate change). Issues that fell under this rubric included campaigns *for* the International Criminal Court, fair trade, and religious freedom in China and the Sudan, as well as campaigns *against* global warming, AIDS, child labor, landmines, small arms, and sweatshops (see Appendix 1A for a non-exhaustive list of campaigns).

While beyond the scope of this book, the field of movement advocacy has also broadened beyond states and transnational organizations to include the private sector, with campaigns targeting mining companies, clothing manufacturers, oil companies, pharmaceuticals producers, and timber companies, among others.[5] Campaigners have even targeted consumers, seeking to cultivate a market for fair trade products and ethical investment. Even as important new actors emerged as an object of advocates' concern, states remained the principal organizing units on the international stage and the primary targets of movement

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[4] Sell and Prakash see the distinction between principled advocacy movements and self-interest-based organizing as artificial. Given that many groups are moved by a desire for survival, contracts, or job security, principled advocacy may be less principled than appears at first blush (Sell and Prakash 2004). Cooley and Ron make a similar point with respect to operational international relief non-governmental organizations (Cooley and Ron 2002).

[5] For illustrative examples in the environmental realm, see Bartley 2007; Dingwerth 2008; Pattberg 2005.

advocacy. Of these, the advanced industrialized countries, epitomized by the annual G-7/G-8 meetings,[6] have been the main recipients of the most visible mobilized advocacy of the past decade and are the states of principal concern in this book.

Even if the contemporary era has been rich with this kind of transnational protest activity, the phenomenon is not new. Although the terminology of transnational social movements is of recent coinage, the tradition of mobilization across borders by groups that have moral attachments to events far from home has a storied history, whether it be the abolitionist movement of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries,[7] transnational campaigns for humanitarian intervention in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries,[8] the early twentieth-century campaign to stop Belgian depredations in the Congo,[9] the British advocates against female footbinding in early twentieth-century China, colonial expatriates railing against female circumcision in Kenya during the same time period,[10] transnational relief efforts after the Russian famines in the early 1920s,[11] or the nineteenth- and twentieth-century efforts by the UK and the United States to rein in the human rights abuses of strategic allies.[12] While less clearly altruistic (though no less interested in imposing their values across borders), émigrés often sought to generate transnational concern for the fate of their homelands or, in the case of the Jewish diaspora at the turn of the twentieth

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[6] The Group of Seven (G-7) refers to the annual meetings of finance ministers and heads of state of seven advanced industrial democracies – Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Formed in 1975, G-7 meetings allowed rich countries to coordinate economic policy and increasingly broader sets of issues. Russia was invited to join in 1997, making it the G-8. Here, G-7 refers to the seven advanced democracies; G-8 refers to the meetings. After the 2008 global economic crisis, the G-8 was superseded in 2009 by the G-20, a broader group of advanced and developing countries thought important for international economic coordination.

[7] Kaufmann and Pape 1999.

[8] Bass 2008. Noting a complex of imperial and humanitarian motives, Bass recounts efforts to address the decline of the Ottoman Empire in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the lead-up to World War I, including the support for Greek independence in 1825, a European drive to save the Maronite Christians of Syria and Lebanon in 1860, the British response to the Bulgarian atrocities in 1876, and American actions after the Armenian genocide of 1915.

[9] Hochschild 1998.   [10] Keck and Sikkink 1998.

[11] McElroy 1992.   [12] Walldorf 2008.

century, international political momentum for the creation of a new Jewish homeland.[13]

Why does the subject of transnational advocacy then deserve fresh treatment? Numerous books and articles have been written in recent years to describe and capture the processes of transnational contention, of mobilization, of actions by advocacy movements to take a stand and compel, browbeat, and persuade decisionmakers to accept what activists consider to be the right thing.[14] Perhaps the foundational work on this topic in international relations is Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink's *Activists Beyond Borders* (1998).

Few books have rivaled (or even sought to rival) its impressive, ambitious breadth, wide historical sweep, and scope. The book's special appeal is that it captured the ethos of the age – the rise of non-state actors with a do-it-yourself mentality that anything was possible. The Internet was relatively new, and the mobilization of attention and people across borders through new media and communications was fresh and novel. This was also a time of, *pace* Francis Fukuyama, posthistory; with the end of the Cold War, traditional security threats had largely receded, opening space for new issues and actors of a variety of stripes to push their agendas. The normative promise led scholars in this tradition to hype the potential for transformative change through social movement advocacy.[15]

A decade on – given everything that has transpired – the late 1990s seem quaint. It would be easy to assume that, with the attacks of September 11, 2001, and the subsequent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the landscape for advocacy would have changed entirely. On one level, one would have expected that the profoundly changed security environment would have driven these new issues off the agenda. Policymakers, consumed by terrorism and security, would have no time for offbeat causes such as climate change and global public health. But did the policy agenda really change that much? While security concerns certainly have risen to the top of the agenda, a number of

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[13] Tarrow 2005. Tilly mentions other historical transnational antecedents, including the temperance movement, movements for women's rights, and the Irish independence movement (Tilly 2004, 113).

