

CELEBRITY POLITICAL ACTIVISM IN THE ERA OF
TRANSNATIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY: BONO'S
POLITICAL EFFORTS AND METHODS

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ABSTRACT

Irish rock n' roll mega-star Bono's political efforts are unparalleled in the realm of celebrity politics, and have thus created a new model for how celebrity politics can function – which the author has named the “Bono-model.” This model evolved during the rock star's lifelong commitment to social and political activism. The model has three integral characteristics, the first being Bono's celebrity together with his humanitarian reputation, which enables initial political access. Secondly is Bono's charisma, which itself is book-ended by a magnetic personality and exceptional issue-knowledge, both of which create political legitimacy. Thirdly, Bono uses coalition-building and nonpartisanship. These three characteristics are encased within an emerging global polity that has enabled an increase in the relative power of transnational civil society, of which Bono's issues have been part. Bono's political activism is historically and theoretically analyzed to both exhibit his paramount celebrity political success and the Bono-model's evolution.

This abstract of 148 words is approved as to form and content.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

It is absurd if not obscene that celebrity is a door that such serious issues need to pass through before politicians take note. But there it is. Jubilee can't get into some of the offices and I can. But the idea has a kind of force of its own. I'm just making it louder. And, you know, making noise is a job description really for a rock star.

- Bono as Quoted by Neil McCormick in 'Killing Bono' (2004, 327)

Bono brought much needed glamour to a worthy campaign when he took up debt relief in 1999. Since then he has pioneered a new model of how celebrities can use their power. What marks him out is how he is reinventing how rock stars do politics.

- The Guardian, 'A Day with Bono,' June 16, 2005.

He's been called a "lobbyist for the world's poor" and dubbed "The Statesman," but is known better by the singular nickname he received as a teen – Bono (pronounced BAH'-noh).¹ The Irish-mega celebrity and charismatic front man of famed rock n' roll group U2 was originally christened Paul Hewson by his Catholic father and Protestant mother in suburban Dublin in 1960. The young Bono's mixed religious heritage was a rare and controversial distinction in a sectarian Ireland where the Troubles raged – the three precariously violent decades during the Anglo-Irish struggle over the political fate of Northern Ireland. Bono's early experience of seeing the "grey" that straddled these two competing ideologies no doubt had its influence on his eventual political bent – the leftward

¹ Donna Cassata. "Bono Doubles as Lobbyist for the World's Poor," San Francisco Chronicle, 7 June 2005; James Traub "The Statesman," *The New York Times Magazine*, 18 September 2005.

humanity-over-ideology type that led to his current and unprecedented celebrity campaign for the continent of Africa – or as he is fond of reminding the public, “representing the poorest and most vulnerable people.”² Perhaps because of his Irish background Bono has embraced a type of political activism that is non-partisan and inclusive. Political Scientist John Street supports this notion by explaining that there is an intimate connection between why and how an artist becomes political.³

Bono’s recent crusade for the African continent is best surmised by the dual-acronym of his US based think-tank and lobbying firm founded in 2002, DATA, which stands for *Debt AIDS Trade Africa* and *Democracy Accountability Transparency Africa*. These terms represent complex and interwoven issues, but more importantly, they have all been linked to one overall goal by Bono and DATA – to bring the African continent out of abject poverty. Bono has been an ardent crusader for the African continent since a 1985 visit to Ethiopia after his rock band U2’s participation in the Live Aid concert spectacular, which raised over £60 million for Africa.⁴

As brand U2 increased in world stature, so has Bono’s political involvement. U2 has steadily built an international fan base since the late 1970s that has vaulted them into the position of one the most successful rock bands of all time. Worldwide they have sold over 130 million albums, grossed nearly a billion dollars in concert sales, received 21 Grammy

² Jann S. Wenner. “Bono: The Rolling Stone Interview,” *Rolling Stone*, 3 November 2005, 67.

³ John Street, “Bob, Bono and Tony B: The Popular Artist as Politician,” *Media, Culture and Society* 24 (2002): 433-441.

⁴ Mick Wall, *Bono: In the Name of Love*. New York: Thunder’s Mouth Press, 2005, 126.

awards, and are card-carrying members of the Rock n' Roll Hall of Fame.⁵ Bono is the face of this colossal musical empire, and a face that is recognizable throughout most of the Western world. As the group's lead singer and resident extrovert, it is fitting that he is also the face for many of U2's political and social forays, sometimes to the dismay of his three U2 band-mates and management partner Paul McGuinness.

The purpose of this work is to historically analyze and explain the new model of celebrity political activism pioneered by Bono, which has eclipsed all previous celebrity political endeavors, particularly in the United States. This model will be hereafter referred to as the "Bono-model" and relates directly to the methods which Bono has used to succeed in his political activities. This work seeks to demonstrate how through this new model Bono has secured considerable political achievements as defined by a measurable policy change and/or enactment, or as represented by a demonstrated political shift from a political actor such as a world leader or an American Senator, and also in the more abstract arena of political agenda-setting. The Bono-model of celebrity political activism provides a blueprint for future celebrity activists who wish to make the greatest impact for their said cause without actually becoming a politician.

Part one and two of this work will historically analyze Bono's political activities from the beginning of his career as front man for U2 through the end of 2005, when he was eventually recognized as de facto leader of the transnational campaign to end abject poverty

⁵ *Supergroup U2 Talks with 'GMA' on What Keeps Them Going After 25 Years Together*, ABC News Online, 20 May 2005: <http://www.abcnews.go.com/GMA/print?id=775034>; Cassata, 2005; *Bono and the Christian Right*, CBS News Online, 20 November 2005: <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2005/11/17/60minutes/main1053542.shtml> ; Ben Wener, *U2 is the 'One'*, Orange County Register, 9 February 2006.

in Africa. The historical portion of this work seeks to document and validate the political achievements that have occurred as a result of the Bono-model through a detailed analysis of the available historical facts. Several of the events analyzed exhibit significant correlations between Bono and a political shift or decision, but in most cases it is difficult to completely credit the rock star. In fact, one of the limitations of this work is the difficulty in completely crediting Bono for anything, as in most cases other forces were at work beyond just Bono. When possible, this work will investigate alternate explanations for Bono's ostensible political achievements. This work concludes it is doubtful that most of the presented political situations would have developed and occurred in the same manner without Bono's involvement. It may be helpful when reading the historical sections to imagine the situations counterfactually – or how they would have transpired in a world in which Bono did not exist.

Given the assertion that Bono has indeed created a new model for celebrity political activism, the next question must explore the reasons for his political success, or more specifically, how has the Bono-model worked? This work contends that the Bono-model involves three key elements, encased within an evolving global polity, which explains how this rock star has rewritten the blueprint for celebrity political activism and has reached the modern pinnacle of celebrity political power. These factors will be briefly discussed and then further examined and explained theoretically in the final section of this work. The first piece of the Bono-model is the easiest to explain and certainly the most obvious. It relates simply to Bono being Bono – or his celebrity status – which is itself attached to his

humanitarian reputation. Bono gained his initial inordinate political access through his celebrity status as front man and persona grata of the internationally renowned and socially conscious rock group U2. Bono's fame as both rock star and humanitarian created the initial conditions that eventually opened the right doors. This manifested itself through his connection to U.S. political insider Bobby Shriver, who introduced him to key American politicians merely because he was Bono of U2. But political access does not guarantee success. Many of the politicians that Bono met were initially reticent to meet the rock star and some were skeptical that they would be used. But something unique seemed to recur each time Bono met with politicians, regardless of what ideological stripe or flag they represented. Scheduled meet-and-greets would overrun by a half-hour, an hour, or two hours. In virtually all documented cases, politicians walked away extremely impressed with Bono, and especially struck by his knowledge surrounding the issues. This leads to the second piece of the Bono-model; charisma, which includes a blend of Bono's magnetic personality flanked by a detailed knowledge of the political issues, or expertise. This charisma, along with his exceptional issue-knowledge, conferred legitimacy in the minds of the politicians. The final step in the Bono-model is the political strategy of nonpartisanship and inclusion, or coalition-building. Bono deliberately sought to influence those who would oppose him, including the political and religious right in the United States. It is difficult to imagine Bono enjoying the same political achievements without the help of these groups, especially in the United States. Bono's charisma contributed to his success in convincing the political opposition to support his plight, but it is also probable that political expediency on

the part of nervous politicians who feared constituent backlash played a role as well. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, these three factors have been encased within a structural shift in global politics during the 1980s - 2000s that has enabled transnational civil society more relative power and influence in the realm of international politics, of which Bono's political campaigns have been a part – a situation which no doubt helped to advance his agenda.

Celebrity Activism in the United States

The Bono-model contends that Bono has surpassed all previous celebrity political endeavors, and to test this notion, it is essential to include a brief overview of celebrity political activism in the United States. It is first helpful to provide a theoretical contrast to celebrity activism before examining it thoroughly, which will be accomplished by presenting two traditional political science theories that have attempted to explain American political access and participation. In other words, how do average Americans outside of celebrities acquire political access? Group theory, or pluralism, is one popular explanation. This theory was developed from the writings of Arthur Bentley and David Truman, who both “placed groups at the heart of politics and policymaking in a complex, large, and increasingly specialized governmental system.”⁶ Groups are formed from “substantial cleavages among citizens,” which has also been encouraged by an American “melting pot” culture that has created a cultural, ethnic and religiously diverse nation. America's constitutional design also spurs group development, which “Guarantees free speech, association, and the right to petition government for the redress of grievances...” In

⁶ Burdett A. Loomis and Allan J. Cigler. “Introduction: The Changing Nature of Interest Group Politics,” in *Interest Group Politics*, ed. Allan J. Cigler and Burdett A. Loomis. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2002, 4-5.

addition, the decentralized power structure of the US Government provides multiple access points for groups. Loomis and Cigler note that “political organization often parallels government structure...”⁷ Clearly these groups form in the United States for common political, material or social representation. This “common” representation is what celebrities can sometimes bypass. Bono did not need an initial group affiliation to gain an audience of American politicians. It is an odd reality to consider that an Irish citizen has more political access than the average American citizen because of his celebrity status.

Another explanation is elite theory, which according to Dye posits public policy as “the preferences and values of a governing elite.”⁸ Elites are “not typical of the masses,” and draw “disproportionately from the upper socioeconomic strata of society.” Elite theory assumes that the masses are “apathetic and ill-informed about public policy,” and that elites shape mass opinion on policy “more than masses shape elite opinion.” Elites hold a tight reign over whom and when new individuals are accepted in to the “governing circles,” which occurs through a “slow and continuous process to maintain stability and avoid revolution.” Dye further notes that new elites must accept “the basic elite consensus,” which includes “the sanctity of private property, limited government, and individual liberty.”⁹ Elite theory also claims that policy change is incremental, which reflects the elites desire to preserve the system. Elites are not “hostile toward mass welfare,” and actually bear mass responsibility as a form of “enlightened self-interest,” or self-protection. Elite theory believes that American democratic institutions such as elections and parties “are important

⁷ Ibid, 6

⁸ Thomas R. Dye, *Understanding Public Policy*. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 2002, 23.

⁹ Ibid, 24

only for their symbolic value,” and that “at best” the masses have “only an indirect influence over the decision-making behavior of elites.” If one accepts the tenets of the elite theory, Bono would probably not be considered an elite. He definitely has elite access, but unless he is pursuing his humanitarian concerns for the sole purpose of “enlightened self-interest,” and starts favoring incremental change over his revolutionary calls to end poverty, then he cannot be considered an elite in the theoretical political science sense. In reality his celebrity status would probably fall somewhere in-between what could be considered a linear continuum between group theory and elite theory.

Normally celebrity activism rarely extends beyond public support of the said political cause, but can include the occasional support of a political candidate or the questionable “expert” Congressional testimony. It is these kinds of trite political tokens that have muddied the image of celebrity political activism. Even rarer are the celebrities who actually become politicians. It is important to differentiate those celebrities turned politicians with celebrity political activism. There are several cases of modern celebrity musicians and movie stars turned politicians, perhaps Ronald Reagan being the most acclaimed. But there is a clear political difference between actually becoming a politician and remaining within the celebrity realm. Meyer and Gamson explicitly divorce traditional celebrity status from “formal, institutional power” and note that they “are distinguished by their *autonomy* [emphasis added] from state institutions.”¹⁰

¹⁰ David S. Meyer, and Joshua Gamson, “The Challenge of Cultural Elites: Celebrities and Social Movements.” *Sociological Inquiry* 65, no 2 (1995), 183-184.

Upon reviewing the history of celebrity activism in the United States, there are no documented cases of any celebrity impact on the political landscape similar to Bono's, whether domestic or international, while still remaining a celebrity. In fact there are no documented cases of celebrities who have used the methods that Bono has pioneered – namely the incessant lobbying of politicians and the creation of a successful think tank/lobbying firm, both of which are flanked by a burgeoning grassroots organization and connected to a transnational coalition. In addition, the uniqueness of this new model partially reflects Bono's actual integration into the political system without leaving his celebrity post. It could be argued that Bono would actually lose political power and influence were he to assume a traditional political post such as Irish Prime Minister, Ambassador, or even World Bank President. Meyer and Gamson help demonstrate the progressive nature of the Bono-model as they stress the celebrity tendency to avoid seeking “any kind of structural change,” and note that the “appeal for generosity, but not reform... is a well-established tradition of celebrity activism.”¹¹ Marshall comments on the typical mobilizing ineffectiveness of traditional celebrity activity by concluding in *Celebrity and Power: Fame in Contemporary Culture* that “The agency of celebrity is more often reduced to a privatized, psychological representation of activity and transformation – it rarely moves into a clear social movement.”¹² It may be premature to call Bono's African campaign a “social movement,” but it is not unimaginable to speculate that this end may indeed materialize.

¹¹ Meyer and Gamson, 1995, 190.

¹² David P. Marshall, *Celebrity and Power: Fame in Contemporary Culture*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997, 244.

Corner and Pels in *Media and the Restyling of Politics* provide an excellent description of the current notion of celebrity:¹³

Forms of celebrity, involving sustained performance within conditions of expanded media visibility and, quite often, vigorous media scrutiny, are major features of contemporary culture. Alongside the more established ‘public figures,’ a whole new range of people from television, sport, popular music and other areas of entertainment have become, if only temporarily, members of a celebrity system that extends to the international level.

Bono is clearly a part of this “celebrity system that extends to the international level,” but his celebrity is limited to a predominantly Western audience, as his anonymity on the very continent he campaigns for was evident in his 2002 African trip with U.S. Treasury Secretary Paul O’Neill. Sociologist C. Wright Mills was a pioneer in the study of the modern celebrity, and asked in 1956, “But what are the celebrities?” His answer perhaps provides the most gripping, timeless definition of the term:

The celebrities are The Names that need no further identification. Those who know them so far exceed those of whom they know as to require no exact computation. Wherever the celebrities go, they are recognized, and moreover recognized with some excitement and awe. Whatever they do has publicity value. More or less continuously, over a period of time, they are the material for the media of communication and entertainment. And, when that time ends – as it must – and the

¹³ John Corner and Dick Pels, Eds. *Media and the Restyling of Politics: Consumerism, Celebrity and Cynicism*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2003, 6.

celebrity still lives – as he may – from time to time it may be asked, ‘Remember him?’ That is what celebrity means.

In 1961 historian Daniel Boorstin defined celebrity simply as “a person who is known for his well-knownness.”¹⁴ Marshall presents an updated analysis of the celebrity concept, and defines the term within its historical context, explaining that the resulting “intense focus on the public personality” is a “peculiarly modern phenomenon,” and traces its birth “from the twinned discourses of modernity: democracy and capitalism.”¹⁵ Marshall admits that “the ubiquity of celebrities, as well as their intangible nature, makes them difficult to define...”¹⁶ Marshall does make a definitional attempt and notes that the term itself, celebrity, “developed in the nineteenth century” and carried an original “affinity with piety and religion,” and has “become a term that announces a vulgar sense of notoriety.” Marshall further claims that celebrity “describes a type of value that can be articulated through an individual and celebrated publicly as important and significant.”¹⁷ Marshall also attributes the “development” of celebrities in the realm of popular music, of which Bono belongs, to the “mass reproduction of songs,” a technological result of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that began with the advent of sheet music production and distribution, and led to a situation in which “the singing star was simultaneously developed.”¹⁸

In *Celebrity Politics* West and Orman discuss the rise of modern celebrity politics and credit several factors for its emergence in 20th century America including technological

¹⁴ Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America*. New York: Vintage Books, 1987, 57.

¹⁵ Marshall, 1997, 4

¹⁶ Ibid, 243.

¹⁷ Ibid, 7.

¹⁸ Ibid, 150.

factors such as radio and television, which contributed to what Leo Braudy called the “democratization of fame,” and journalistic shifts such as “gossip journalism.”¹⁹ Mills also pointed to “the rise of mass communication,” which is “the prime means of acclaim and even a creator of those acclaimed.”²⁰ Because of these technological shifts, ordinary people were propelled into the spotlight with the advent of movies, recorded music, television and radio. Mills pronounced that this new media system has “placed a spotlight” on celebrities “such as no higher circles of any nation in world history have ever had upon them.”²¹

West and Orman also detail the history of modern celebrity politics in the United States and categorize the numerous ways that celebrities have become “integrally involved” in political activities including electioneering, campaigning, fund-raising, endorsing and lobbying. West and Orman note the “special power” celebrities possess resulting from their “centrality in the mobilization of interests and recruitment of candidates,” and add “They are able to position themselves in ways that enhance their overall influence.”²² Meyer and Gamson discuss the “resources” celebrities can bring to social movements, many of which overlap West and Orman, and cite their “chief asset” as “the visibility that comes along with their participation.”²³ Also noted is the celebrity’s ability to (2) draw in other participants and potential supporters, (3) make attendance more attractive to potential supporters, (4) provide critical fund-raising support to help social movement organizations, and (5) “the lure of celebrity contact,” which is powerful for politicians and policymakers. Street concurs

¹⁹ Darrell M. West and John Orman, *Celebrity Politics*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2003, 7-8.

²⁰ C. Wright. Mills, *The Power Elite*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1959, 85.

²¹ *Ibid*, 84.

²² West and Orman, 2003, 6.

²³ Meyer and Gamson, 1995, 185-6.

and simply explains that “Celebrities legitimate political causes and political movements by lending their ‘credibility’ and ‘popularity’ to them.”²⁴ Meyer and Gamsom further note that “celebrities can open doors for movement activists,” and demonstrate how celebrities have special political access that eclipses that of the general public.²⁵ This celebrity ability to “open doors” has been shamelessly used by Bono, and was the first step utilized in his recent political ascent.

Another political arena in which celebrities engage are the ever-present political fundraising battles, where “celebrities are adept at raising money and attracting media attention to particular candidates and highlighting the importance of pressing causes.”²⁶ In addition, celebrities are significant financial contributors to political campaigns themselves. Celebrity musicians have also donated their songs to political campaigns, such as Ronald Reagan’s “reliance on Lee Greenwood’s song *I’m Proud to be an American*.”²⁷ Street expands on this notion explaining that musical celebrities in particular “command audiences who pay for the CDs, videos and concerts that bear [their] name, and people respond differently to [them] because of what [they do].”²⁸

Perhaps the most pervasive way in which celebrities become political is through their activism. West and Orman discuss the myriad of entertainers who have engaged in celebrity activism including actors Marlon Brando and Jane Fonda who took part in the civil rights

²⁴ Street, 2002, 437.

²⁵ Meyer and Gamson, 1995, 186.

²⁶ West and Orman, 2003, 33.

²⁷ Ibid, 61.

²⁸ Street, 2002, 434.

struggles, mainly by participating in demonstrations.²⁹ In the 1960s Brando also raised money for famine relief in India, and in the 1970s helped the American Indian Movement through a brilliant publicity stunt that sent Native American Sasheen Littlefeather to the 1973 Oscar's ceremony as a stand-in for Brando, who was nominated as best actor for his role in *The Godfather*. Charlton Heston took his passion for gun rights to a new celebrity level when he assumed the presidency of the National Rifle Association (NRA) – a move that is somewhat similar to Bono's founding of DATA and the ONE Campaign, but miniscule in comparison as Heston merely represents the NRA. Heston frequently spoke on behalf of the NRA to raise publicity and money, and has engaged in “get-out-the-vote” drives to rally pro-gun voters against gun-control candidates. Similarly, actors Audrey Hepburn and Danny Kaye represented the United Nations International Children's Fund at different times in their careers.³⁰

Paul Newman has been what West and Orman call one “of the most consistently principled celebrity politicians,” as he “raises funds for candidates... educates the public about various issues, and acts as media spokesperson for various political issues.”³¹ Newman also created his own fine food label called *Newman's Own*, which has donated \$175 million in profits to various charities.³² The Creative Coalition is another example of celebrities attempting to educate the public, and may have lent to the formation of Bono's strategies as it is considered a political interest group. It was founded in 1989 by a Hollywood group led

²⁹ West and Orman, 2003, 62-74.

³⁰ Jonathan Curiel, “Star Power: When Celebrities Support Causes, Who Really Winds Up Benefiting?” *The San Francisco Chronicle*, 5 June 2005.

³¹ West and Orman, 2003, 66.

³² Taken from Newman's Own website: <http://www.newmansown.com/ourstory.cfm>

by actor/director Ron Silver and pursues a mission to “better inform and influence the community and nation” on a wide range of political issues including “education policy, violence in America, the role of the media, campaign finance reform, First Amendment rights, public funding for the arts, and arts education in the public schools,” and “other topics of broad concern.”³³ The Creative Coalition’s website explains that the organization “Testifies before Congress, sponsors awareness-building events, actively participates in the Democratic and Republican conventions, and plays an assertive role in presenting the creative community's views on these issues.”

West and Orman also discuss the celebrity politics of rock stars including 1960s and 70s folk singers such as Arlo Guthrie, Phil Ochs and Joan Baez who “played many social and political benefits.”³⁴ There are also the much- publicized benefit concerts that have sometimes taken the form of the modern mega-concert. George Harrison was the first to organize such an event with his 1971 *Concert for Bangladesh*, which raised \$240,000 for the UN Children’s Fund for Relief to Refugee Children of Bangladesh. West and Orman also cite musician and world hunger activist Harry Chapin, who they claim has “one of the most remarkable records of achievement by a politico pop star in the 1970s,” and may have also helped partially pioneer some of Bono’s methods.³⁵ West and Orman note that Chapin “became a full-fledged food activist and lobbyist on Capitol Hill as he appeared before Congressional hearings and on Congressional doorsteps,” and that “Chapin and other activists put enough pressure on the appropriate power points in Washington to get Congress

³³ Taken from the Creative Coalition Website: <http://www.thecreativecoalition.org/about/mission.html>

³⁴ West and Orman, 2003, 70.

³⁵ Ibid.

to call for the establishment of a presidential Commission on Domestic and International Hunger and Malnutrition.”³⁶ Chapin also helped raise about \$500,000 per year from 1973-1981 for world hunger. It would be an injustice to neglect the efforts of Bob Geldof, Bono’s buddy in campaigning for the African continent, who was also a political trailblazer when he conceptualized the first mega-concert, *Live Aid* in 1985, and for his efforts was knighted in England and received the first rock star Nobel Peace Prize nomination. Geldof has also met with several world leaders including members of the US Congress, the British Parliament, U.K. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and Mother Theresa.

From the previous brief analysis of modern celebrity political activism, it is apparent that Bono has borrowed some of tactics of his predecessors, including his partner Bob Geldof, but this work contends that his activism has substantially eclipsed his predecessors in both scope and method. Bono has met with the leaders of virtually every Western nation and achieved substantial political results both domestically and internationally. In the process Bono has become perhaps the first “transnational celebrity political activist.” He is the first celebrity to create his own think tank/lobbying firm and grassroots political interest group. Meyer and Gamson help demonstrate the importance of this development by noting, “The resources that celebrities bring to bear in social movement struggles do not generally include citizen education or detailed political analysis.”³⁷ As will be demonstrated, Bono has exceeded both citizen education and detailed political analysis. It will also be shown that Bono is the first celebrity to reach across the partisan divide and unite people around a cause

³⁶ Ibid, 71.

³⁷ Meyer and Gamson, 1995, 202.

instead of divide. In addition, Bono still uses the traditional methods enabled by his celebrity musician status including the mobilization of the U2 fan base at concerts, which Bono now uses as a forum to gather supporters for his grassroots The ONE Campaign.

CHAPTER 2

EVOLUTION

You know, celebrity is ridiculous. It's silly, but it's a kind of currency, and you have to spend it wisely. And I've learnt that much.

- Bono in interview with Michka Assayas (2005, 93)

Politics matters. We grew up in a generation where we were told it didn't, and we were bored: 'No matter who you vote for, the government always gets in.' That's wrong. We have to puncture that.

- Bono in interview with Michka Assayas (2005, 188)

This section will exhibit the development of Bono's coexisting celebrity and humanitarian status through his role as front man for arguably the most popular rock n' roll band in the world. The resulting celebrity, or fame, enwrapped with Bono's humanitarian reputation, is the first piece to the Bono-model. In addition, Bono's social and political activities have been both consistent and evolving throughout his celebrity career, which have also aided his humanitarian reputation. This evolution is imperative in understanding how the Bono-model was developed, as it is a function of both agency in the person of Bono, and the structure in which it resided, in this case, a shifting global polity that has enabled more relative power for transnational advocacy groups. It is no coincidence that Bono's political activism has strategically developed parallel to that of an emerging global transnational civil society. The political causes in which Bono has been involved have been directly linked to these developing transnational movements. This section also seeks to establish Bono's long-term commitment to humanitarian and political issues, something that is rare among most

politically-involved celebrities. This long-term commitment has also lent to Bono's legitimacy as a political actor, and led directly to his eventual elevated celebrity political status. In addition, it will be demonstrated that U2 and Bono's early forays with political and social causes primarily used their popular music, which as Pratt explains has limited political influence, to highlight their causes. Pratt discusses the political limitations of popular music and notes that "Although numerous efforts to fuse music and politics have arisen, their relation to any more fundamental movements for change remains problematic, given the weakness of such movements as perceived realistic alternatives to existing institutional politics."¹

Pratt also claims that instead of creating real institutional change, "the most important function of music has always been in expressing and reinforcing elements of existing, broadly oppositional political culture and attitudes, thus facilitating ongoing struggles and resistance..."² Marshall presents a similar view noting that, "Occasionally, the social power that has congealed in popular music has facilitated the organizations of social movements opposed to the general organization of the social structure."³ Pratt further explains that this "oppositional consciousness does not imply transformative movements embodying affirmative challenge and change," but acknowledges that "these forms at least establish the groundwork that make such movements possible."⁴ Pratt then categorizes political popular music within Antonio Gramsci's "war of position," which challenges the

¹ Ray Pratt, *Rhythm and Resistance: The Political Uses of American Popular Music*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994, 207.

² Ibid, 209.

³ Marshall, 1997, 164.

⁴ Pratt, 1994, 211.

structure of social power. Pratt claims that these “positional challenges” are “necessary and prior to fundamental shifts in the scope of public programs” in “the supposedly open and democratic systems of Western liberal capitalism.” Pratt concludes that “In this sense music may function as a material force with significant political potential,” but “What people will make of that potential remains an open question.” Bono has pushed the boundaries of which Pratt speaks and has rewritten the rules of celebrity political activism.

Pratt discusses the potential actual impacts of political popular music and cites R. Serge Denisoff’s eight political functions of music:

- *Solicit or arouse support for a movement*
- *Reinforce the value structure of individuals*
- *Create cohesion, solidarity and morale*
- *Recruit individuals into a specific movement*
- *Evoke solutions to a social problem via action*
- *Describe a social problem in emotional terms*
- *Divide supporters from the world around them*
- *Counteract despair in social reformers, when hoped for change does not materialize*

U2’s music has touched all of these functions at different points in their career, yet at some point Bono realized these methods alone would not create significant and lasting social and institutional change, a finding echoed by Pratt. In the late 1990s Bono’s strategy radically changed as he used his celebrity to become a campaigner-activist, strolling the halls of

power instead of as he notes, “throwing rocks at the obvious symbols of power.”⁵ Pratt provides an example of a recent popular music innovation with political limitations – the activist mega-concerts that proliferated in the 1980s, which includes the 1985 *Live Aid* concert for Africa in which U2 was instrumental.⁶ Pratt notes that the money these mega-concerts provided “[were] only small portions of the vast sums needed to make a transforming impact on any of the problems addressed.” Pratt admitted their “main positive effects have been to raise public consciousness...” Bono knew that to truly transform Africa he had to move beyond merely raising public consciousness.

Bono’s Early Political Ventures – Contraception, Sexism and the Taoiseach

1978 marked U2’s first adventure in activism when they played a show “in a Dublin carpark” to protest Ireland’s anti-contraception laws.⁷ Having perhaps enjoyed the taste of rebellion, U2 quickly played another Dublin protest gig with an anti-sexism agenda.⁸ There were early indications of Bono’s charismatic appeal as Jackson notes that he was a “natural magnet” for journalists and “always loquacious,” never limiting his discussions to musical topics.⁹ A 1980 interview offered a portent of his future activism when he blasted governments for their “hypocrisy” in “promoting a healthy lifestyle...while at the same time making a mint from alcohol and tax revenue.”¹⁰

⁵ Bono quoted in Michka Assayas, *Bono in Conversation with Michka Assayas*. New York: Riverhead Books, 2005, 95.

⁶ Pratt, 1994, 212.

⁷ Mick Wall, *Bono: In the Name of Love*. New York: Thunder’s Mouth Press, 2005, 234.

⁸ Laura Jackson, *Bono: His Life, Music, and Passions*. New York: Citadel Press, 2001, 18.

⁹ *Ibid*, 29

¹⁰ Bono quoted in Jackson, 2001, 29.

A chance 1982 Heathrow airport meeting brought Bono face-to-face with the leader of Ireland's Fine Gael party, Garret Fitzgerald, who was running for re-election as Taoiseach (the Irish-Gaelic term for Prime Minister). Jackson notes that "Bono had promptly buttonholed the senior Irish Politician and held him in close conversation about Ireland's various problems... a conversation that carried on throughout the entire flight to Dublin."¹¹ Bono later confessed that his approach towards the politician was "very arrogant."¹² Using the nonpartisan strategy that would define his African campaign twenty years later, Bono quickly distanced himself from party politics noting that he liked "Fitzgerald as a person, not a politician" and claimed "his party is just as bad as the others."¹³ Fitzgerald found Bono "interesting... with a good mind, a serious person who is interested in politics and all kinds of issues," which also provided a small glimpse of Bono's academic interest in the issues.¹⁴

Bono subsequently invited Fitzgerald to the U2 recording studio, an invitation which happened to be on the last day of the campaign. Fitzgerald accepted, and the resulting visit was "the main campaign story of the day, and featured heavily in the Irish press."¹⁵ The next week Fitzgerald was re-elected, and the Fine Gael party scored "their best vote ever." Denselow concludes that the visit was not the deciding factor in the campaign, but lent heavily to the progressive image Fitzgerald was trying to project.¹⁶ Fitzgerald remembers,

¹¹ Jackson, 2001, 42.

¹² Bono quoted in Robin Denselow *When the Music's Over: The Story of Political Pop*. London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1989, 168.

¹³ *Ibid*, 168.

¹⁴ Jackson, 2001, 42.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 168.

¹⁶ Denselow, 1989, 168.

“Bono spoke favorably about my party during the election and that was politically helpful.”¹⁷

The re-elected Taoiseach sought to continue his newfound political relationship with the budding rock star and invited Bono to sit on a government panel formed to examine youth problems and unemployment. Bono accepted the invitation, which required some introspection regarding his own political role:¹⁸

I was faced with a question that I hadn't got a real answer to. If a performer is singing about someone not feeding their bellies, when his is full, what is his duty? Is his music just a soundtrack to change, or does he himself change? Does he involve himself in the process of change?

This episode exposes a seemingly pivotal point in Bono's political involvement. Would the young artist engage in the political process, or just simply sing “the soundtrack of change?” Bono accepted the role on the committee, but was quickly frustrated. Jackson explains that Bono wanted to take a hands-on approach and work directly with the community to investigate their problems, an idea which met “concerted resistance from the rest of the committee.”¹⁹ This resistance along with Bono's frustration with the “committee speak” employed by the bureaucrats led him to resign.²⁰ It is noteworthy that after this initial bureaucratic stumble, Bono would not return to institutional politics (through his lobbying efforts for the transnational nongovernmental organization *Jubilee 2000*) until the late

¹⁷ Garret Fitzgerald quoted in Jackson, 2001, 42

¹⁸ Bono quoted in Denselow, 1989, 169.

¹⁹ Jackson, 2001, 43.

²⁰ Ibid, 169.

1990s. One might speculate that this early negative bureaucratic experience kept him away so long.

Irish Politics and The Troubles

After the Fitzgerald episode, it seemed inevitable that Bono and U2 would involve themselves with the volatile Northern Ireland situation – although both sides of the conflict were probably shocked at the young group’s decided stance. 1983 was a watershed year for the burgeoning activists and U2’s music began to reflect their socially conscious mood. Their third record *War* included the controversial track *Sunday Bloody Sunday*, an oft misunderstood song that immediately enmeshed them within the Irish political debate. *Sunday Bloody Sunday*’s title references two particularly gruesome events in Irish political history, the first being 1920’s *Bloody Sunday* in Dublin’s Croke Park where the British Black and Tans massacred 13 Irish innocents in retaliation for a Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) action that had left 14 British officers dead earlier that day.²¹ More than fifty years later on another *Bloody Sunday*, 13 more innocent civilians were killed by the British Army’s Parachute Regiment during a 1972 riot.²² Given the Republican sentiment that surrounds these events, it is understandable how the Irish public could misunderstand *Sunday Bloody Sunday*’s intended message.

²¹ Eamon Dunphy, *Unforgettable Fire: Past, Present, and the Future –The Definitive Biography of U2*. New York: Warner Books, Inc., 1987, 205.

²² Jackson, 2001, 44.

Bono hurriedly tried to explain the song's intended meaning before it was hijacked by rebel sympathizers. He called U2's new record *War* "the first apolitical political record" and described *Sunday Bloody Sunday* as a song about

"...the idea of aggressive pacifism and the principles of surrender... the situation [in Ireland] is stuck because people on both sides believe they are right and are sticking to their principles. Real love means backing off your own opinions, just for the sake of the movement... people have got to learn to step down, to surrender. I wanted to write something that wasn't a rebel song, but which said, we're sick of it".²³

In another interview Bono noted that

"*Sunday Bloody Sunday* is a day that no Irishman can forget, but should forget, which is what we are saying – 'How long must we sing this song?' When I introduce it I say, 'This isn't a rebel song'. The name comes up all the time and we're saying 'How long must we have songs called *Sunday Bloody Sunday*?'"²⁴

To emphasize its pacific theme, Bono would enwrap himself in a white flag onstage during U2's performance of the song.²⁵ The pacific ideas that peppered U2's newest music were of direct import from America. Bono frequently references the civil rights movement and Martin Luther King's nonviolence strategy when discussing the ideology behind *Sunday Bloody Sunday*.²⁶ This newfound reverence for Dr. King and his strategy of nonviolence would emanate profusely from U2's future records.²⁷

²³ Ibid, 169-170.

²⁴ Interview with Liam Mackey in *Hot Press* as taken from Dunphy, 1987, 207.

²⁵ Jackson, 2001, 48.

²⁶ In an interview with Michka Assasyas Bono explained the meaning of 'Sunday Bloody Sunday': "We became students of nonviolence, of Martin Luther King's thinking. Then we wrote 'Sunday Bloody Sunday' as a way of refuting the armed struggle. The irony was that a lot of people thought 'Sunday Bloody Sunday' was

When the political arm of the Irish Republican Army, Sinn Fein, learned the true meaning of *Sunday Bloody Sunday*, their leader Gerry Adams removed the U2 poster in their Dublin office. Adams also called Bono a “little shit” during an interview. Bono explained diplomatically: “It’s not helpful when the leader of an armed struggle who has support in every working class neighborhood, and a lot of maniacs, calls you a ‘little shit.’”²⁸ Bono recalls other incidents in which the *Sunday Bloody Sunday* controversy entangled U2 with IRA supporters, including one kidnapping threat which the “head of the Special Branch was taking very seriously,” and another episode in which U2’s “car was surrounded by a bunch of Provo supporters” who threatened violence.²⁹ U2 and Bono were now more controversial than ever, and Bono wasn’t even sitting on a governmental committee.

In 1984 U2 released their fourth full length record, *the Unforgettable Fire*, whose title mirrored that of a Chicago Peace Museum art exhibit that was created by survivors of the World War II nuclear attacks at Hiroshima and Nagasaki.³⁰ During the record’s supporting tour, U2 displayed the *Unforgettable Fire* art exhibit and another dedicated to the life of Dr. Martin Luther King at their various concert venues. U2’s latest record also contained two tributes to Dr. Martin Luther King, *Pride (In the name of love)* and *MLK*. It

a call to arms, a rebel song for a united Ireland. It was about unity, but not in the geographical sense.” In Assayas, 2005, 170.

²⁷ Bono discussed Martin Luther King’s inspiration in a discussion with Bill Flanagan noting: “I was very inspired by Martin Luther King. He was a character in the middle of a very dangerous situation – civil rights for African Americans in the sixties. It could have gone very wrong... The word *peace* is like bullshit a lot of the time, it’s like flowers-in-the-hair hippie talk, but he held on to a much stronger idea, a much more concrete idea about peace and respect, and he just kept on to it, he just kept pummeling it. The idea was that he’d live for his country but he didn’t want to die for it and he would never kill for it. And he did die for it. It’s a hard thing to hold on to.” In Bill Flanagan, *U2 at the End of the World*. New York: Delacorte Press, 1995, 277.

²⁸ Bono quoted in Assayas, 2005, 172.

²⁹ Ibid, ‘Provo’ is Irish slang for the Provisional Irish Republican Army.

³⁰ Denselow, 1989, 171 and Dunphy, 1987, 235.

was now clear that Bono and U2 were using their music as a means of promoting social awareness.

Live Aid

Bono and U2 knew that they could offer more than just political songs, and yet without actually having to join the governmental process. 1984 marked their first entrée in to the African realm, and perhaps unknowingly, world politics in general. In November Bob Geldof, the lead singer of the Irish band The Boomtown Rats, was “deeply moved” by a BBC special which documented the Ethiopian famine.³¹ He was inspired to produce an “all-star” charity single from which the profits would benefit famine victims. Thus the plan for Band-Aid was hastily created, and within two-weeks Geldof had enticed 36 established musicians including Bono and U2 bassist Adam Clayton to lend their talents. The resulting single, ‘*Do They Know It’s Christmas?*’ sold nearly ten million copies and raised almost £8 million for Ethiopian famine relief.³²

Geldof was discontent with limiting his African relief efforts to the Band Aid single, and he soon began planning the concert extravaganza Live Aid – two simultaneous mega-concerts that were held at both Philadelphia’s JFK stadium and London’s Wembley Stadium on July 13, 1985. The shows were arranged to ensure concertgoers at each venue could watch both cross-Atlantic performances, which were beamed back and forth via satellite. The 20th Century media-spectacle required precise timing – when one performance

³¹ Jackson, 2001, 60.

³² Stan Rijven, “Rock for Ethiopia,” in *World Music, Politics and Social Change*, ed. Simon Frith. New York: Manchester University Press, 1989, 199.

finished, another would begin immediately at the other location. It is interesting to note that Phil Collins was the only musician to perform both Live Aid venues that day, whom with the help of the supersonic Concorde jet made the cross-Atlantic trip in three hours.