[14] Betsill 2000; Bob 2005; Hawkins 2004; Hertel 2006; Kolb 2007; Price 1998, 2003; Risse, Ropp, and Sikkink 1999; Risse-Kappen 1995a; Rutherford 2000; Staggenborg 2008; Tarrow 2005; Tilly 2004; Wapner 1995.

[15] Florini 2000; Mathews 1997.

non-traditional issues, including climate change and HIV/AIDS, have continued to receive attention and resources but not all of them equally so. With greenhouse gas emissions ascending nearly unabated, the continuation of killings in Darfur, the estimated two and a half million new HIV/AIDS infections each year, and persistent poverty affecting hundreds of millions particularly in Africa, the issues that animated moral outrage in the first place have not gone away.

At the same time, the literature on social movements has not quite moved on or progressed beyond the initial documentation of the relevance of social movements and the variety of mechanisms by which they exercise influence. The first cohort of research, including Keck and Sikkink's work, focused primarily on advocacy movements in developing countries and how, when faced with local state intransigence to their demands for protection of human rights or environmental enforcement, these campaigns might enlist the support of global partners to pressure their home governments. These outside–in processes were aptly titled, one being the now famous "boomerang model," and the other its illustrious counterpart, the "spiral model."[16] But what of efforts to move stronger governments and already manifestly liberal democracies? Do the same processes apply in societies with a more established democratic culture and role for internal free expression and mobilization?

The accumulated wisdom of more than a decade of scholarship on social movements has focused on a few key factors – whether or not the messages resonate with local value structures, the relative openness of the process to civil society input, and the ability of different groups to mobilize.[17] The mechanisms of influence have largely focused on mobilizing information to persuade and attention to praise and shame decisionmakers for good and bad behavior. What is missing in all these accounts is a more conditional understanding of the circumstances that facilitate successful social movement action. As Richard Price notes, the next generation of this kind of research needs to answer: "*Why* do some campaigns succeed in some places but fail in others?"[18] We can also turn this question around to ask: *When* will states take on these new normative commitments championed by principled advocacy movements?

[16] Keck and Sikkink 1998; Risse, Ropp, and Sikkink 1999.
[17] McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996. Kolb makes a similar assessment (Kolb 2007).
[18] Price 2003, 586.

In this line of study, it is tempting to look at the material through the lens of the advocates, the structure of their networks, the nature of their messages, and other elements of what they do and what they can control. If we study what advocates can control, we can potentially provide policy advice. If only you tweak your message, raise more money, or improve your governance structure, then you will likely have more success.[19] In reality, much is outside advocates' control, once they have decided on an issue to work on. Some problems are simply harder to solve than others. More than that, most issue areas, even if unsettled, already have a cohort of professionals inside and outside governments and international institutions who are tasked to have a say over how that issue is handled.

In slightly more technical terms, advocacy involves a strategic interaction between agents and structures.[20] In other words, some things are under the control of advocates – the agents – but whether or not advocates succeed is mediated by the context, the nature of the issue, what else is going on in the world, which agencies and international organizations have a say over this problem, and so on. As the field on this topic has long recognized, the "political opportunity structure" matters greatly. If advocates cannot monitor or participate in an international conference or even get a meeting with staff at an international institution, they may be constrained from having input on the process, let alone influence. Another wrinkle in this story is that there are other agents in the narrative; you have advocates and their allies, but also you often have opponents and their coterie. More than this, on the other side of the institutional wall, both in governments and in international institutions, are people with varying degrees of authority who can, at some level, choose to act based on information and appeals. Understanding when those decisionmakers can or will listen and respond to advocates therefore is a central question in this book.

We can identify a number of reasons to explain why a given campaign succeeded, and political scientists, myself included, have written article after article about individual campaigns and single-issue areas

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[19] Kolb critiques this line of argument (Kolb 2007). Staggenborg describes this as the "resource mobilization" school in social movement theory (Staggenborg 2008). For an illustration of this kind of perspective applied to a recent movement, see Randle on Jubilee 2000 (Randle 2004).

[20] Lake and Powell 1999.

dispensing such sage explanation and advice.[21] But how much do we really know about why some campaigns work and others fail? It is both easy and hard to offer a coherent narrative to explain many cases. Readymade, off-the-shelf answers that emphasize costs and difficulty are available from scholars in the "rationalist" tradition in political science. On one level, we can expect movement success when what is asked is easy and consistent with what states and decisionmakers wanted to do anyway.[22] However, while a good beginning, we need a more nuanced explanation that can encompass when states do what is apparently the hard thing, when the costs of action or policies are not manifestly clear, and when states seemingly act against their short-run interests or act for reasons other than for obvious material gain.

This book looks at cases of success and failure by transnational advocacy movements in different national contexts. Here, success is primarily defined in a political rather than a policy sense. What this concept means is that the focus is principally on the early stages when a country has been asked to make a domestic decision about an international commitment.[23] At this early stage, advocacy typically focuses on securing either (1) commitments of funds or (2) support for international treaties. For financial commitments, the end result involves an appropriation of money. In the case of treaties, this action entails domestic ratification. To a certain extent, this issue raises the important question of whether countries make international commitments because they engage in cheap talk, relatively painless acts of international solidarity.[24] I will come back to this discussion over the course of the coming chapters, but compliance is not the central focus of this book for a number of reasons. First, since many of these cases are live issues, the degree to which individual countries have complied with their international commitments remains an open question. Second, this project concerns states taking on international commitments championed by principled advocacy movements, not about the wisdom or the efficacy of those commitments. While I understand and have

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[21] Cardenas 2004; Carpenter 2005; Price 1998; Rutherford 2000; Sundstrom 2005.
[22] Downs, Rocke, and Barsoom 1996, 380; Goldsmith and Posner 2003–2004, 2005; von Stein 2005a, 612; 2005b.
[23] In the life cycle of norms, Checkel refers to this early stage before internalization as "empowerment" (Checkel 1997, 479).
[24] On cheap talk, see the literature in game theory by Farrell and Rabin 1996; Morrow 1994.

analyzed the question of effectiveness (one that is intimately bound up with compliance), whether what advocates propose is wise (i.e., likely to work) is simply beyond the scope of this book. Any project has to be bounded. While subsequent chapters examine whether or not states can make commitments and later fail to abide by them, the initial commitment is a significant decision in its own right. Importantly, in countries such as the United States where the international rhetorical commitment has to be matched by domestic action (i.e., advice and consent of the Senate for treaties and congressional appropriations of funds), this book focuses on the domestic approval stage, a harder and higher bar of commitment than a leader merely announcing his or her intentions publicly.

I try to provide a generalizable explanation and approach that can explain why some countries accept commitments championed by principled advocacy groups while others reject them. The scope of the argument is both multi-issue and multi-country, with limitations on the number of issues and countries a function of using case study methods. I look at four substantive issues – debt relief, climate change, HIV/AIDS, and the International Criminal Court (ICC). For each, I examine why the campaigns for action succeeded in some country cases and failed in others. For the purposes of symmetry, the universe of potential cases is the same for all four issue areas, the seven most advanced industrialized countries (the G-7): Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States. For each of the substantive empirical chapters, I provide a more extended discussion of some of the most interesting country cases within the G-7. The object for each is to subject my argument to some tougher tests, where it would not be expected to do well or where it is hard to show what I propose to show.[25] At the same time, I also seek to analyze cases that are important in terms of their global significance as well as likely to be of interest to a general audience.[26]

Invariably, a desire for relevance and significance leads me to use the United States as a country case, making this book as much about the peculiar patterns of US engagement with the world as it is about social movements. Here we have two cases – debt relief and HIV/AIDS – where the United States has been an important partner to and leader

[25] George and Bennett 2005.
[26] On the selection of important cases, see Van Evera 1997.

of international action and two cases – climate change and the ICC – where the United States has sought to undermine whatever counter-leadership efforts that have emerged from other countries without, as yet, putting forward much of an alternative vision. As George W. Bush left the stage and President Barack Obama assumed office, whether the United States would become a more robust supporter of multilateral cooperation remained an important and live question.[27]

Some might ask "why these cases and not others?" with respect to both the substance and the breadth of country cases. I wanted a diversity of issue areas – international economics and development (debt relief), environment (climate change), public health (HIV/AIDS), and justice/security (the International Criminal Court) – as well as a diversity of country cases. To be able to make more generalizable claims, I particularly needed cases of both successful and failed advocacy – in other words, of successful and failed state acceptance of commitments championed by social movements. While there was some overlap of coverage of the United States, I sought substantive cases where the country acted differently in some cases. At the same time, I wanted to include a variety of country cases, some cases including Japan, others Germany, some the UK, others with France or Canada. Only one country of the G-7 does not get an extended treatment, and that is Italy.

During my research for this book, I conducted several hundred interviews over eight years, many of them face to face, some by phone, and some over e-mail with a variety of people, including activists, government officials, staff of international organizations, academics, members of the business community, international lawyers, physicians, clergy, and scientists, among others. This project has taken me to Berlin, Bonn, Boston, Brussels, The Hague, London, Milan, New York, Paris, Seattle, Tokyo, Vienna, Washington D.C., and beyond. This book would not have been possible without the collaboration of the many people I interviewed.

Those interested in "external validity" or broader generalizations across larger numbers of countries and cases may find fault with a case study approach. A number of scholars have begun to apply advanced

[27] Brooks and Wohlforth 2008; Busby and Monten 2008b; Ikenberry 2003; Kagan 2003; Keohane 2005; Kupchan 2002; Kupchan and Trubowitz 2007; Lepgold 2001; Moravcsik 2005; Walt 2005.