Live Aid helped create a friendship/strategic partnership between Bono and Bob Geldof based upon their mutual concern for Africa, which has kept them working together on the issues for more than twenty years, and has helped cement Bono's reputation as a humanitarian. U2 was one of the Live Aid Wembley Stadium headliners, and their resulting performance was arguably the most riveting of the day. During U2's second song, *MLK*, Bono leapt down from the stage – literally reaching out to the crowd – and after running through the Wembley masses, brought an unsuspecting female fan back up on to the elevated stage for a not-so-private dance with the extroverted front man. The seemingly foolish venture swept U2's allotted performance time away, requiring them to axe the last song from their set. The gamble was rewarded as U2's performance is still remembered as one of Live Aid's best, and helped propel the ascending band to a legitimate rock n' roll super group. Wall notes that "many thousands of people... went into record shops over the following days and weeks asking for something by 'the singer that danced with the girl at Live Aid.'"³³

Live Aid was declared a phenomenal success as it was beamed to a worldwide television audience of 1.5 billion in over 150 countries and raised over £60 million for

³³ Wall, 2005, 12.

Africa.³⁴ As Garofalo notes, “not even the producers understood the power of what they were dealing with.”³⁵ Bob Geldof was less impressed when he noted,³⁶

[W]e’ve used the spurious glamour of pop music to draw attention to a situation, and we’ve overloaded the thing with symbolism to make it reach people. But people get bored easily. People may have been profoundly affected by the Live Aid day – some were shattered by it – but that does not translate into a massive change in consciousness.

Geldof’s frustration and discontent pointed to his future African political exploits with Bono.

Something about Live Aid and the Ethiopian plight affected Bono, and within months he took an unpublicized trip to an Ethiopian refugee camp with wife Ali Hewson. The six week trip profoundly influenced Bono and he often refers to the time as a defining experience. Bono explained how upon watching the image of a starving child on television trying to stand up, he wondered how “In a world where there is so much, in a world where there’s plenty, in a world of unimaginable prosperity, a child can die of starvation!”³⁷ Once in Africa Bono realized that “the images weren’t pictures, they were children standing right before me, or at least trying to stand before me.” It was then that Bono decided: “I don’t want to be, I will not be, in a world where that continues to be true.” After the 1985 Ethiopian visit, Bono did not return to the Africa continent for more than a decade, when on

³⁴ Ibid, 126.

³⁵ Reebee, Garofalo, *Rockin’ the Boat: Mass Music and Mass Movements*. Boston: South End Press, 1992, 27.

³⁶ Geldof quoted in Garofalo, 1992, 35.

³⁷ Assayas, 2005, 215.

March 16, 1998 U2 performed in Cape Town, South Africa.³⁸ As Assayas notes, “the truth is, for twelve years, before he received a phone call from someone trying to find a worthy champion for the Jubilee 2000 campaign, Bono had very little to say or do about Africa publicly.”

Live Aid was the beginning of Bono and U2’s increased public affiliation with several political and social causes. Shortly after Bono’s six week excursion to Ethiopia he helped the Artists United Against Apartheid movement for South Africa by contributing to the *Sun City* single – a star-laden effort that promoted South African Apartheid awareness. Bono also lent the song *Silver and Gold* to the coordinating *Sun City* record, a tune which appeared on U2’s 1988 album *Rattle and Hum*. Bono then used the 1988 Grammy Awards to deliver an anti-Apartheid message to the 50 million television viewers, but “pulled back” when “his words received a polite, but distinctly tepid, response...”³⁹

Amnesty International Benefit and Latin America

In August 1985 U2 donated one week of their time to Amnesty International’s twenty-fifth anniversary concerts, which evolved into a mini-tour of sorts called *Conspiracy of Hope*. The originally scheduled one week June 1986 concert had been extended to two and featured a ballooned set that included celebrity musicians Sting, Peter Gabriel, Joan Baez, the Neville Brothers and Jackson Browne. The seven engagements in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Denver, Atlanta, Chicago and New York raised \$4 million for Amnesty

³⁸ Ibid, 258.

³⁹ Jackson, 2001, 94-95.

International while tripling its membership.⁴⁰ Bono's political involvement was beginning to mirror the success of his burgeoning band.

In 1986 Bono also became interested in the Latin American Civil Wars that were occurring in El Salvador and Nicaragua. The liberation theology aspect of this people's movement is what inspired his curiosity. Bono notes, "...I became fascinated with [the Sandinistas] modus operandi, because here was liberation theology in action...I was shocked to see how much the people's religion had inspired their revolt." Bono is still quick to mention his aversion to the violence that accompanied these ideas, and recalled a comment he made to Ernesto Cardenal, then Nicaragua's minister of culture and liberation theology guru: "there's nothing glorious about people losing their lives..."⁴¹ As with Africa, this newfound political interest led Bono and wife Ali to travel, this time to El Salvador with a refugee organization called *Sanctuary*. The Central American experience inspired two songs on U2's 1987 album *The Joshua Tree* including *Mothers of the Disappeared* and *Bullet the Blue Sky*, the former of which spoke about those in South and Central American opposition movements who had "disappeared" while in custody of the "government police" and were presumably murdered.⁴² The latter described "the terror America's presence inflicts on the people of Nicaragua."⁴³

⁴⁰ Dunphy, 1987; 259, 263.

⁴¹ Assayas, 2005, 176.

⁴² Ibid; 187, 277.

⁴³ Murphy, 1987, 278.

U2 vs. Arizona

Bono and U2's loyalty to philosophical mentor Martin Luther King – the subject of no fewer than two U2 songs including *MLK* and *Pride (In the Name of Love)* – was tested on their 1987 North American tour. The tour opener was scheduled in Tempe, Arizona, and unbeknownst to the band they were stepping right into a political quagmire. While reading a local Arizona newspaper, U2's guitarist Dave "the Edge" Evans discovered that the Doobie Brothers had recently cancelled an Arizona concert in protest over Arizona governor Evan Mecham's decision to rescind the Martin Luther King Jr. state holiday. Evans was "shocked" and the rest of the band was "appalled."⁴⁴ U2 felt it was too late to cancel the three scheduled Arizona shows, so they used the concerts to publicize the controversy. U2 immediately released a statement which they also read to their Arizona audiences: "We were outraged when we arrived in Arizona last weekend and discovered the climate created by Governor Meacham's rescission of the holiday honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr." *The New York Times* reported that each sentence Bono read of the statement "was greeted by thunderous cheers and applause."⁴⁵ U2 also contributed an "undisclosed amount to a Meacham recall committee," and called him an "embarrassment to the people of Arizona."⁴⁶ Meacham's press secretary Ron Bellus responded by accusing the band of "meddling in Arizona politics"⁴⁷ and tried to defuse the controversy by labeling it a "legal-technical

⁴⁴ Robert Palmer, "U2 Starts National Tour on a Political Note," *New York Times*, 4 April 1987.

⁴⁵ Ibid

⁴⁶ Robert Hilburn, "U2 Shows Grace Under Pressure at Tour Opener," *Los Angeles Times*, 4 April 1987.

⁴⁷ Ibid

matter.”⁴⁸ It appears that U2’s complaints did not sway the governor, as Arizona’s Martin Luther King Holiday was not implemented until a 1992 statewide ballot initiative passed.⁴⁹

Besides a 1989 German trip to join the Berlin Wall festivities, the late 80s and early 90s were a quiet time for both Bono and U2. This quietude was spurred by U2’s first major brush with negative criticism when their 1988 album *Rattle and Hum* was “savaged by the press” and led to “U2 jokes [circulating]... the music industry.”⁵⁰ The band was reacting to press reports about their “conceited” artistic explanations of *Rattle and Hum*’s roots-inspired content and as a result the band spent the next year “out of the public eye.”⁵¹ In 1991 Bono and U2 started their slow ascent back into the public realm both as musicians and activists. 1991 saw the release of U2’s seventh studio album, *Achtung Baby*, and a return to political activism when U2 “offered to pay a £500 (Irish) fine on behalf of the Irish Family Planning Association (IFPA),” when the association had been found guilty of selling condoms illegally at a Virgin Records store in the centre of Dublin.⁵² U2’s payment provided the IFPA with some “much-needed publicity,” and the band explained its position in a press release: “...we feel the IFPA have much more important things to be doing than turning up in court. Furthermore, the group fully supports the IFPA’s call for condom law in Ireland to be changed.”⁵³

⁴⁸ Bellus Quoted in Palmer, 1987.

⁴⁹ Nicholas O. Alozie, “Political Intolerance Hypotheses and White Opposition to a Martin Luther King Holiday in Arizona,” *Social Science Journal*, 1995, 32(1), 1-15.

⁵⁰ Flanagan 1995, 5.

⁵¹ Ibid, 4-5.

⁵² Jackson, 2001, 111.

⁵³ Press Release quoted in Wall, 2005, 235.

The last two episodes highlight U2 and Bono's growing political sophistication. Whereby thus far most of U2's social and political involvement has involved the use of their music, such as the Arizona incident where they were forced to use the stage as a protest platform, the IFPA incident allowed U2 their first effective political outlet that did not use their music, albeit through a simple financial contribution and a coordinating press release. This simple political act may have set the stage for their boldest political move yet.

Sellafield Greenpeace Incident

1992 was a landmark year politically for Bono and U2 as they pulled off a risky Greenpeace stunt, and made an important political contact in American presidential candidate Bill Clinton. The Greenpeace maneuver developed when reports in Ireland claimed the English government was building a Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant (THORP) at the Sellafield Nuclear Processing Plant, which was located just across the Irish Sea from Ireland in Sellafield, England. The expanded "collection point for deadly waste" would "substantially increase the radioactive pollution of the Irish Sea and the nearby countryside" at what Greenpeace already considered "[one of] the most dangerous plutonium plants in the world," and contributed to a Sellafield leukemia rate "three times the national average."⁵⁴

Initially the English activist group Cumbrians Opposed to a Radioactive Environment (CORE) planned a protest rally on land near the plant, which was owned by parent company British Nuclear Fuels Ltd (BNFL). CORE was also working alongside

⁵⁴ Jackson, 2001, 119 and Flanagan, 1995, 68-69.

Greenpeace, who pitched the idea of a U2 performance at the protest. When U2 officially accepted and were added to the bill, the size of the expected crowd inflated to 20,000. The original agreement had only allowed for a “few hundred people.”⁵⁵ BNFL learned of the new protest plan and panicked – withdrawing the protest permit citing concerns “about public safety and public order, as well as health considerations.”⁵⁶ Greenpeace and CORE responded by taking it to an English High Court in London, which upheld BNFL’s injunction.

Undeterred, the activist network rescheduled the U2 protest performance to a nearby Manchester, England arena and added additional acts Public Enemy, B.A.D. II and Kraftwerk to the set. The bands played to a 10,000 strong sell-out crowd, and onstage Bono taunted the English authorities:

They’ve cancelled a peaceful demonstration on the grounds of public safety! These people are responsible for the death of innocent children, for God’s sake! Public safety doesn’t come anywhere near them! Don’t let them gag you! We only live 130 miles from Sellafield. So do you in Manchester. It’s a lot further to Number Ten Downing Street!

The protest gig was no different than many of Bono and U2’s past political performances, except for what happened next. Immediately after the Manchester concert Bono and U2 boarded a bus that transported them to the Greenpeace ship *Solo*, where they rendezvoused with other activists and were ferried to a strip of beach not owned by BNFL and located

⁵⁵ Jackson, 2001, 120.

⁵⁶ Ibid, 121.

“directly opposite” the Sellafield nuclear plant.⁵⁷ The plan was “hatched” by both U2 and Greenpeace, a sleuth mission that involved boarding dinghies and floating to the beach strip at high tide where the activists then calmly walked on shore and deposited several barrels of radioactive sand from the Irish coast, which was presumably caused by the Sellafield plant. The protesters brought giant posters that read ‘No Freedom of Speech Beyond This Point’ and ‘Warning! Radioactive Facility Sellafield.’⁵⁸ The press was also waiting and ready to take photos of U2 in their full-body anti-radiation suits.

Jackson notes that there was “news coverage of the protest all over the world, thereby scoring a triumph for Greenpeace and causing the nuclear industry some embarrassment.”⁵⁹ Bono noted: “I suppose it’s a token gesture. We’ve given one day in a year. It’s not much. [If it means] that people who were interested in the band then become focused on such important issues then it was worth it.”⁶⁰ The protest maneuver was a first for Bono and U2 and demonstrated another step in their evolution from performing benefit concerts to becoming intimately involved with their issues. The route that led to the Sellafield protest was strategic and did not occur accidentally. As U2’s drummer Larry Mullen Jr. notes:

After we did the Amnesty International tour and Live Aid and a lot of benefit concerts, Bono and I sat down and talked about how we were going to approach the future. We came to the conclusion that maybe the best thing to do was leave Amnesty – continue to support them, obviously, but doing more concerts may be a

⁵⁷ Ibid, 124.

⁵⁸ Ibid, 124.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 125.

⁶⁰ Ibid, 126.

mistake for now – let’s do something for Greenpeace. We’ve donated to them for a long time, we’ve done gigs with them, but we’ve never actually been involved in an action. When this came up it was an opportunity.

U2’s Sellafield stunt may have lathered the nuclear facility in bad publicity, but ultimately it did not stop BNFL from operating the Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant. After the protest, Greenpeace and the Lancashire County Council united and petitioned for a British High Court hearing on THORP, which actually delayed plant operations until 1994 when the High Court eventually ruled in favor of BNFL.⁶¹ THORP was temporarily shut down several times over the following years for safety violations and in August 2003 BNFL announced THORP would close permanently in 2010.⁶² It is difficult to ascertain if the publicity garnered by U2’s involvement with Sellafield gave Greenpeace the exposure to get the High Court hearing. It is known that the Irish government lobbied for “years” against THORP, and the United States via the Clinton Administration “warned the [British] government against approving THORP,” and both of these diplomatic efforts were unsuccessful.⁶³ Considering the British government ignored the Irish and American governmental pleas, it is realistic to conclude that the Brits were not deterred by a rock band either.

⁶¹ *High Court Attempts to Block Thorp Plant Fails*, The Irish Times, 5 March 1994.

⁶² *End of the Road is in Sight for Thorp Plant*, The Irish Times, 26 August 2003.

⁶³ Ibid and Colin Brown, “Peace Campaigners Join Fight Against Nuclear Site,” *The Independent (London)*, 7 February 1994.

Schmoozing with Clinton

Soon after the Sellafield stunt, Bono and U2 were back in the United States for the third leg of their *Zoo TV* tour in support of their *Achtung Baby* album. While appearing on nationally syndicated radio program *Rockline*, “Bill from Little Rock” phoned to speak with U2.⁶⁴ It was August 1992 and the presidential race between Bill Clinton and George Bush was in its final weeks. At first Clinton and Bono traded quips during their ‘Rockline’ conversation, but then Clinton turned serious, and commended U2’s efforts in the ‘Rock the Vote’ campaign – a nonpartisan voting awareness campaign created by a music industry group designed to increase youth involvement in the political process. Bono responded “that it was not his, nor U2’s, intention to try and steer young voters in any specific direction,” but then assured Clinton that he “certainly sounded presidential.”⁶⁵ Bono also “intelligently quizzed Bill Clinton on a range of political issues,” offering a glimpse of Bono’s future interactions with world leaders. Bono was once again nodding to nonpartisanship, a hallmark of the Bono-model.

Two weeks later the rock group and the politician unexpectedly found themselves bunking at the same Chicago Ritz-Carlton Hotel, which resulted in an early morning breakfast rendezvous between the future Rock and Roll Hall of Famers and the future president. The discussion ranged from the general “corruption of the system” to U.S. visa policy for the Irish, and ended with Clinton extending an invitation for U2 to play at the

⁶⁴ Flanagan, 1995, 95.

⁶⁵ Jackson, 2001, 129.

presidential inauguration.⁶⁶ Clinton's rival George Bush used the U2 meeting as a political dagger to chide Clinton's foreign policy inexperience, claiming "he was in Hollywood seeking foreign policy advice from the rock group [sic] U2".⁶⁷ Bush further noted (emphasis added to illustrate Bush's pun):

I have nothing against U2. You may not know this, but they try to call me every night during the concert! But the next time we face a foreign policy crisis, I will work with John Major and Boris Yeltsin, and Bill Clinton can consult with Boy George! ...if Clinton is elected *you, too*, will have higher inflation, *you, too*, will have higher taxes. *You, too! You, too!*⁶⁸

Bono was confused about Bush's apparent misunderstanding over the personal identity of the U2 front man. Boy George, Bono was not, but Bush's comment may have been cynical payback for Bono's harassing phone calls during U2 concerts. Bono had repeatedly phoned the White House from stage during U2's *Zoo TV* tour, but operators would not connect him with the president. Bono also called German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and the Pope from stage while in their respective countries.⁶⁹ Nevertheless, the Bono/George Bush verbal feud is stunningly ironic considering one decade later George Bush's son George W. Bush would directly consult with Bono on African foreign policy issues as president of the United States, the result of a persistent lobbying effort by Bono and his think tank/lobbying firm DATA.

Bill Clinton was elected in November 1992 and promptly invited Bono and U2 to the January 1993 inauguration. U2 didn't "feel comfortable" accepting a band invitation to the

⁶⁶ Flanagan, 1995, 98-99.

⁶⁷ George Bush quoted in Flanagan, 1995, 99.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Flanagan, 1995, 267, 279.

gala, so only drummer Larry Mullen Jr. and bassist Adam Clayton attended, while Bono watched it all on TV. Bono was hoping to hear excerpts from a letter he had sent Clinton urging the newly elected president to make a “speech of expiation.”⁷⁰ Clinton aides had mentioned that the president “had loved the letter and might want to quote from it,” but in the end Bono’s words weren’t used.⁷¹

At the inauguration Bill Clinton met Ireland’s Prime Minister Albert Reynolds, and confided that U2 “played a big part in getting [me] elected,” a comment which later “startled” Bono.⁷² U2 had not been this close to a politician since the Garret Fitzgerald episode in Ireland more than a decade earlier. U2 was once again being hailed as instrumental in a political election, and this time it wasn’t even in their country. Drummer Larry Mullen Jr. discussed his “ambiguous feelings” about U2’s pro-Clinton stance and constant mockery of incumbent George Bush:⁷³

I wasn’t sure if it [the election] was something we should be involved with. There were differing opinions in the band about being involved at all, about using George Bush. I was a little concerned about that. I’m naturally cautious. I’m still unsure whether it was the right thing to do. I enjoyed the ride - it was very interesting to see it from a different perspective. Meeting Bill Clinton was good. He came across like he still comes across. He seems to be an all right guy. But I’m not living in America. I don’t have to live under his administration’s policies. That’s why I was worried about it. We don’t live here. Are we endorsing him? What exactly are we doing?

⁷⁰ Presumably for the sins of America’s past social injustices.

⁷¹ Flanagan, 1995, 166.

⁷² Ibid, 172-3.

⁷³ Ibid, 167.

And the truth is – it was an ambiguous gesture. We weren't officially endorsing him and yet on the other hand we were saying, 'yeah, he's all right.'

These ambiguous feelings may help explain why in the coming years Bono would become more politically involved on an *individual* level, predominantly using his own celebrity status instead of that of his band.

1992 also provided Bono with possibly the most important contact for his future politicking when he met JFK's sister Eunice Shriver Kennedy in March. Bono's "brain [was] blown" by the meeting with whom he calls "the most extraordinary woman in the world."⁷⁴ During Bono's involvement in the Jubilee 2000 Campaign he decided that he would have to go straight to the "decision-makers" or "at the very least the people who knew the decision makers." This led to Bono to call Kennedy – "the best phone call [he] ever made." Kennedy promptly connected him with her son Bobby Shriver, a record producer and an "ally" of fellow U2 music industry friends Jimmy Iovine and Ted Fields. Shriver also happened to be a noted "Democratic power broker" and brother-in-law of celebrity-cum-California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.⁷⁵

Satellite Sarajevo

May 1993 marked the beginning of the second European leg of U2's *Zoo TV* tour, newly renamed *Zooropa* to reflect the title of their latest album, which they had managed to record "between tour legs."⁷⁶ U2 had also started funding Bosnian relief efforts in the war-

⁷⁴ Flanagan, 1995, 64 and Assayas, 2005, 89.

⁷⁵ Flanagan, 1995, 64 and Assayas, 2005, 89.

⁷⁶ Jackson, 2001, 136 and Wall, 2005, 187.

torn former Yugoslavian state for humanitarian reasons and to bring publicity to the situation.⁷⁷ A year earlier the Sarajevo-focused Bosnian-Serb War had exploded and in May 1993 Europe “rejected U.S. efforts” to intervene with NATO. This exasperated the already desperate conflict, which was characterized by daily fighting and atrocities on all sides.⁷⁸ In July U2 received a fax from a Bosnian television station, Radio Televizija Bosne I Hercegovina, which requested an interview with the band while they would be performing in Verona, Italy. Due to Serbian travel restrictions placed upon the Bosnians, their “foreign associate Bill Carter” would be sent.⁷⁹ Carter was an aspiring American film-maker who landed in Sarajevo when he volunteered for a relief mission and decided to stay and film a documentary about the war.

The Verona interview with Carter went as planned and ended with an invitation for Bono to visit Sarajevo. Bono replied: “I think I would... I’d love to go there.”⁸⁰ Initially Bono convinced the entire band to make the Sarajevo trip and play a show in the bunker where Bill Carter and his Bosnian friends hid and cranked up the rock n’ roll to cover the sound of the daily shellings. Bono explained his rationale: “Even if all we get is some extra attention for Bosnia on MTV, that’s something.”⁸¹ The Sarajevo concert created a debate within U2 management regarding the wisdom of Bono’s latest idea. U2 manager Paul McGuinness thought the idea was “foolhardy and vain.” He explained that U2 had previously decided that “the duty of the artist is to illustrate contradictions and to point a finger at

⁷⁷ Taken from conversation with U2 bassist Adam Clayton in Flanagan, 1995, 201.

⁷⁸ Flanagan, 1995, 285.

⁷⁹ Flanagan, 1995, 277.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 278.

⁸¹ Ibid, 287.

things that are wrong and terrible without the responsibility of having to resolve them.” He further noted: “U2’s effort to discuss any humanitarian issue have sometimes been accompanied by a false instinct that U2 is also obliged to resolve that issue. Going to Sarajevo seems to me to fall into that category. I think it would endanger the people we go with, endanger the tour, and endanger the band. I think it’s grandstanding.”⁸² McGuinness’ idea about the “duty of the artist” is clearly different from Bono’s current view in his position as an African activist.

Regardless of McGuinness’ feelings, Bono was still resolute about Sarajevo until he received a fax from Bill Carter requesting otherwise. It seems that Carter shared some of McGuinness’ concerns, noting that U2 would not only endanger their own lives, but the lives of the people of Sarajevo, considering they would have to publicly congregate at the U2 show. Carter instead requested that U2 link with Sarajevo via satellite hookup each night on the *Zoo TV* tour to show the rock n’ roll audience “the insanity, the surrealness, the survival” which was occurring in Bosnia. Carter’s fax went on: “The audience if anything would realize, *Jesus, lucky I’m here enjoying this concert and not in Sarajevo*. Maybe they will think about not letting it happen in their country, their city, their house...”⁸³

U2 agreed to air the Bosnian satellite feeds, the first of which was set for a July 17 show in Bologna, Italy. U2’s management company Principle helped Bill Carter pay off the European Broadcast Union (EBU) for the use of their satellite feeds, a deal in which Principle made payments to the “satellite pool” covering the war. In order for Carter to

⁸² McGuinness in a conversation with Bill Flanagan in Flanagan, 1995, 294.

⁸³ Flanagan, 1995, 300.

connect the feeds to each performance, he and two Bosnian friends would sneak through the dangerous Sarajevo night to the relative safety of the EBU, a journey which required passing through an area dubbed “Sniper’s Alley.” Once there, Carter and company had to operate under the cover of darkness as any lighting would attract bombings.⁸⁴ Carter made this arduous journey over ten times throughout the next month, broadcasting nightly to unsuspecting European audiences.

The satellite broadcasts were different each night, but always featured Carter communicating the desperation of the Bosnian situation. Carter brought Sarajevo citizens from all sides of the conflict who told of the “organized rape and systematic torture” that was occurring.⁸⁵ The live confessions were difficult and uncomfortable for both U2 and their audience. As one British press review reported, “the sudden switch from deafening rock to beleaguered Bosnians is genuinely shocking.”⁸⁶ Bono confided that the broadcasts were “the most excruciating thing U2 has ever been through.”⁸⁷

U2 ended the Sarajevo broadcasts in August 1993 partially because “by coincidence or indirect effect, Sarajevo [had] gone from being virtually unmentioned in the press three weeks earlier to dominating the front pages of the British papers every day.”⁸⁸ The increased British press did not correlate with the U2 broadcasts though. A LexisNexis news search of the terms “*Bosnia and Sarajevo and War*” in the year 1993 within four leading British newspapers (*The Financial Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Independent* and *The Times*) returned

⁸⁴ Ibid, 302-304.

⁸⁵ Jackson, 2001, 139.

⁸⁶ Ben Thompson, “The Medium and the Message,” *The Independent (London)*, 15 August 2003.

⁸⁷ Bono to Bill Flanagan in Flanagan, 1995, 307.

⁸⁸ Flanagan, 1995, 307.

657 articles, 271 or 41% of which were published before U2's first Sarajevo satellite connection with Bill Carter on July 17, 1993.⁸⁹ This would support Jackson's contention that when U2 started the Sarajevo broadcasts, "the conflict... was already being extensively covered in the nation's television and radio news."⁹⁰ But there is no doubt that U2 helped expose the desperation of the Bosnian situation to its fans and perhaps indirectly to the British public.

Bono eventually went to Sarajevo in December 1995 when the Bosnian conflict was ending. He went as a "guest of the Bosnian government," arriving with his wife Ali on a United Nations aid flight. Bono held a press conference upon arrival, which "[provoked] a stampede" of various media outlets. Accompanied by Bosnian Foreign Minister Mohammed Sacirbey, Bono "expressed his respect and admiration for the enduring courage of Sarajevo's people."⁹¹ U2 eventually performed in the war-torn Bosnian capital in September 1997 at the Kosovo Olympic Stadium, and was greeted by another politician, Bosnia and Herzegovina president Alija Izetbegovic. U2 posters that advertised the gig were hung over "weathered pictures" of indicted war criminal and former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic. U2 donated the proceeds from the Sarajevo concert to a local hospital rebuilding program.⁹²

U2 also used the 1993 *Zooropa* leg of the *Zoo TV tour* to surprise the world. Bono placed a phone call to author in-hiding Salman Rushdie at a London Wembley Stadium

⁸⁹ LexisNexis™ is a leading academic research and information provider.

⁹⁰ Jackson, 2001, 139.

⁹¹ Ibid, 151.

⁹² Ibid, 162-3.

concert, who after writing the controversial 1987 novel *The Satanic Verses* had a fatwa, or Islamic death sentence, placed on him by the Ayatollah Khomeini.⁹³ Salman answered Bono's call, and then shocked the audience when he walked out and appeared onstage with U2 – his first public appearance since the fatwa was proclaimed five years earlier. Several Muslim countries were upset by U2's affiliation with the author, and several Islamic radio stations cancelled a planned broadcast of an upcoming U2 Dublin concert.⁹⁴ The episode also unleashed a tirade of bad press for the band, which accused U2 of exploiting the author's situation. Rushdie countered noting that:

...in a way [I was] exploiting their global audience, to get people to pay attention to another kind of important message... We live in an age when people want to reinvent a whole bunch of demarcation lines and say 'If you're a rock band don't step across the line into news coverage.' I haven't responded to a rock group as strongly as this for a very long time, because I think people have been so cautious. And here's a rock group taking a fantastic risk of itself. I like it when people go over the edge and invite you to go with them. In this case, people have.

Irish Politics Revisited

In 1994 Bono returned to addressing Irish politics through song when he collaborated with fellow Irish musician Christy Moore on the "Irish Anthem" *North and South of the River*, which "[expressed] regret for the past and hope for a reconciliation."⁹⁵ Four years later in 1998 Bono and U2 would find themselves in the middle of the Belfast

⁹³ Flanagan, 1995, 308.

⁹⁴ Ibid, 327.

⁹⁵ Jackson, 2001, 146.

Agreement (also known as the Good Friday Agreement), a “historic political agreement” that was “intended to unite the differing political opinions” in Ireland and usher in an era of “lasting peace” by creating a “power-sharing executive” of “unionists and nationalists.”⁹⁶ The agreement would only be ratified if the Irish public voted ‘yes’ in a joint referendum on ballots in both Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic.

Jackson notes that in the weeks before the vote opinion polls showed that public support for the peace deal “might be faltering.”⁹⁷ Looking for ways to garner “yes” votes, campaign worker Tim Attwood of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) proposed the idea of organizing a “free concert for peace.” Attwood was aware of the “long standing friendship” between SDLP leader John Hume and U2 leader Bono, and used the Hume connection to request a last minute performance from the band. U2 did not hesitate to accept despite the short notice, and the concert was hurriedly scheduled for the next day, May 19, at Belfast’s Waterfront Hall. U2 were still very cognizant of their past reputation as a protest or benefit gig band, and had been careful not to excessively lend their influence to extraneous issues, but the Irish peace concert was an exception and an obvious cause for the Irish band to promote. Guitarist Dave “the Edge” Evans mentioned his concern with the danger of U2 “being overwhelmingly associated with benefit gigs, to the detriment of the

⁹⁶ Ibid, 173.

⁹⁷ 2003, 174; This claim can be debated as an *Irish Times/Market Research Bureau of Ireland (MRBI)* poll published one week before the vote on May 15, 1998, shows 72% of the Irish Republic planned to vote ‘Yes’ for the Belfast Agreement, while the number of ‘No’ voters had dropped to 5%, which was down from 20% four weeks earlier. The number of undecided voters was 23%. The poll did reveal that only 55% of potential voters, a 2% decrease from four weeks previous, believe ‘the agreement offers a strong chance of lasting peace’. Taken from Geraldine Kennedy, “Accord Support Growing but Optimism Slips - Large Majority in Republic to Vote Yes but Electorate Less Hopeful of Peace,” *The Irish Times*, 15 May 1998, 6.

career as a rock band,” and not wanting U2 “to be viewed as the ‘Batman and Robin’ of the rock scene.”⁹⁸

As expected, the Irish peace concert brought a “flood of media interest in the event.” Seeking to capitalize on the newfound publicity, campaigners requested Irish political rivals who represented both sides of the conflict – John Hume and Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) leader David Trimble – make a joint appearance at the gig. A press conference was held before the concert that included Bono, the Edge, rock band Ash’s lead singer Tim Wheeler (the Northern Ireland band also played the concert, a symbolic gesture that featured two united bands from each side of the border), and politicians John Hume and David Trimble. Bono pled with voters, urging them to vote ‘Yes’ in the referendum. The rival politicians also appeared onstage during the concert with U2, and Bono lifted “David Trimble’s left arm and John Hume’s right arm in a salute.”⁹⁹ The pair then shook hands, which led to a standing ovation from the crowd. Both politicians gave brief speeches, with David Trimble pleading for an “optimistic and forward-looking” people; and John Hume asking the crowd to vote for their “children, grandchildren and future generations.”¹⁰⁰

The referendum was held Friday, May 22, 1998 and the Belfast Agreement received a landslide ‘yes’ vote of 94% in the Irish Republic and 71% in Northern Ireland. The referendum did not end the peace process however, as Jackson notes: “three years later the relevant parties were still trying to make it work. But the Peace gig came to be seen as one

⁹⁸ Jackson, 2001, 159.

⁹⁹ Jackson, 2001, 176.

¹⁰⁰ Hume and Trimble quoted in Suzanne Breen, “Bono's Unusual Support Act -Unlikely Rockers Shake on it at 'Good but Weird' Belfast Billovation,” *The Irish Times*, 20 May 1998, 1.

of the critical moves made in the closing stages of electioneering, and U2 had been proud to play a small, but vital, part in the process.”¹⁰¹ Bono himself remembers:¹⁰²

...I [had] the greatest honor of my life in Ireland when U2 played in support of the Good Friday Peace Agreement in the Waterfront Hall in Belfast in 1998. We got John Hume and David Trimble, the two opposing leaders in the conflict, to shake hands onstage in front of U2 and Ash audiences. People tell me that rock concert and that staged photograph pushed the people into ratifying the peace agreement. I'd like to think that's true.

Garret Fitzgerald, former Irish Taoiseach and Bono buddy remembers:¹⁰³

When Bono brought out John Hume and David Trimble together it was very striking. That was a very dramatic moment. But Bono has that strong commitment to issues in Northern Ireland and to other issues more globally. And he has used his considerable influence, derived from his popularity, very constructively.

Fitzgerald notes several issues that have become part of the Bono-model, namely a sustained commitment from Bono on humanitarian and political issues, which was initially afforded through his celebrity or as Fitzgerald notes, his “popularity,” and has given him the platform from which to exercise his “considerable influence.”

As previously mentioned, 1998 also marked Bono's first return to Africa since his 1985 Ethiopian visit. The occasion was a March 16 U2 concert in Cape Town, South Africa at the Green Point Stadium during the *Pop Mart* tour. While in Africa, Bono met with anti-

¹⁰¹ Jackson, 2001, 176.

¹⁰² Bono in interview with Michka Assayas; Assayas, 2005, 172-3.

¹⁰³ Fitzgerald in interview with Laura Jackson; Jackson, 2001, 176.

Apartheid activist and Noble Peace Prize winner Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who was then the Chairman of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee in South Africa. The Committee allowed people “on the grounds of not being prosecuted” to admit to their crimes under Apartheid, “...whatever crimes were committed.” Bono explained that “Archbishop Tutu felt the country needed to come clean if it was going to go forward, that it needed to repent, and maybe prosecution is not as important as that,”¹⁰⁴ and further discussed the philosophy behind the Committee noting that “sometimes truth is more important than justice.” Archbishop Tutu remembers the meeting with U2 and confesses that “one has to be very, very impressed with their social consciousness. They were strongly aware of the anti-apartheid struggles, which they supported and this is something that thrilled us.”¹⁰⁵ Bono’s African return was a harbinger of the near future, when in 1999 through the Jubilee 2000 campaign he began devoting an increased amount of his energies to Africa’s political and social ills.

This section has sought to illustrate that Bono, both individually and through his rock band U2, has been actively engaged in various political and social causes throughout the first years of his celebrity career. Even early in his career, Bono had eclipsed most other celebrity political efforts, but had not yet fully developed the Bono-model. In addition, an evolution in his activist approach occurred, whereby in the earlier years of U2, Bono and the band would seemingly lend their platform to any worthy cause. As U2’s popularity grew, it became obvious that a more selective approach would be necessary when supporting various

¹⁰⁴ Bono in interview with Michka Assayas; Assayas, 2005, 271-2.

¹⁰⁵ Archbishop Desmond Tutu in interview with Laura Jackson; Jackson, 2001, 171.

causes. The band realized in the 80s that benefit concerts were not always the best strategy to address issues, which led to their publicity stunt with Greenpeace. These efforts have created a humanitarian reputation for Bono that also legitimized his ability as a political celebrity, and which brought the Jubilee 2000 campaign to his doorstep. In addition, Bono and U2 have always been careful to support nonpartisanship by avoiding outright endorsements of particular political parties and politicians, although this has not stopped politicians from seeking them. It is also clear through Bono's associations with politicians such as Garret Fitzgerald and Bill Clinton that he possesses an affinity with them, which probably results from his charisma. Finally, by reflecting on the events that have been discussed in this section, one can almost feel the world getting smaller through headways in technology and communication as evidenced by the first mega-concert Live Aid, the Berlin Wall falling, and through U2's satellite feeds of the Bosnian war. As will be seen, these technological advancements are some of the same factors that have advanced the transnational civil society sector, which has been an essential component of Bono's recent African efforts.

CHAPTER 3

ARRIVAL

“What is going on in Africa defies all concepts that we hold to be true: our concept of neighbor, our concept of civilization, our concept of equality, of love...”

- Bono in Interview with Michka Assayas (2005, 189)

“A prominent head of state said to me if we really believed these people in the developing world were equal, there is no way we would allow 3,000 Africans, mostly children, to die everyday from mosquito bites while we have the medicines and technologies that could save their lives. It’s as absurd as separate drinking fountains for blacks in the 1950s. It’s racism disguised by distance. Our audience agrees with us, and history will, too.”

- Bono in Interview with Jann Wenner of Rolling Stone, ‘The Rolling Stone Interview’ (2005, 62)

This section will analyze Bono’s political involvement as an activist for the African continent from the late 1990s through 2005. The primary purpose of this section is to exhibit Bono’s success as an activist through his political achievements. These achievements are typified by measurable political achievements such as policy change and political commitments, but also include Bono’s role in the abstract political formulation of agenda-setting, whereby he has helped place the issues both in the public consciousness and on to the political agenda. It will become clear that Bono has indeed surpassed previous celebrity political efforts. This section also attempts to exhibit the eventual arrival of the complete Bono-model, and explores its characteristics as embodied through the last steps in Bono’s activist evolution. The first step of this evolution was presented in section one. This section

examines the next steps of the evolution, which has included an intense political lobbying campaign followed by the eventual formation of a policy think tank and lobbying firm, and lastly featured the founding of a grassroots political organization that is affiliated with a transnational anti-poverty coalition. These methods contrast with his earlier approaches whereby protest-oriented songs, benefit concerts, public pronouncements and minor political involvement, not actual political lobbying, were used as political ammunition.¹

The story of Bono's ascent from socially conscious rock star to international political lobbyist is a fascinating tale interweaving politicians, businessmen, academics and clergy at the highest levels of power in the world. Bono has consistently befriended these power brokers with his charisma, but more importantly, has impressed them with his knowledge of the issues. Bono has also been extremely adept at coalition building, which has been vital to his political success. This is characterized by a deliberate strategy of nonpartisanship that includes conservative groups, Evangelical Christians and Republican politicians – groups with whom a left-leaning rock star normally doesn't associate. It will be seen that these groups have been deliberately targeted and drawn in to a vast transnational alliance of anti-poverty advocates during an era which has seen the relative political power of transnational civil society increase. This relative increase in political power has been the structural force that has enabled the Bono-model.

¹ R. Serge Denisoff notes in *Sing a Song of Social Significance*, Bowling Green: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1983, viii, that "Protest songs basically stress the lyric or intellectual aspect of song by attempting to convince the listener that something is wrong and need of alteration." Denisoff also includes a brief discussion of (1983, 19) a noted early passage surrounding the power of music in Plato's *First Republic* that calls for musical censorship in the name of the Republic: "any musical innovation is full of danger to the whole state and ought to be prohibited." Denisoff explains that this fear of music "was echoed" throughout history by no less than noble lords, clerics, politicians, priests, ministers and English monarchs.

Jubilee 2000

In 1996 two International Financial Institutions (IFIs), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank, enacted the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative.² The HIPC initiative intended to address the excessive external debt that was incurred by dozens of lower and middle income, or poor, countries throughout the 1970s and 1980s when the IMF, the World Bank, and numerous private creditors loaned them billions of dollars. As much as 60 percent of this debt is now legally considered “odious” or “unjust.”³ These loans included political payoffs to corrupt dictators during the Cold War era to keep them “aligned with the West,” and were usually void of any accountability measures.⁴ Former World Bank Chief Economist and Senior Vice-President Joseph E. Stiglitz discussed the unjust nature of this debt noting that “The issue of the moral responsibility of the creditors was particularly apparent in the case of cold war loans.” Stiglitz cites the case of Congo’s “notorious ruler” Mobutu, who was lent monies by the IMF and the World Bank which the corrupt dictator subsequently stole. The incompetence of the IFI’s lending policies did not end there. Some of the loans were tagged for IFI development projects that were “poorly designed,” or simply failed.⁵ Sometimes IFI institutions stipulated loan contingencies in the form of social spending cutbacks, which when enacted caused political instability. In several instances loans were used to purchase

² Jeffrey Sachs. *The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time*. New York: The Penguin Press, 2005, 34.

³ Nancy Birdsall and John Williamson, *Delivering On Debt Relief: From IMF Gold to a New Aid Architecture*. Washington D.C.: Center for Global Development and the Institute for International Economics, 2002, 58.

⁴ Joseph E. Stiglitz, *Globalization and Its Discontents*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2003, 244.

⁵ C. Collins, Z. Gariyo and T. Burdon, *Jubilee 2000: Citizen Action Across the North-South Divide* Chap. in *Global Citizen Action*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001, 136-7.

military equipment that perpetuated ethnic conflicts, which killed innocents and disrupted economies.⁶ Many times drought would ruin export commodities, or increasing energy costs would decimate IFI project profits, both of which rendered countries unable to repay. All of these situations resulted in what has been called the “debt crisis.”⁷

The debt crisis was realized by the IFIs as early as 1982 when Mexico threatened to default on its international debt – an issue that was first viewed by Western governments as a threat to the stability of the entire international financial system, without regard to its impact within Mexico itself. It was soon realized by many in the international NGO community that loan repayment was unrealistic, as many countries were barely covering interest payments. This created a situation in which several nations currently spend more on loan repayment each year than on basic services for their citizens such as education and health care. Sachs admonished the rich countries noting the debt issue “should have been resolved years ago,” and claims that “rich countries should have given the poorest countries grants rather than loans, so that the poor countries would have never been indebted in the first place.”⁸ Hardt and Negri see this debt system as a modern form of slavery calling it “a legal mechanism of enslavement...” noting it is “applied not merely to the individual indentured worker or even to a specific racial group or indigenous population (where the assumption of a civilizing mission is the basis of debt) but rather to entire nations.”⁹ The

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid, Elizabeth A. Donnelly, “Proclaiming Jubilee: The Debt and Structural Adjustment Network,” in *Restructuring World Politics: Transnational Social Movements, Networks, and Norms*, ed. Sanjeev Khagram, Kathryn Sikkink, and James V. Riker. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002, 158.

⁸ Sachs, 2005, 281.

⁹ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri. *Multitude: War and Democracy in an Age of Empire*. New York: The Penguin Press, 2004, 279.

1992 UN Human Development Report was also critical noting that “the World Bank and the IMF should be the buffer to protect developing countries, but their recent record shows that they have become institutions for recycling debt, not recycling resource.”¹⁰

Early attempts by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to address the growing problem were “sporadic.” By the late 1980s and due to “increased NGO and church interest,” national debt crisis “networks” were created to “exchange information and coordinate efforts on the issue.”¹¹ In the early 1990s these networks reformed under new names and began to increasingly work together, as well as with other anti-debt groups within the debt-affected countries themselves. In 1993 the “Rethinking Bretton Woods” IFI reform project was created by the Jesuit-sponsored Center of Concern to correspond with the 50 year anniversary of the 1944 Bretton Woods Conference where the IMF and the World Bank’s predecessor, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, were created. In addition, the “Fifty Years is Enough” coalition was formed by thirty-three U.S. groups that had affiliates in twelve countries. “Fifty Years is Enough” sought three types of reform including *process reform* in the form of transparency and accountability, *policy reform* relating to debt and structural adjustment issues, and *project reform* which questioned projects types and the related decision-makers, as well as how local communities would be involved. Both coalitions had overlapping membership albeit different styles, as the “Fifty Years is Enough” groups were more “radical and confrontational in style,

¹⁰ Davison Budhoo, “IMF/World Bank Wreak Havoc on Third World.” In *50 Years Is Enough: The Case Against the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund*, ed. Kevin Danaher. Boston: South End Press, 1994, 22.

¹¹ Donnelly, 2002, 159.

language and strategy.”¹² Each group had some success in creating dialogue with World Bank and IMF officials, and with members of the Clinton Administration.

By the mid-1990s there were large coordinating debt relief bodies in virtually every region of the world. In the United States the groundswell of IFI-targeted NGO activity coalesced into the Multilateral Debt Coalition, coordinated and developed by Oxfam International, the Center of Concern, and the United States Catholic Conference (USCC). Europe was represented by the European Network on Debt and Development (EURODAD), a Dutch founded coalition represented by sixteen NGOs from different European countries, which by the mid-1990s was corresponding with “approximately sixty other NGOs from Europe, the United States, Canada and the South.”¹³ Latin America was represented by the Forum on Debt and Development (FONDAD), Asia was represented by the Asian Campaign on Debt and Structural Adjustment and included over ninety organizations, and the African Network and Forum on Debt and Development (AFRODAD) represented Africa.

The transformation from loose-knit debt networks to the transnational coalition Jubilee 2000 began in 1993 when Bill Peters, a debt campaigner and former British High Commissioner to Malawi as a member of Her Majesty’s (HM) Diplomatic Service, had formed the then “small charity.” Jubilee’s title referenced “the biblical injunctions about debt forgiveness, as suggested by Michael Schluter of the Jubilee Centre in Cambridge (U.K.).”¹⁴ By 1996 the “Jubilee” concept had resonated throughout the debt relief network,

¹² Ibid, 160.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Bill Peters, “The Third World Debt Crisis – Why a Radical Approach is Essential,” *Round Table*, April 2000.

and the Jubilee 2000 U.K. campaign was launched, “led by the overseas relief agencies of the Anglican and Catholic churches,” and headed by the “seasoned and astute political organizer” Ann Pettifor.¹⁵ The Jubilee 2000 U.S. network was formed by “leaders of the Religious Working Group and the Multilateral Debt Coalition” in 1997 and launched at the June 1997 G7 summit in Denver, Colorado. It opened a D.C. office with two staff members in spring 1998. By the end of 2000 there were fifty-seven national Jubilee 2000 networks around the world. Pettifor is quick to emphasize the Jubilee network’s informal nature and flat organizational structure, noting that the U.K. campaign “tend[s] to take the lead,” but “doesn’t have an explicit leadership role...” Pettifor added, “Jubilee 2000 is an informal international network. The British may be the oldest and the best funded but it is not the coordinating body. There is no coordinating body.”¹⁶

In 1995 Jubilee 2000 strategy partner Jamie Drummond (who later became executive director of Bono’s think tank/lobbying firm DATA), decided to pursue celebrity publicity for Jubilee 2000. Drummond remembers: “I was going to try and basically persuade the music industry to support this young campaign.”¹⁷ Drummond further stated that Bono was “one of the first people [that came] to mind,” noting his “ability to communicate” and his “spiritual conviction in what he is doing.” Drummond first attempted to contact Bono in 1997 and was initially unsuccessful, but with the help of the Universal Music Group’s chief lawyer, Richard Constant, was able to “put the campaign firmly in front of Bono and to

¹⁵ Donnelly, 2002, 161.

¹⁶ Fred Rosen, “Doing Battle Against the Debt,” *NACLA Report on the Americas*, (xxxiii) 1, July/August 1999, 43.

¹⁷ Drummond in Interview with Laura Jackson; Jackson, 2001, 180.

encourage him to support it.”¹⁸ Finally in 1998 Bono contacted Drummond via an unexpected phone call. Drummond remembers that Bono’s involvement would eventually take “various different guises,” but “really took off” at the “end of 1998 and the beginning of 1999.” Drummond’s glowing comments about Bono, and the pursuit of his endorsement for Jubilee 2000, lends credence to the humanitarian reputation of the rock star.

Bono publicly began his campaign by penning a February 1999 editorial in *The Guardian* newspaper entitled “World Debt Angers Me” on the eve of the televised “Brit Awards,” the U.K. equivalent to the Grammy Awards. Bono’s editorial eloquently presented Jubilee 2000’s position noting “There’s been a mix of bad lending, bad borrowing, bad economics and bad luck. Jubilee 2000 says, ‘write off those unpayable debts in the year 2000, under an open, fair and transparent process. Put in place a new discipline for lending and borrowing to stop the debts building up again.’ I’m with Jubilee 2000,” which Bono further described as “bipartisan... broad, inclusive and international.”¹⁹ This nod to nonpartisanship and coalition-building in Bono’s first public pronouncement about debt relief was not surprising considering his past hesitation to endorse political parties and/or candidates. But it was an essential element to his eventual political success.

Bono also called on several world leaders to support the debt relief campaign including U.K. Prime Minister Tony Blair, U.K. Chancellor Gordon Brown, Germany’s Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and U.S. president Bill Clinton, and challenged them to “face the implications of their own script,” and added “a sense of occasion is everything.” Bono

¹⁸ Ibid, 181.

¹⁹ Bono, “World Debt Angers Me,” *The Guardian*, 16 February 1999.

compared the African debt crisis to post-World War II war-torn Germany in which the Allies forgave German war debts and the U.S.-sponsored Marshall Plan helped rebuild their infrastructure. Bono claimed that the Marshall plan “saved the next generation of Germans from repeating the horrors of the 20s and 30s.” Lastly Bono wrote that he believed politicians “have the will,” but will only “find the way if there is an extraordinary public outcry.”²⁰

The Brit Awards provided Bono with a live television audience which could “generate further much needed publicity” for Jubilee 2000, a timely gesture considering that he was being presented the Freddie Mercury Prize for “outstanding charitable works” that evening.²¹ Upon accepting the award, Bono leapt from stage, ran down to Mohammad Ali’s seat in the first row, and offered his Brit Award to the boxing legend. Bono then explained that he and Ali were both representing Jubilee 2000, Ali as the international ambassador, and Bono as the “most vocal public figurehead,” and promptly “[demanded] that Western governments cancel debt repayments by the new millennium.”

DATA executive director Jamie Drummond points out that the “surprise” speech was not “scripted into the show.” Drummond maintains that the event “was a golden moment because it launched the campaign in the tabloid newspapers in a way that we had not managed to do before.” He further noted that Jubilee 2000 had previously had some coverage in the *Financial Times* and the *Guardian*, “but it was really the celebrity thing around the Brit awards in February which forced politicians to realize that they could not

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Wall, 2005, 251-2.

afford to ignore the post bag that was swelling with letters from people from all walks of life in the U.K. who were calling on Prime Minister Tony Blair and the Chancellor Gordon Brown to do more. And, within a couple of days of the Brit awards, Gordon Brown announced the U.K. would cancel £50 million in debt at the forthcoming G8 [Group of Eight] summit.”²² London School of Economics Development Scholars Allen and Weinhold called the speech “famous.”²³ Former Oxfam Media Spokesman Seth Amgott also spoke of the event’s significance noting that “There seems to be a lot reason to believe it had an enormous influence really in changing the game.”²⁴

U.K. Chancellor Gordon Brown’s statement came via a jointly-penned letter with British Development Secretary Clare Short to World Bank President James D. Wolfensohn and IMF Managing Director Michel Camdessus “urging them to back his reforms” around debt relief.²⁵ In addition, Brown presented the debt plan to his counterparts at a G7 finance summit held days after the Brit Awards in Bonn, Germany, in which he proposed eliminating £50 million of debt from the world’s poorest countries.²⁶ Brown claimed that Jubilee 2000 and its affiliated celebrities “had a tremendous impact on public opinion around the world.”²⁷ Jubilee 2000 director Ann Pettifor saw a direct correlation between Brown’s actions and Bono’s pleas, noting “The Chancellor is responding directly to Bono

²² Jamie Drummond in interview with Laura Jackson; Jackson, 2001, 182-3.

²³ Tim Allen and Diana Weinhold, “Dropping the Debt for the New Millennium: Is it Such a Good Idea?” *Journal of International Development*, 2000, 12, 858.

²⁴ As reported to the author in a personal telephone interview with Seth Amgott on December 9, 2005.

²⁵ Andrew Garfield, “Chancellor Takes Stars’ Debt Plea to G7 Summit,” *The Independent (London)*, 20 February 1999.

²⁶ Charlotte Denny, “Chancellor Urges World Leaders to Write Off Loans to Poor Countries,” *The Guardian*, 20 February 1999, 24.

²⁷ Gordon Brown quoted in *Ibid.*

and Mohammed Ali and that's great news."²⁸ Adrian Lovett of world relief agency Oxfam and one of the founders of Jubilee 2000 noted, "The decisive moment on debt was June 1999 at the G8 summit in Cologne where an extra £50 million was promised. It wasn't all down to Bono, of course, but it would have never happened without him."²⁹

At some point Bono realized that his past activist tactics would be insufficient to achieve the goals of the Jubilee 2000 campaign. Bono explained that Jubilee 2000 had been "slower to catch on" in the U.S. as opposed to the U.K. and as a result "[he] had to go straight to the decision-makers, or at the very least the people who knew those decision makers."³⁰ This notion is substantiated by Donnelly who explains, "Activists also found it difficult (more so in the United States than in Europe) to generate interest in a topic that is both severely under-covered by the media and portrayed as having been resolved."³¹

Following the advice of friend Eunice Shriver Kennedy, Bono called her son Bobby Shriver, whom Bono noted "immediately put the family filofax to work for me." Bono explained that Shriver provided more than just contacts, but that he also "called them and often accompanied me to those appointments." Through Shriver Bono also met Arnold Schwarzenegger; Shriver's brother-in-law, Governor of California and celebrity actor, who

²⁸ Ann Pettifor quoted in Ibid.

²⁹ Sean O'Hagan, "The Observer Profile: Bono," *The Observer*, 26 September 2004, 27.

³⁰ Bono quoted in Assayas, 2005, 89.

³¹ In Khagram, Riker and Sikkink, "From Santiago to Seattle: Transnational Advocacy Groups Restructuring World Politics," in *Restructuring World Politics: Transnational Social Movements, Networks, and Norms*, ed. Sanjeev Khagram, Kathryn Sikkink, and James V. Riker. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002, 175.

in-turn provided the connection to Republican Representative John Kasich from Ohio. Kasich would become “an important guide through the Republican side of Congress.”³²

On Shriver’s advice Bono also “went back to school,” and in meetings set up by Shriver he met World Bank head James Wolfensohn, ex-Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volker, David Rockefeller and then Harvard economist and Third World poverty specialist Jeffery Sachs, who was also an economic advisor to Jubilee 2000.³³ Bono realized the importance of this education for his lobbying purposes: “[I needed to] know what I was talking about before I went up to Capitol Hill to lobby on behalf of Jubilee 2000 for the cancellation of the LDC’s [least developed countries] debt to the rich countries of the OECD [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development] as a part of the millennium celebrations.”³⁴ Bono speaks glowingly of his education and his mentor noting “I would enter the world of acronyms with a man who can make alphabet soup out of them. Soup you’d want to eat. Soup that would, if ingested properly, enable a lot more soup to be eaten by a lot more people.” Sachs is just as effusive about his student Bono noting that “he is an outstandingly capable interlocter” and a “gifted [leader].”³⁵ Bono’s decision to go “back to school” was perhaps his most crucial. As will be seen, charisma can only get celebrities so far – Bono has proven that expertise and issue-knowledge are both imperative for successful celebrity activism.

³² Bono quoted in Assayas, 2005, 89.

³³ James Traub, 2005.

³⁴ Quotes taken from Bono’s forward in Sachs, 2005, xv.

³⁵ Sachs quoted in Lisa McLaughlin, “Can Rock n’ Roll Save the World?” *Time Europe* (17 December 2001) 158, no. 25, 52-3 and in Sachs, 2005, xii.

Next Bono even sought out potential critics because “[he] wanted to get to know the people who might oppose the idea” and admits that he’s “always attentive to the bearers of bad news, because they’re a little more reliable.”³⁶ Les Gelb from the U.S.-based Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) offered to help Bono create a list of potential ideological foes. Gelb’s advice to the rock star mirrored Bono’s philosophy: “I’m not going to give you the names of people that can help you – I’m going to give you the 30 names of people who can block you.”³⁷

Conservative Harvard economist Robert J. Barro was one of the first debt relief critics Bono met. Barro forthrightly told Bono that “[he] was an unlikely candidate to support Jubilee 2000 and that some leftist economists would be much more promising.”³⁸ Bono didn’t flinch, and responded that was “precisely why he wanted to talk with [Barro].” Barro recalls, “He wanted to see whether hard-thinking conservative economists could be convinced of the soundness of the campaign.” Barro listened and “was shocked” to hear the rock star’s intelligent arguments. Nevertheless, Barro “was not persuaded to put debt relief on the Top 10 list of growth-promoting policies for poor countries.” Barro did concede that Bono’s “arguments were better than [he] anticipated,” and he offered “two restrained cheers for Jubilee 2000.”³⁹ This may have been the first instance in which someone was surprised and impressed by Bono’s issue-knowledge about the debt relief campaign – a reaction that would soon be echoed by many politicians.

³⁶ Bono quoted in Assayas, 2005, 91 and James Traub, 2005.

³⁷ Madeline Bunting, “We Have to Make Africa an Adventure.” *The Guardian*, 16 June 2005.

³⁸ Robert J. Barro, “My Luncheon with Bono,” *Business Week* (12 July 1999), 3637, 22.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

Bono also contacted Presidential pal Bill Clinton, and procured a summer 1999 Oval Office meeting with him. Clinton had already agreed in principle to cancel two-thirds of African poor-country debt owed to the United States through the World Bank's HIPC initiative.⁴⁰ Bono pitched the Jubilee 2000 debt relief idea to Clinton, who responded that he was "already supporting the HIPC initiative."⁴¹ Bono retorted, noting the HIPC initiative "wasn't going far enough or quick enough." Bono pled that the millennium "was the hook to hang this on and to getting the Bretton Woods people... farther down the road." Bono left the Clinton meeting feeling that the president was "very interested and supportive," and the two kept up their correspondence through letters and phone calls.

Bono recalls that Clinton was somewhat hesitant because his Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin "was not a fan of debt cancellation."⁴² Rubin incidentally resigned his Treasury Secretary post on July 2, 1999 – only weeks after the Bono/Clinton meeting. Fortunately for the campaign, Rubin's successor Lawrence Summers eventually became a major proponent of debt relief and Bono's next lobbying target. Clinton recalled the first time Summers met Bono: "I'll never forget one day during my administration, Secretary Summers comes into my office and says, 'You know, some guy just came in to see me in jeans and a T-shirt, and he just had one name, but he sure was smart. Do you know anything about him?'"⁴³ Summers also remembers his first encounter with Bono, when he had agreed to "drop by" a Bono lobbying session with Summers' Chief of Staff Sheryl Sandberg and

⁴⁰ James Traub, 2005.

⁴¹ Bono quoted in Assayas, 2005, 230.

⁴² Ibid .

⁴³ Josh Tyrangiel and Benjamin Nugent, "Bono," *Time*, (4 March 2002), 159, no. 9, 62-8.

Clinton's Chief Economic Advisor Gene Sperling. *The New York Times* reported that Summers "tried to give Bono the polite brushoff," and in understated belittlement noted, "These are complicated issues. I'll have to take it up with the G7 finance ministers."⁴⁴ Bono was not swayed and rejoined, "You know what, I've been all over the world, and I've talked to all the major players, and everyone said, 'If you get Larry Summers, you can get this done.'" Sheryl Sandberg remembered the interchange in *The New York Times* noting, "It was a really important moment. I think we were all inspired and motivated."⁴⁵ Bono's combination of charisma and issue-knowledge prevailed once again.

In June 1999, Jubilee 2000 organized peaceful protests in 35 countries to coincide with the G7 summit in Cologne, Germany.⁴⁶ In London 50,000 Jubilee 2000 supporters formed a three mile human chain a week before the summit.⁴⁷ Bono joined in with the 35,000 strong human chain that protested on the streets of Cologne during the summit. Afterwards Bono, who was joined by former Live Aid promoter Bob Geldof, presented a worldwide debt relief petition to summit host German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder. Bono and Geldof also used the occasion to connect with U.K. Prime Minister Tony Blair. While still in Cologne the G7 leaders announced an unprecedented debt relief package that would forgive \$60 billion in debt of 33 poor countries.⁴⁸ *Commonweal* magazine reported that the

⁴⁴ James Traub, 2005.

⁴⁵ Ibid/

⁴⁶ Fred Rosen, "Doing Battle Against the Debt", *NACLA Report on the Americas*, (xxxiii) 1, July/August 1999, 43.

⁴⁷ Jamie Wilson, "50,000 in Human Chain Reinforce Petition Shipped to G8 Leaders," *The Guardian*, 14 June 1999.

⁴⁸ Fred Rosen, 1999, 43.

G7 adopted the U.S plan that was presented by Bill Clinton.⁴⁹ The think tank North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA) believed Jubilee’s lobbying had been effective: “Indeed, the movement’s lobbying among the leaders of the major industrial nations played a part in the G7’s announcement in Cologne, Germany...”⁵⁰

In September 1999 Clinton announced his intentions to “cancel 100 percent of the bilateral debt owed [to the United States] by HIPC countries,” and that he would seek the \$1 billion in funding from Congress over a four-year period.⁵¹ *The New York Times* credited Bono for Clinton’s 100 percent cancellation of bilateral debt (as opposed to two thirds), claiming that the rock star had convinced staffer Sperling of its importance. *The New York Times* reported: “When Bono left, Sperling called a treasury official and said that he wanted to insert something on debt relief into a speech Clinton was about to give at the World Bank. [Sperling] and Summers got a few minutes in the presidential limo. Clinton instantly agreed to call for 100 percent cancellation of the debt owed to the United States by 33 impoverished countries.”⁵²

Bono was ecstatic when Clinton made the announcement remembering that “We thought we cracked it, we were jumping up and down.” Thus began Bono’s formal introduction to United States politics, in which the president is only one of three theoretically equal federal branches. This realization led Bono to quip, “It’s funny, I thought the president of the United States was the Big Kahuna, the Boss. But he’s not. In the United

⁴⁹ David Beckmann, “Debt relief at the Millennium,” *Commonweal*, 15 December 2000.

⁵⁰ Fred Rosen, 1999, 43.

⁵¹ Donnelly, 2002, 172.

⁵² James Traub, 2005.

States, the Congress is in charge.”⁵³ Bono was now “inside the body politic, trying to figure out how it lived and breathed, how it behaved.” Bono further noted:

[I was] a rock star wandering around the corridors of power rather than placarding at the gates outside. Strange. Every few weeks I had to travel to Washington, D.C., to go and meet all kinds of unexpected people, in an attempt to get debt cancellation accepted in the United States. It was uphill. Myself and Bobby Shriver were entering a world not just of ideologue politicians, but one of bankers and economists, and a certain elite who guard America’s piggy bank. For most of the people, especially the bankers, it’s against their religion to cancel debts. Bobby had a background in finance, but I was way out of my depth.

Thus began Bono’s journey of lobbying the United States Congress. Former Oxfam Media Spokesman Seth Amgott candidly explained the strategy: “we needed some high-profile, high-level support to get the appropriation through Congress, and we invited Bono over and do some press and take some Congressional meetings.”⁵⁴ Bono already had an important Washington ally in conservative Republican Representative Spencer Bachus from Alabama. Bachus began to campaign for the Jubilee 2000 agenda after a group of his constituents including members of a Catholic parish and a Presbyterian church enlightened the Congressman about the third world debt situation, which convinced Bachus to take up his “new crusade.”⁵⁵ In September Bachus, Bono and Jeffrey Sachs all served on a Carnegie Endowment for International Peace panel in which Bachus “captivated the crowd” with his

⁵³ Ibid, 90.

⁵⁴ As reported to the author in a personal telephone interview with Seth Amgott on December 9, 2005.

⁵⁵ Michael Grunwald, “GOP’s Bachus Makes Debt relief His Mission,” *The Washington Post*, 9 October 1999, A03; David Beckmann, 2000.

pragmatic arguments noting, “I believe the American people to be loving and compassionate... I believe that if they knew about the conditions in your countries, they’d say: Forgive the debt! But they don’t know. They know who’s the number one football team. They know who won the fight in Las Vegas. But they don’t know what you’re going through. I didn’t even know.”⁵⁶ Bachus also held a joint news conference with Bono in which the rocker “praised” the Congressman for “his passion.” Bachus demonstrated his commitment to the cause by fasting for one day and even sent a symbolic \$1.20 to each of his fellow 434 Representatives – the average amount each American would pay for debt forgiveness.⁵⁷ Bachus notes that he was impressed by Bono “because he knew the issues backward and forward,” one more testimony to Bono’s growing expertise.⁵⁸

Bono also met with one of his most influential allies in September – Pope John Paul II. Bono explained the inclusive strategy behind the Pontifical visit: “We knew we had to get both sides, so we got Billy Graham and the Pope...”⁵⁹ The Rome September 23 meeting at the Pope’s residence marked 100 days to the millennium, and included “an international Jubilee 2000 delegation of economists, artists and campaigners.”⁶⁰ Bono brought a book of Irish poetry by Seamus Heaney as a gift to the Pontiff, who offered the rock star a rosary in return.⁶¹ Any tension in the room was soon eased when “the first funky Pontiff,” as Bono later called the Pope, stared-down Bono’s ever-present shades and tried them on. A photo

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Miles A. Pomper, “With Religious Backing, Third World Debt Forgiveness Wins House Panel’s Approval,” *CQ Weekly*, 6 November 1999, 2668.

⁵⁸ Mark Memmott, “Rocker Leads Drive to Lift Third World Debt,” *USA Today*, 14 June 2001.

⁵⁹ *Pro Bono*, The Guardian, 18 March 2002.

⁶⁰ *Pope Meets Bono and Calls for Debt relief*, The Guardian, 23 September 1999.

⁶¹ Jackson, 2001, 189.

was taken of the momentous cultural event, but was never released by the Vatican. Bono particularly remembered John Paul's grin – "the wickedest you could ever imagine."⁶²

Humor aside, the day was imperative for the campaign as the Pope publicly embraced Jubilee 2000 and its calls for debt forgiveness, making "a strong appeal to world leaders to take urgent and decisive action towards resolving the debt crisis."⁶³ Ann Pettifor called the meeting and the resulting endorsement "a day that will go down in history."⁶⁴ Bono later stressed the significance of the meeting explaining, "They weren't just platitudinous words out of Castel Gandolfo on that day. Actions followed. They were very tactical and strategic, and put the shoulder of the church to a few doors that had been slammed to us."⁶⁵ Former Oxfam Media Spokesman Seth Amgott explained that the Conference of Catholic Bishops was "enormously influential on debt cancellation" in the United States.⁶⁶ Bono's meeting with the Pope helped draw in the Christian contingent that became part of his expanding coalition.

October 1999 saw Bono involved with NetAid, a United Nations (U.N.) sponsored African charity concert that attempted to emulate Live Aid. Technological corporate sponsor Cisco Systems created a website to globally promote the event, which was introduced via press conference by U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan and Bono on September 9 in New York City, and was first "clicked-on" by U.S. President Bill Clinton, U.K. Prime Minister

⁶² Bono quoted in Assayas, 2005, 202.

⁶³ *Pope Meets Bono and Calls for Debt relief*, The Guardian, 23 September 1999.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Bono quoted in Assayas, 2005, 203.

⁶⁶ As reported to the author in a personal telephone interview with Seth Amgott on December 9, 2005.

Tony Blair and South African ex-President Nelson Mandela.⁶⁷ NetAid featured simultaneous concerts October 9 in New Jersey, London and Geneva, and included Bono sans U2 performing with hip-soul artist Wyclef Jean at the New Jersey venue. Other musicians such as Sting and Sheryl Crow also played NetAid, which in-between acts included “appeals for U.N.-sponsored programs, such as refugee resettlement, Third World debt relief and environmental protection.”⁶⁸ The concert initially appeared to be an overwhelming success as 100,000 people attended the three shows, the internet video feeds were accessed 2.4 million times, and more than 1 billion people watched or listened via television or radio.⁶⁹ The final donations were less robust as NetAid only garnered \$1 million and received a disappointing 6,000 volunteers from online registrants.⁷⁰ DATA front man Jamie Drummond remembers that “NetAid was not a great success” and stressed that “Bono did not play a lead role in it, although some people made out that he did.”⁷¹

In November Bono was back in Washington, this time specifically targeting Republican Congressmen. Bono’s November 4th meetings were organized by Ohio Republican Representative John Kasich, who Bono credits with providing “a lot of help” with debt cancellation and notes that “He passionately made the case to the Republicans.”⁷² Kasich in turn has said that “[Bono’s] transcended music... He’s gone from a rock band to a

⁶⁷ Jackson, 2001, 188.

⁶⁸ Paul Farhi, “NetAid’s Gross Take Still Unavailable; Benefit Organizers Yet to Have Divulge Tally,” *The Washington Post*, 15 October 1999, C07.

⁶⁹ Ibid and Paul Fahri, “NetAid Catches Few On the Web; Internet, Shows Brought in Meager \$1 Million,” *The Washington Post*, 17 November 1999, C01.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Jamie Drummond in interview with Laura Jackson, 2001, 190.

⁷² George Lloyd and Beth Berselli, “The Reliable Source,” *The Washington Post*, 5 November 1999, C03; Chuck McCutcheon, “Foreign Aid Bill Gives Clinton Requested Funding,” *CQ Weekly*, 28 October 2000, 2552; Bono quoted in Assayas, 2005, 92.

rock band with a purpose.”⁷³ Later Kasich explained his views about celebrity: “We live in a celebrity world. That’s why all these idiots are following Paris Hilton around. Bono in a lot of ways is like Arnold (Schwarzenegger). Arnold has taken celebrity and combined it with a political purpose.”⁷⁴ Kasich’s comment is illustrative of common misconceptions about celebrity politics. It is true that Schwarzenegger was a celebrity previous to his gubernatorial election, but by entering formal politics, he has transcended celebrity political activism, per Meyer and Gamson’s previously discussed definition. This work contends that Bono has surpassed all previous celebrity political efforts, with the exception of those who have become elected officials. Although, there is reason to believe and it could warrant further study, that Bono has actually had *more* power and influence than even these elected celebrities.

The day before Bono arrived in Washington the House Banking Committee approved Iowa Republican Jim Leach’s \$1 billion debt relief bill.⁷⁵ Bono was presumably lobbying to keep it alive in Congress when he met Texas Republican and House Majority Leader Dick Armey, Georgian Republican Senator Paul Coverdell, and Democratic Senator Christopher Dodd of Connecticut.⁷⁶ *CQ Weekly* reported that the new debt relief movement was “winning converts despite budget constraints and the traditional lack of political support for foreign aid programs,” which contributed to the success of the Jubilee 2000 coalition.⁷⁷

⁷³ Donna Cassata, 2005.

⁷⁴ *What Washington Says About Bono*, The Associated Press, 7 June 2005.

⁷⁵ Miles A. Pomper, “With Religious Backing, Third World Debt Forgiveness Wins House Panel’s Approval,” *CQ Weekly*, 6 November 1999, 2668.

⁷⁶ *Ibid* and George Lloyd and Beth Berselli, 1999, C03.

⁷⁷ Miles A. Pomper, “With Religious Backing, Third World Debt Forgiveness Wins House Panel’s Approval,” *CQ Weekly*, 6 November 1999, 2668.

Bono was pursuing his task dutifully by befriending and lobbying numerous Congressional members and their staff. The fruit of his labor was beginning to show in the form of a bipartisan political coalition.

Congress eventually reached a compromise that provided \$123 million in the foreign operations bill for bilateral debt relief in fiscal 2000, and it would consider an additional \$1 billion in multilateral debt relief the next year.⁷⁸ The sticking point was in the details of how to pay for debt forgiveness, which engendered another debate about IMF gold revaluation. Congress wanted to fund debt relief through an accounting trick which would revalue IMF-owned gold. The gold was still listed on the IMF's balance sheet at an old price of \$47 an ounce, but if it was recalculated to the 1999 price of \$300 an ounce it would provide the excess capital to the IMF for the debt proposal. Armev was one of the major critics of this plan and advised that "the complicated proposal deserves thorough scrutiny by the relevant committees next year."⁷⁹ *CQ Weekly* also reported that Armev was "reluctant to approve the debt relief funds in the closing weeks of [the] congressional session." Armev himself sounded uncertain and noted that "[the gold sales question] is a fascinating issue and it's an issue where the heart says go, go, and the mind says, well, just wait a minute, a little because it's very complex."⁸⁰

Finally, "after weeks of delay," a deal between Armev, fellow Texan and Republican Senate Banking Committee Chairman Phil Gramm, and Treasury Secretary Lawrence

⁷⁸ Miles A. Pomper, "Foreign Aid Compromise is a Success for Clinton Team," *CQ Weekly*, 20 November, 1999, (57) 45.

⁷⁹ Miles A. Pomper, "Debt Issue Stalls Foreign Aid," *CQ Weekly*, 13 November 1999, 2706.

⁸⁰ Ibid

Summers authorized the IMF to revalue its gold reserves “in a complex accounting formula” that would help pay for debt forgiveness.⁸¹ The deal was brokered with the gold industry by former Oxfam Media Spokesman Seth Amgott and lobbyist Lydia Williams, and according to Amgott, “Bono did not have a big personal involvement [in the deal].”⁸² It is possible that Bono’s meeting with Arney may have helped loosen the Texan’s objections to the plan. Arney would later give Bono’s lobbying skills an “A-plus,” and mentioned that he was “well-informed and intensely devoted to the issues.”⁸³ Arney explained further, which provided another testimony to Bono’s expertise: “In the vernacular of country western, [Bono] was country when country wasn’t cool. He’s made an intellectual and emotional commitment to a project that’s gone beyond himself.”⁸⁴

Treasury Secretary Summers’ involvement as a consistent advocate for debt relief was also a critical component of the debt plan’s success. Summers “had been pushing” Congress for the debt relief plan after he was convinced by Bono’s and Spencer Bachus’ arguments and even penned a Washington Post editorial on the subject in which he called debt relief “the moral imperative for the world’s richest economy” and a “national strategic imperative.”⁸⁵ Summers was also pressed by Clinton, who made debt relief a “priority.” Gene Sperling relayed a story to Bono that illustrated “how hard [Clinton] had to fight” for

⁸¹ John Burgess, “Debt relief,” *The Washington Post*, 17 November 1999, E02; and Deborah McGregor, “Republican Deal Clears IMF Debt relief Plan,” *The Financial Times*, 17 November 1999, 12.

⁸² As reported to the author in a personal telephone interview with Seth Amgott on December 9, 2005.

⁸³ Donna Cassata, 2005.

⁸⁴ *What Washington Says About Bono*, The Associated Press, 7 June 2005.

⁸⁵ Miles A. Pomper, “Foreign Aid Compromise is a Success for Clinton Team,” *CQ Weekly*, 20 November, 1999, (57) 45; Michael Grunwald, “GOP’s Bachus Makes Debt relief His Mission,” *The Washington Post*, 9 October 1999, A03; Lawrence H. Summers, “Debt relief: A Fresh Start,” *The Washington Post*, 3 November 1999, A35; Robert J. Barro, “Why Would A Rock Star Want to Talk to Me?” *Business Week*, 16 July 2001, (3741) 24.

debt relief. Bono recalls, “At one point I had sent [Clinton] a letter. Gene was called up to the top cabinet in Air Force One, and the president was screaming at him at the top of his voice, pointing at my letter, going: ‘Why aren’t we doing this?’”⁸⁶

The Congressionally approved \$123 million in bilateral debt relief was a small victory for Jubilee 2000 and Bono. It was also just the beginning of a long-term political lobbying effort by Bono. The next step for Bono and the coalition was to secure an additional \$1 billion in funding for multilateral debt relief that had been promised by Clinton. Treasury Secretary Summers agreed, acknowledging “Our work is not done” and admitted that “much more is needed to complete the administration’s share” of the June 1999 Cologne debt relief commitment.⁸⁷ In February 2000 the Clinton administration announced it would seek \$210 million in supplemental monies from the fiscal 2000 budget for debt relief, an additional \$225 million from the fiscal 2001 budget, and \$375 million in “advance appropriations for future-year debt relief.”⁸⁸ This new round of debt relief faced significantly more opposition than the first effort. The initial blow occurred when the House of Representatives ignored Clinton’s \$210 million 2000 supplemental spending request, which wasn’t included in the final bill that was passed on March 30. Ranking California Democrat Nancy Pelosi tried to override the opposition by appending a last minute debt relief amendment, but it was subsequently defeated.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ Bono in interview with Michka Assayas; Assayas, 2005, 231.

⁸⁷ Miles A. Pomper, “Third World Debt relief Plan Unveiled.” *CQ Weekly*, 5 February 2000, 264.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Miles A. Pomper, “Debt relief Loses Momentum,” *CQ Weekly*, 24 June 2000, 58 (26).

The next hurdle appeared when North Carolina Republican and Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Jesse Helms tried to tie debt relief to IMF and World Bank institutional reform. *CQ Weekly* reported that Helms wanted to abolish the IMF, but offered an alternative: “If the IMF wants to avoid that fate, the IMF will have to make some changes in the way the IMF conducts its business.”⁹⁰ Helms had previously demonstrated his pork-barreled approach to debt relief when he attempted to place contingencies on the original 1999 debt relief bill, which would not allow the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to consider the measure “in an effort to pressure the Clinton administration to approve disaster funds for his state.”⁹¹

Helms eventually reached an agreement with Treasury Secretary Summers that would implement some of the IMF changes he requested, but they did not satisfy Senate Banking Committee Chairman Phil Gramm. Gramm held up the fiscal 2001 foreign aid authorization bill, “demanding” that his committee consider the measure.⁹² Helms retaliated on June 28 by splitting the foreign aid bill into four separate measures, each of which he would attempt to advance through the Senate separately, with one bill specifically funding debt relief. Helms’ position had changed measurably – possibly because of the IMF contingencies placed in the bill. His shift was captured by this plea in *CQ Weekly*: “I don’t

⁹⁰ Miles A. Pomper, “Helms, Others Put Conditions on Debt relief,” *CQ Weekly*, 4 March 2000, 487.

⁹¹ Miles A. Pomper, “With Religious Backing, Third World Debt Forgiveness Wins House Panel’s Approval,” *CQ Weekly*, 6 November 1999, 2668.

⁹² Pomper, Miles A. “Attempting to Sidestep Gramm, Helms Splits Foreign Aid Authorization Bill Into Four,” *CQ Weekly*, 1 July 2000, 1623.

understand why they don't go along and do it, because it's an important piece of legislation."⁹³

The House finally passed the fiscal 2001 \$225 million foreign aid bill with a debt relief amendment in July. California Democrat Maxine Waters attached the debt relief amendment to the bill, which was adopted in a "drawn-out, dramatic vote."⁹⁴ *CQ Weekly* reported that the amendment was passed only after "an extended tug-of-war between party leaders." The amendment was almost defeated, but four Democrats and one Republican switched their votes at the last minute (David Obey, D-Wisconsin; Sander M. Levin, D-Michigan; David Wu, D-Oregon; Leonard Boswell, D-Iowa; and Tom Latham, R-Iowa). Waters noted the amendment was a "very big victory" and said it was "part of a deliberate strategy: The Congressional Black Caucus made a conscious decision that we were going to take charge [of the bill]."⁹⁵ Waters probably had help from the widespread Christian backing of the measure. *The New York Times* reported that one last "holdout" was Alabama Republican Sonny Callahan, to which "Bono and his little band ginned up the clergy members in [his] district."⁹⁶ Former DATA Communication Director Seth Amgott explained the tactics, noting that they "worked with grassroots organizations like Bread for the World with members in those districts, and with religious leaders whose national denominations might be a part of the campaign, to show Congressman Callahan that there was social

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ *House Passes Foreign Aid Bill With Increase for Debt relief*, *CQ Weekly*, 15 July 2000, 58 (29).

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ James Traub, 2005.

interest in these issues.”⁹⁷ Callahan admitted that he “eventually gave in.”⁹⁸ Treasury Secretary Summers also pushed for the amendment at a July 12 Capitol Hill press conference in which he pled, “It is imperative for our country economically, morally and diplomatically to provide this debt relief.”⁹⁹

In September 2000 Bono became more publicly visible and spoke at the Millennium Summit in New York City. During the speech he presented a global debt relief petition with 21.2 million signatures from over 150 countries to U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan.¹⁰⁰ Bono also appeared at the Capitol on September 21 for a debt relief rally flanked by Treasury Secretary Summers, Utah Republican Orrin Hatch, John Kasich, Maxine Waters and Gene Sperling. Bono pled to lawmakers: “I’m asking... get your scissors and cut through the crap.”¹⁰¹ White House Economic Director Sperling also announced President Clinton would hold a bipartisan debt relief summit on October 2.¹⁰²

Bono also managed to get a meeting with Republican Senator Jesse Helms while in D.C., setting up a coup de grace for Bono as his arguments brought tears to the Senator’s eyes. Helms then embraced Bono and told him, “I want to do anything I can to help you.”¹⁰³ John Kasich, who was also at the meeting, was shocked by Helms’ reaction and later quipped: “I thought someone had spiked my coffee.”¹⁰⁴ Afterwards Helms said Bono had

⁹⁷ As reported to the author in a personal telephone interview with Seth Amgott on December 9, 2005.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ *House Passes Foreign Aid Bill With Increase for Debt relief*, CQ Weekly, 15 July 2000, 58 (29).

¹⁰⁰ Jackson, 2001, 199.

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 201.

¹⁰² Miles A. Pomper, “Hill Rally Asks Debt relief for Poor Nations,” *CQ Weekly*, 23 September 2000, 2228.

¹⁰³ James Traub, 2005.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

“depth I didn’t expect,” and the Senator fully committed to debt relief.¹⁰⁵ Helms explained: “If I can find some way that the Lord would show me how to really help these people, I’d quit the Senate and try to do it. I told Bono that. He is working hard and I’m going to help him the best I can.”¹⁰⁶ Helms also confirmed that Bono “changed his mind” about debt relief.¹⁰⁷ Helms soon persuaded the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee, as its Chairman, to approve the additional \$435 million debt relief appropriation.¹⁰⁸ The Helms meeting was the first of many which soon developed into an unlikely alliance between the noted conservative and the rock star. The Bono-Helms axis has become one of Bono’s most famous political triumphs, and highlights the importance of his non-partisan, coalition-building strategy. Senator Helms would later prove invaluable when he helped Bono gain credibility with the Bush Administration.

Clinton’s October 2 debt relief summit featured a variety of individuals including Bono, Pat Robertson of the Christian Coalition, International Hunger Campaign *Bread for the World* President and Jubilee 2000 activist David Beckmann, Archbishop Theodore McCarrick and Rabbi David Saperstein.¹⁰⁹ Beckmann recalls that at the end of the meeting, “the participants vowed to work with their constituencies and colleagues to make sure Congress funded the full amount needed for debt relief for 2001, \$435 million, before the end of the session.”¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ David Beckmann, “Debt relief at the Millennium,” *Commonweal*, 15 December 2000.

¹⁰⁶ Mark Memmot, 2001.

¹⁰⁷ Joseph Kahn, “A Star Close to the Heart of Aid Policy,” *The New York Times*, 15 March 2002, A8.

¹⁰⁸ Nancy Birdsall and John Williamson, 2002, 58.

¹⁰⁹ Joseph Kahn, “A Star Close to the Heart of Aid Policy,” *The New York Times*, 15 March 2002, A8

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

On October 25 Congress finally agreed to a plan that would fully fund the \$435 million for debt relief. The agreement also allowed the IMF to release \$800 million from gold sales for additional debt relief.¹¹¹ Gene Sperling, who according to Bono had earlier been reprimanded by Bill Clinton for not furthering debt relief, reported that the administration was “extremely pleased.”¹¹² Sperling also said of Bono: “[He] is exceptional, not only in his knowledge and his commitment but in his desire to work in a strategic and practical way.”¹¹³ *The Washington Post* reported that the “eclectic coalition” of the Pope, Sachs and Bono provided the “intense pressure” that eventually garnered the support of a majority of Republicans. *The Post* also noted that Clinton had “been unable to persuade skeptical lawmakers to go along” until the coalition began lobbying.¹¹⁴ *CQ Weekly* reported that “the coalition’s backing put the issue on the Congressional agenda.”¹¹⁵ Donnelly credited Jubilee 2000’s “lobbying blitz” for securing the appropriation.¹¹⁶ Birdsall and Williamson wrote: “A group of debt campaigners headed by Jubilee and with illustrious supporters like Bono and the pope led a campaign to cancel these debts...”¹¹⁷ Edward W. Scott, cofounder of the Center for Global Development summed up Bono’s role in the campaign:¹¹⁸

¹¹¹ Eric Pianin, “Hill Leaders Agree on Third World Debt relief,” *The Washington Post*, 25 October 2000, A01.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

¹¹³ Mark Memmot, 2001.

Eric Pianin, “Hill Leaders Agree on Third World Debt relief,” *The Washington Post*, 25 October 2000, A01; Eric Pianin and Steven Pearlstein, “Lott Sees a Finish by Friday; Spending Bill, Debt relief Are Chief Issues Before Congress,” *The Washington Post*, 24 October 2000, A04.

¹¹⁵ *Debt relief*, *CQ Weekly*, 16 December 2000, 2881.

¹¹⁶ In Khagram, Riker and Sikkink, 2002, 174.

¹¹⁷ Birdsall and Williamson, 2002, 115.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, x.

Perhaps no single person did more to advance public and political awareness of the debt issue than the rock star, Bono, lead singer of the group known as U2. Bono has come to symbolize a new sense of global social responsibility which the debt question has sparked in the development world.

President Clinton signed the foreign aid bill with the debt relief provisions on November 6, a ceremony in which he “specifically praised [Bono’s] fervent efforts on behalf of Jubilee 2000.”¹¹⁹ Jubilee 2000 had progressed significantly since Bono and Jeffrey Sachs were told “in no uncertain terms, that debt cancellation could not pass the U.S. Congress.”¹²⁰ Sachs explained their early skepticism: “That was the initial view across the political spectrum, from the Clinton White House and Treasury Department to the Republican-dominated House of Representatives.”

After the year 2000 expired and the Jubilee 2000 campaign had procured several debt relief victories both in the United States and internationally – including the G7’s June 1999 \$55 billion enhanced HIPC initiative – the campaign decided to continue its mission, albeit under a different moniker. Jubilee 2000 was christened *Drop the Debt* in late 2000 with the immediate goal of lobbying the 2001 G7 meeting for further debt relief measures.¹²¹ Birdsall and Williamson called the Jubilee 2000 campaign “by far the most successful industrial-country movement aimed at combating world poverty for many years, perhaps in all of recorded history,” noting its success in not just changing “official policy,” but also in “arousing” the rich world’s concern for the world’s poor “that had been conspicuously

¹¹⁹ Jackson, 2001, 207.

¹²⁰ Sachs, 2005, 342.

¹²¹ Mike Crawley, “Rich Nations Grant Poorest 22 A Checkbook Reprieve,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, 26 December 2000, 7.

lacking for many years.”¹²² This arousal of the “rich world’s concern for the world’s poor” is an eloquent way of stating that the issue had been placed onto the international political agenda – or as political science theory calls it – agenda setting. Agenda setting is one of the inconspicuous ways in which Bono has been influential. The debt relief issue was virtually unknown to the public and ignored by governments before Jubilee 2000, but because of Bono and the transnational Jubilee alliance the issue became just that – a political issue. A political issue that was now present on domestic and international political agendas, an issue that was being discussed and debated by the public, the media, and bureaucrats, and an issue that did not fade away.

Bono’s “Next International Cause”

The year 2000 also brought changes to the American political landscape as George W. Bush was controversially elected president – an election which was ultimately decided by the Republican-controlled Supreme Court.¹²³ Change was also swirling in Bono’s head as he searched for his “next international cause” as reported by *The Washington Post* after a 2001 meeting between Bono and “policy maven” C. Fred Bergsten, director of the think tank Institute for International Economics.¹²⁴ Bergsten said of Bono: “I found him more impressive and devoted than I imagined. The other thing that is really dramatic is how much Bono knows not only about the substance but about the politics.” Bergsten informed Bono that there “were several directions to go” including “[sticking] to the direct attack on poverty

¹²² Birdsall and Williamson, 2002, 1.

¹²³ Max Skidmore, *Presidential Performance: A Comprehensive Review*. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2004, 355.

¹²⁴ Richard Morin and Claudia Deane, “The Ideas Industry,” *The Washington Post*, 26 June 2001, A15.

and kind of work on countries to increase their foreign aid.” Another option Bergsten suggested was African trade reform. Bergsten expounded on this idea: “Trade, not aid. For the longer run, it remains true no country has ever successfully developed its economy without a big expansion of its trade and participating in the globalization process.”¹²⁵ The Bergsten meeting may have been a key impetus for the eventual formation of Bono’s think tank/lobbying firm DATA in 2002. One international cause that Bergsten did not pitch to Bono was the African AIDS crisis.¹²⁶ The African AIDS pandemic soon became the next piece of Bono’s African crusade and was eventually represented by the “A” in DATA’s acronym (AIDS).

The African AIDS pandemic has expanded considerably since the mid-80’s when the potentiality of its development in to an international epidemic was first recognized.¹²⁷ Whiteside calls it “the most devastating epidemic in recent history,” noting that by 2000 22 million people had already died.¹²⁸ *Washington Quarterly* agreed saying “Not since the bubonic plague has the world faced an infectious disease pandemic of such sweeping proportions as the present HIV/AIDS global pandemic – at whose epicenter Africa firmly stands.”¹²⁹ In 2001 the world had 40 million people infected with HIV, and although Africa represents only ten percent of the world’s population, it housed 68% of HIV infections, 77%

¹²⁵ Ibid

¹²⁶ Nana K. Poku notes in “The Global AIDS Fund: Context and Opportunity,” *Third World Quarterly* 23, no. 2 (2002), 284 that “the virus is at one and the same time a crisis and an endemic condition. It is a crisis because the speed of its spread has proved to be quite overwhelming.”

¹²⁷ Kevin M. De Cock, et al., “Shadow On the Continent: Public Health and HIV/AIDS in Africa in the 21st Century.” *The Lancet*, 360 (6 July 2002), 68.

¹²⁸ Alan Whiteside, “Poverty and HIV/AIDS in Africa,” *Third World Quarterly* 23, no. 2 (2000): 313.

¹²⁹ Stephen J. Morrison, “The African Pandemic Hits Washington,” *Washington Quarterly*, (Winter 2001), 24, no. 1, 197.

of AIDS deaths and 90% of AIDS orphans and HIV-infected children.¹³⁰ Africa is also the only place besides the Caribbean where “the epidemic is generalized rather than concentrated in and around specific risk groups, with almost the same number of women affected as men.” In other words, AIDS does not discriminate in Africa – everyone is at risk.

HIV/AIDS has created a situation with several destructive actual and potential results in Africa. Whiteside discusses the direct relationship between HIV prevalence and increased poverty in Africa elucidating that “The causal chain runs from macro-factors, which result in poverty through the community, household and individual, into the capacity of the individual’s immune system.”¹³¹ Poku also discusses this relationship noting “Poverty itself does not cause AIDS; however, there are endless potential links between poverty, poor health and poor health care which leave the poor dangerously exposed to diseases such as HIV.”¹³² This destructive cycle has exacerbated the fragile condition of African nations, which has also engendered new international security concerns. In 2000 the United Nations Security Council met to discuss the security implications of HIV/AIDS. Poku notes that the meeting “highlighted the growing awareness that the epidemic is a security threat that requires a global mobilization.”¹³³ Then United States Vice-President Al Gore illuminated these concerns when he argued that the “AIDS pandemic [has] reached well beyond a health crisis and now [constitutes] a threat to global security, the viability of states, and economic

¹³⁰ Kevin M. De Cock, et al., 2002, 68.

¹³¹ Whiteside, 2002, 316.

¹³² Poku, 2002, 284.

¹³³ Ibid, 283.

development.”¹³⁴ Given these facts, and as Bono is fond of saying, Africa is truly “a continent bursting into flames.”¹³⁵

In addition, a country’s health has also been increasingly linked to its very economic development.¹³⁶ Jeffrey Sachs concludes that many African countries are in a “poverty trap,” whereby “a poor country is simply too poor to achieve sustained economic growth...” He further explains that economic growth depends on “minimum standards of health, education and infrastructure...”¹³⁷ Sachs also noted the other potential economic failures related to a country’s poor health infrastructure including state bankruptcy, liquidity crises, and transition crises that involve significant institutional change. These economic failures can lead to state failures which threaten U.S. national security and propagate economic losses, increase international crime and drug trafficking, increase African environmental degradation, and exasperate infectious diseases.¹³⁸

The Washington Quarterly’s winter 2001 issue listed seven “critical future challenges” to “effectively combat HIV/AIDS in Africa,” and clearly exposed the United States’ inadequacies at targeting and combating African AIDS.¹³⁹ It is obvious from *The Washington Quarterly* article that the African AIDS crisis was starting to politically surface in America, but that there was still much to be done. The political “awakening” began under

¹³⁴ Stephen J. Morrison, “The African Pandemic Hits Washington,” *Washington Quarterly*, (Winter 2001), 24, no. 1, 197.

¹³⁵ From Bono’s Speech to the Labour Party Conference, Brighton U.K., September 29, 2004.

¹³⁶ Exemplified by the World Health Organization’s (WHO) Jeffrey Sachs led Commission on Macroeconomics and Health, which published *Macroeconomics and Health: Investing in Health for Economic Development* in 2001.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ Stephen J. Morrison, “The African Pandemic Hits Washington,” *Washington Quarterly*, (Winter 2001), 24, no. 1, 197-209.

the Clinton Administration in 1999 when U.S. trade policies changed, “rhetorical commitments to battling HIV/AIDS overseas [were elevated],” and aid commitments were raised.¹⁴⁰ In February 2000 President Clinton addressed the National Summit on Africa and “appealed passionately to African leaders and citizens to deal more openly with the HIV/AIDS crisis and pledged greater U.S. efforts.”¹⁴¹ The surge in African HIV/AIDS policy activity continued until the end of Clinton’s presidency in January 2001. When Bush assumed the presidential mantle, his HIV/AIDS policy was not yet clear and even appeared hostile when his second foreign policy action upon taking office was to “place under review” Clinton’s executive order “that supports African countries’ right to import or produce generic versions of HIV/AIDS medications that are still under U.S. patent.”¹⁴² In addition, during Bush’s presidential campaign, his advisors “repeatedly stressed that Africa did not fit into the strategic interests of America, and Bush said that during the debates that Africa was not a priority.”¹⁴³

Meanwhile Bono’s mentor Jeffery Sachs had also jumped headfirst into the African AIDS epidemic, which probably inspired Bono’s efforts. Sachs explains that in the late 90s he went on the “warpath” with the international financial community over AIDS.¹⁴⁴ He complained that the IMF and the World Bank had been in Africa “for decades” and “had remained blind to the most basic realities there, and to the growing human and economic

¹⁴⁰ Ibid, 199.

¹⁴¹ Ibid, 200.

¹⁴² *Bush Medicine for Africa*, The Nation, 26 February 2001; Michael Dobbs, “Trip Marks President’s Turnabout On Africa,” *The Washington Post*, 7 July 2003, A1.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Sachs, 2005, 203.

catastrophe.” Sachs helped form an April 2000 AIDS summit in Nigeria. He was also called to lead the new World Health Organization (WHO) Commission on Macroeconomics and Health (CMH), which Sachs chaired from 2000 – 2001. The Commission’s December 2001 report requested increased donor aid from rich countries to combat AIDS in Africa to the tune of \$27 billion per year by 2007, up from \$6 billion per year. Sachs noted that the report’s impact was atypical, citing the ephemeral nature of most reports:¹⁴⁵

The Report of the Commission on Macroeconomics and Health had quite a notable reception. Reports come and go. This one, I think it is fair to say, stayed. It made the important point that we, as a generation, can do something dramatic to improve our world. The report found a wide audience, in part, because it was based on a broad and surprising consensus. It was launched with the kind of pizzazz that it deserved, with Brundtland; U.K. Secretary of State for International Development Clare Short, Ray Gilmartin, the CEO of Merck; and Bono as enthusiastic supporters.

Sachs’ testimony was indicative of Bono’s growing influence as a political agenda setter. Sachs also penned the idea for a “global fund” to fight AIDS and malaria, and introduced the plan during a speech at the 2000 International AIDS conference in Durban, South Africa – an event Sachs called “a turning point.”¹⁴⁶ Sachs writes that “Word spread of the speech and the idea of a new global fund took hold.”¹⁴⁷ Sachs enlisted the UN via Kofi Annan, who helped him “refine the concept.” In March 2001 when the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria was in the final stages of formation, the Bush

¹⁴⁵ Sachs, 2005, 205.

¹⁴⁶ Gretchen Vogel, “Dollars and Cents Vs. the AIDS Epidemic,” *Science*, (29 June 2001), 292, no. 5526.

¹⁴⁷ Sachs, 2005, 205.

Administration stance on the global AIDS epidemic was still ‘unclear’ as reported by *The Washington Post*.¹⁴⁸ In April Kofi Annan publicly announced the creation of the Global Fund during a speech at the Abuja, Nigeria AIDS Summit. Then on May 11 President Bush, who was flanked by Kofi Annan and Nigerian president Olesegun Obasanjo in the White House Rose Garden, announced U.S. support for the U.N.-sponsored Global Fund including an initial \$200 million pledge.¹⁴⁹

Bono’s efforts had not stagnated either. He began his lobbying advance on the new administration immediately, and secured a January 2001 meeting with Secretary of State Colin Powell, whom Bono had brought a signed note from George C. Marshall, “another military man turned secretary of state.”¹⁵⁰ The Marshall note was symbolic as Bono and other anti-poverty campaigners would often mention the need for “a Marshall Plan for Africa,” referring to the plan created by the ex-general which gave 1% of American GDP to European post-World War II reconstruction efforts over a four year period.¹⁵¹ Colin Powell later became a staunch advocate for African aid policy.

Bono’s strategy involves more than just meetings with cabinet level officials and Congress. He also targets White House and Congressional staffers. The payoff with staffers can be big as they can secure meetings with their bosses and continually press the cause – and they are much easier to access. Bono used this strategy with White House Chief of Staff

¹⁴⁸ Karen DeYoung, “Bush AIDS Policy Remains Unclear; Activists Awaiting Despite Reassurances,” *The Washington Post*, 31 March 2001, A15.

¹⁴⁹ Karen DeYoung, “U.S. Gives AIDS Fund \$200 Million Donation; Bush Vows More Money for Public-Private Project,” *The Washington Post*, 12 May 2001, A19.

¹⁵⁰ Josh Tyrangiel and Benjamin Nugent, 2002, 62-8.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

Josh Bolten, White House advisor Karl Rove, and top aides at the Treasury Department.¹⁵² The Treasury Department meetings may have helped Bono meet new Treasury Secretary Paul O’Neill, who “refused to meet him at first.” O’Neill thought Bono “was just some pop star that wanted to use me.”¹⁵³ Once O’Neill agreed “their scheduled half-hour session overran by an hour.” In the meeting O’Neill challenged Bono: “If you want U.S. money to flow to Africa, take me to the green hills and show me what works.”¹⁵⁴ Bono “smiled” and retorted: “Let’s set a date.” The date would come in May 2002 when the two took a ten day fact-finding trip to Africa. Overall O’Neill was impressed by Bono and noted: “He’s a serious person... He cares deeply about these issues, and you know what? He knows a lot about them.”¹⁵⁵ O’Neill also acknowledged the persistence of U2’s fan base, noting that the Treasury Department received “about 20,000 email messages from U2 fans pressing for more action on AIDS.”¹⁵⁶ The O’Neill episode highlights an uncharacteristic situation as Bono was actually refused a first meeting. In this instance Bono’s celebrity was not sufficient to meet his lobbying target. It took Bono’s persistence and a bit of luck to get a first introduction with the Treasury Secretary, but ultimately rested on his issue-knowledge and expertise to win O’Neill over.

Bono also targeted then National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, who as Bono metaphorically notes, “gave the keys to her office to a bunch of English activists,” referring

¹⁵² Mark Memmot, 2001; *Pro Bono*, The Guardian, 18 March 2002.

¹⁵³ Sean O’Hagan, “The Observer Profile: Bono,” *The Observer*, 26 September 2004, 27.

¹⁵⁴ Ron Suskind, *The Price of Loyalty: George Bush, the White House, and the Education of Paul O’Neill*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004, 244.

¹⁵⁵ Sean O’Hagan, “The Observer Profile: Bono,” *The Observer*, 26 September 2004, 27.

¹⁵⁶ Joseph Kahn, “A Star Close to the Heart of Aid Policy,” *The New York Times*, 15 March 2002, A8.

to her later cooperation with Bono's think tank/lobbying firm DATA.¹⁵⁷ Rice told *The New York Times* that when she met with Bono "The administration was grappling with ways to build a consensus on foreign assistance" and was "surprised" to learn of Bono's stance on African accountability.¹⁵⁸ The view that "there's a responsibility for the recipient" was as *The Times* noted, "precisely the kind of reform the administration had been thinking of."¹⁵⁹

Bono once again tracked-down conservative economist Robert J. Barro to discuss his latest AIDS efforts. The two connected at Harvard's 2001 commencement, where Bono was receiving an honorary master's degree from the Kennedy School of Government's Center for International Development.¹⁶⁰ Barro agreed to meet Bono after U2's Boston concert, which Barro attended and called "amazing." Bono told Barro of his latest "mission" to "[alleviate] the AIDS epidemic in Africa" at a post-concert meeting in the hospitality suite of Bono's hotel.¹⁶¹ Bono explained that "he wanted to combine a push for medical assistance from rich countries with an expansion of international trade." Bono also told Barro that like their debt relief discussions two years earlier, "he wanted to get an understanding of the conservative objections to his ideas." As with the debt relief discussions, Barro explained his objections to Bono's arguments, but he did support "expanded international trade... [combined] with the expansion of medical aid." Barro clarified his position in a *Business Week* editorial:¹⁶²

¹⁵⁷ Bono quoted in Assayas, 2005, 233.

¹⁵⁸ James Traub, 2005.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Robert J. Barro, "Why Would A Rock Star Want to Talk to Me?" *Business Week*, (16 July 2001) 3741, 24.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Ibid.

Because I hold Bono in high esteem, I wish I could believe that debt assistance for AIDS would encourage economic development and save lives in Africa. But my understanding of economics and my research on economic growth keep me from believing these things. I wonder what would happen if Bono instead directed his persuasive talents to further the classical liberal ideas that actually matter a lot for economic performance. I have in mind property rights, the rule of law, free markets, and small government. And I would be happy to include efficient investments in human capital in the form of education and health. But of course, this is just a dream. And the concert in Boston was really great.

Barro's "dream" may have been partially realized, and it is possible that his comments impacted Bono's development stance. The tripartite pillars to African aid pushed by Bono's think tank/lobbying form DATA formed after the Barro conversation are *Democracy*, *Accountability* and *Transparency* – "classical liberal ideas" as Barro requested. The exchange between Bono and Barro highlights Bono's charisma and influence, but also demonstrates one of the lobbyist's greatest challenges – shaping and/or changing the ideology of an influential person.

Bono also rekindled his Jesse Helms connection to further his latest campaign. Helms even attended a Washington D.C. U2 concert in June – his first rock concert ever. The octogenarian senator was "amazed" and noted in a somewhat bucolic metaphor that "People were moving back and forth like corn in the breeze."¹⁶³ Helms added: "When Bono

¹⁶³ Dorothy Rompalske, "Rock Star to the Rescue: Bono Tackles World Poverty – and the White House is Listening," *Biography Magazine*, October 2002.

shook his hips, the crowd shook their hips... [It] was the noisiest thing I ever heard.”¹⁶⁴

Helms also hosted a D.C. luncheon for Bono “that nine other senators attended.” *USA Today* reported that Bono was “humbled” and “felt like an outsider in the ornate capital,” to which Helms reassured the rock star: “You’ll never be an outsider. You’ll always be a friend here.”¹⁶⁵ Bono soon secured a closed meeting with the senator to discuss the African AIDS crisis. Bono relayed the episode to *Biography Magazine*: “I went to people like Jesse Helms, who had been very tough on the concept of foreign assistance and very bleak on AIDS. He’s a religious man so I told him that 2,103 verses of scripture pertain to the poor and Jesus speaks of judgment only once – and it’s not about being gay or sexual morality. But about poverty. I quoted that verse of Matthew, chapter 25: ‘I was naked and you clothed me.’ He was really moved. He was in tears.” For the second time in as many years Bono had brought Jesse Helms to tears. Helms would later publicly repent for having “not done more to combat the world’s AIDS epidemic” and admitted he was “ashamed.”¹⁶⁶ *CQ Weekly* reported that Helms “has drawn religious inspiration from Bono.”¹⁶⁷ Bono recounted the Helms story to Michka Assayas:¹⁶⁸

I took my time with him to press ahead with our work in the AIDS emergency. He did an incredible thing: he publicly repented for the way he had thought about HIV/AIDS. Politicians rarely do that. He really changed the way people on the Right

¹⁶⁴ *Pro Bono*, The Guardian, 18 March 2002.

¹⁶⁵ Mark Memmot, 14 June 2001.

¹⁶⁶ Miles Pomper, “Conservative Firebrand Helms Tempers His Image in Final Term.” *CQ Weekly*, (30 March 2002) 60, no. 13, 875-6.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁸ Assayas, 2005, 179-180.

thought about the disease. ...I found him to be a beautiful man with convictions that I wouldn't all agree with, but had to accept that he believed in them passionately.

Jeffrey Sachs wrote about the phone call he received from Bono immediately after the Helms meeting.¹⁶⁹

One day I was driving home when my cell phone rang. It was Bono. "What are you doing?" he asked. When I told him I was driving home, he said that I better pull over. "What's up?" "You won't believe what just happened. Senator Jesse Helms just blessed me and the effort on AIDS." Bono and the senator had read scripture together, and Helms had committed to help push the AIDS legislation through the White House and Congress.

The Guardian reported that a top Helms staffer, Lester Munson, said "the Senator is very much a fan of Bono... or that's my sense from hearing him talk all the time about this person who now seems to be his favorite rock star."¹⁷⁰ The Helms reversal was monumental for Bono, as Helms' influence eventually afforded him White House access – and his eventual connection to President Bush. After Helms' change of heart about AIDS, the senator contacted Vice-President Dick Cheney, who then persuaded Bush to meet Bono. President Bush later remembered: "Dick Cheney walked into the Oval Office; he said, 'Jesse Helms wants us to listen to Bono's ideas.'"¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁹ Sachs, 2005, 344.

¹⁷⁰ *Pro Bono*, *The Guardian*, 18 March 2002.

¹⁷¹ Dorothy Rompalske, "Rock Star to the Rescue: Bono Tackles World Poverty – and the White House is Listening," *Biography Magazine*, October 2002.

Bono began 2002 in a whirlwind as U2 performed the Super Bowl halftime show, and he took an eight day trip to Africa with Jeffery Sachs to “observe AIDS relief work.”¹⁷² Upon returning from Africa Bono joined fellow African activist and Microsoft mogul Bill Gates, Treasury Secretary Paul O’Neill, and former Mexican president Ernesto Zedillo on a poverty and AIDS panel at the World Economic Forum in New York City. Bono used the appearance to publicly announce the expansion of his African activism to include “vaccination and disease eradication.” O’Neill “reiterated his reluctance” to increasing U.S. African aid substantially, noting that they were often “misused and fail to help” African countries, but hinted that he was pursuing a new aid structure that required “imagination.”¹⁷³ The Forum also included 40 world religious leaders, a group whose importance to the African agenda did not escape Bono.¹⁷⁴

In March Bono reignited his relationship with the Christian contingent that was integral to the Jubilee 2000 debt campaign. This came on the heels of the Franklin Graham–organized February evangelical conference in D.C. *Prescription for Hope*, which focused on the AIDS crisis. Franklin Graham announced AIDS would become a priority noting: “We as the church have been too quick to pass judgment on this disease. Let’s put this issue at the top of our agendas as individuals, churches, denominations, and Christian organizations.”¹⁷⁵ Jesse Helms also attended the conference where he used the appearance to publicly repent for his past AIDS stance. Helms also penned an aforementioned *Washington Post* editorial

¹⁷² Ben White, “An Elite Cast Debates Debates Poverty; O’Neill, Bono, Gates Discuss Aid Plans at N.Y. Forum,” *The Washington Post*, 3 February 2002, A03.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ John Dart, “Bono: ‘Juxtapositioning’ For The World’s Poor,” *Christian Century*, 13-20 February 2002.

¹⁷⁵ Timothy C. Morgan, “Bono’s Burning Question,” *Christianity Today*, 22 April 2002, 5.

called “We Cannot Turn Away,” in which he pled for increased Congressional African AIDS spending.¹⁷⁶ Bono also met with Evangelical leaders in February, where he presented his strategic “outline” for approaching Congress and the White House. The Evangelicals noted that this was Bono’s first “personal connection” with the Evangelical community.¹⁷⁷ At this point it is becoming clear that a pattern is emerging in regards to Bono’s political strategy. By approaching and appealing to Christian groups again, Bono exhibited his propensity to non-partisanship and coalition-building.

The early months of 2002 also saw Bono busily forming his think tank/lobbying firm DATA. He had secured donations for DATA from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, international financier George Soros, “Silicon Valley mogul” Ed Scott, the Entertainment Industry Foundation and Bono himself.¹⁷⁸ The “policy wonks” of the newfound yet unnamed think tank had been working on a new aid proposal that would reflect Paul O’Neill’s call for “imagination” in new aid directions, and the administration’s insistence that “money was tight.”¹⁷⁹ DATA eventually “proposed a scheme to nurture good governance, which included a “two-pronged strategy to ‘reward success’ in six to nine well-governed countries and to keep others from ‘falling back’ through major increases in funding on AIDS, TB and Malaria.”¹⁸⁰ Then “in early 2002,” Jamie Drummond, ex-Jubilee 2000 activist and eventual director of DATA, “was summoned to Washington and asked not

¹⁷⁶ Jesse Helms, “We Cannot Turn Away,” *The Washington Post*, 24 March 2002, B07.

¹⁷⁷ Sheryl Henderson-Blunt, “Bono Tells Christians: Don’t Neglect Africa,” *Christianity Today*, 22 April 2002.

¹⁷⁸ *Bono-Think*, *The Wall Street Journal*, 17 June 2002, A18; Cathleen Falsani, “Bono’s America,” *Christianity Today*, March 2003, 44; and *Bono-Think*, *The Wall Street Journal*, 17 June 2002, A18.

¹⁷⁹ Josh Tyrangiel, “The Constant Charmer,” *Time*, (26 December 2005), 166, no. 26, 46-62.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid* and James Traub, 18 September 2005.

to leave.”¹⁸¹ Drummond told *The New York Times* that “in a series of closed door meetings, he worked with White House officials on the details of an aid program based on the principles that Bono had proposed.” Presidential advisor Josh Bolten acknowledged that “[Bono] was working with the president at a time when he was considering” the program.¹⁸²

The Bush administration would not enact the program void of Bono’s consent though, a testimony to Bono’s intrinsic involvement. Condoleezza Rice delivered the terms of the agreement to Bono – which included Bono’s public endorsement of the new program, in the form of a press conference alongside President Bush. As Rice told *The New York Times*, “It’s great to have a person who would not normally be identified with the president’s development agenda as a part of it.” Bono then told Rice he would only make the appearance if the president also agreed to “a historic AIDS initiative,” and almost nixed the public presidential appearance.¹⁸³ Rice was reportedly “very unhappy” with Bono’s demand, and reprimanded the rock star: “Bono, this president cares about AIDS too, and let me tell you that he is going to figure out something dramatic to do about AIDS. You’re going to have to trust us.”¹⁸⁴ Bono acquiesced and the Bono-Bush press conference was set.

Bono finally secured the presidential meeting he had been seeking since Bush’s election. At the March 15 Oval Office meeting Bono remembers stating his position “pretty quickly” noting: “the point was an unarguable one – 6500 people dying every day of a preventable and treatable disease would not be accepted anywhere else in the world other

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

than Africa, and that before God and history this was a kind of racism that was unacceptable.”¹⁸⁵ Bush replied: “Yeah, it’s unacceptable. In fact, it’s a kind of genocide.” White House Press Secretary Scott McClellan later downplayed Bush’s genocide remark noting he “was using it figuratively as a way to describe an immense tragedy.”¹⁸⁶ Bono acknowledged Bush’s “hyperbole,” but admitted that “He really helped us in using that word.”

After the meeting Bono accompanied Bush to a press conference at which the president announced the new Millennium Challenge Account (MCA), later to become the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), which was initially intended to be a three year program that would provide up to \$5 billion per year in additional monies for poor countries that were “committed to reforming their economies and stamping out corruption.”¹⁸⁷ Bush said the United States “must encourage nations and leaders to walk the hard road of political, legal and economic reform so that all their people can benefit.” The *Financial Times* reported that the new program “represents an attempt by the US to wrest back the initiative on global development, where it has been under fire from campaigners and European countries for its relative ungenerosity on development aid.”¹⁸⁸

The Guardian reported that “Bush’s announcement on foreign aid astonished development experts.”¹⁸⁹ Crediting Bono they reported, “...Bono, unlike many of the other

¹⁸⁵ Assayas, 2005, 232.

¹⁸⁶ *Bono Meets President*, St. Petersburg Times, 15 March 2002, 2B.

¹⁸⁷ Alan Beattie, “Bush Promises Big Rise in US Aid to Help Fight War on World Poverty,” *Financial Times*, 15 March 2002, 1.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁹ *Pro Bono*, The Guardian, 18 March 2002.

development lobbyists in Washington, kept on going after the Republicans took over the White House. [Bono] was convinced – he told skeptical aid experts, that the Republicans were taking him seriously – and Bush’s extraordinary testimony to Bono’s influence was vindication.” The Bush Administration had wryly nicknamed Bono “The Pest,” because of his pesky lobbying, but Bush publicly commended Bono at the White House MCA announcement for the “responsible” use of his “position,” citing his willingness “to lead to achieve what his heart tells him, and that is nobody – nobody – should be living in poverty and hopelessness in the world.”¹⁹⁰ Bono admitted that “It is much easier and hipper for me to be on the barricades with a handkerchief over my nose. It looks better on the resume of a rock n’ roll star. But I can do better by just getting into the White House and talking to a man who I believe listens, wants to listen, on these subjects.”¹⁹¹ Bono spoke of the experience with Michka Assayas: “On the Millennium Challenge, [Bush] was delivering. He was agreeing to the pitch, so it was a different mood. I was laying the ground for the next pitch, a historic AIDS initiative, but I didn’t want to be too overt.”¹⁹² The MCA legislation was one of Bono’s most substantial political achievements. The financial aspect alone surpassed his previous efforts, but the swaying of the Bush Administration to adopt his agenda after it was established that they were uninterested in African aid was perhaps the most impressive element. Bono’s effort took all of his political skills including persistence, charisma, expertise, and coalition building.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid and *President Proposes \$5 Billion Plan to Help Developing Nations*, The White House Office of Press Secretary Press Release, 14 March 2002.

¹⁹¹ *Bono Meets President*, St. Petersburg Times, 15 March 2002, 2B.

¹⁹² Assayas, 2005, 233.

After Bush's MCA announcement, Jesse Helms called for \$500 million in additional funding to combat African AIDS by proposing an amendment to the emergency supplemental appropriations bill with Tennessee Republican Senator Bill Frist, also a noted African development proponent. Helms and Frist made the funding contingent on matching private sector dollars pegged to the U.S. agency for International Development's HIV/AIDS programs.¹⁹³ *The Boston Globe* reported that "the climate in Washington to dramatically increase foreign assistance to poor countries is better than it has been in years," and noted the turning point may have been when Bono and Jesse Helms "began quoting scriptures to each other." *The Boston Globe* also reported that Helms' aides confirmed the momentous occasion noting that "From that private meeting last year, the arch-conservative and deeply religious senator began questioning why the United States wasn't doing much more to fight AIDS in Africa."¹⁹⁴ Bono could once again claim responsibility for helping to influence the political agenda on African aid issues.

In May 2002 Bono accompanied Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill on a highly publicized trip to Africa, in an effort charged with investigating the best uses for the new MCA measure. The rock star and the former Alcoa Chief Executive were dubbed "the odd couple" by "almost every newspaper which covered the ten-day tour around Ghana, Uganda, Ethiopia and South Africa."¹⁹⁵ During the first stages of the tour O'Neill and Bono offered contrary strategies regarding the correct way to help Africa – O'Neill emphasizing the role

¹⁹³ Jesse Helms, 24 March 2002, B07.

¹⁹⁴ John Donnelly, "Helms's Reversal on US Aid Reverberates: Senator Seeks \$500M to Help Stamp Out AIDS Transmission in Africa," *The Boston Globe*, 27 March 2002, A12.

¹⁹⁵ Satiyesh Manoharajah, "Bono Who?" *The Guardian*, 2 June 2002.

of business investment and downplaying aid, noting its past ineffectiveness, and Bono continually prodding the man with “a very big wallet” to increase aid.¹⁹⁶ During their trip Bono explained O’Neill’s position noting he “is hanging on very tightly to the excuse that the reason that the U.S. is at the bottom of the league table, in rich-country contributions to poor countries, is because aid is inefficient.” As the trip progressed, O’Neill appeared to grow more indignant at the lack of basic needs such as water in Africa. In one Ghanaian village O’Neill commented that the water “looks like rinse water from a washing machine,” and questioned rhetorically, “I don’t understand why one of life’s most important conditions, namely clean water, hasn’t been solved.”¹⁹⁷

Suskind reports that O’Neill’s comments at a Ghanaian press conference were indicative of his shifting position: “We can create the basis for real change... the potential is there, the potential exists here for a much more productive society that has much better enjoyment of life and life’s conditions.”¹⁹⁸ Suskind dryly notes that “the script notes [between Bono and O’Neill] began to blur.” O’Neill eventually “took an unexpected position” when he called for increased international aid for Africa during another African press conference: “the world community ought to provide substantially more money for treating poor people afflicted with AIDS and the human immunodeficiency virus that causes the disease.”¹⁹⁹ *The Washington Post* noted the “political” nature of O’Neill’s comments,

¹⁹⁶ Paul Blustein, “Good Spirits Despite Differences; O’Neill, Bono Disagree About Aid but Get Along Well on 4-Nation Tour of Africa,” *The Washington Post*, 26 May 2002, A24.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Suskind, 2004, 246.

¹⁹⁹ Paul Blustein, “Mothers With AIDS Move O’Neill to Back Money for Treatment,” *The Washington Post*, 25 May 2002, A25.

citing his ability to “sway opinion” in both the Bush Administration and Congress on these matters – a pertinent issue given Congress was “considering several bills to substantially increase spending on global AIDS relief.”²⁰⁰ O’Neill was cautious about endorsing any legislation though, and warned that “Before we know whether we need more money in the supplemental, we need to understand, for God’s sake, what we are going to do with what we have got.”

Bono noticed O’Neill “getting angrier by the day,” but the Treasury Secretary still preached a steady diet of fair trade talk, which was beginning to influence the rock star as well.²⁰¹ O’Neill explained that “Africa would benefit more from even a modest expansion of trade than from a radical increase in aid.”²⁰² Bono had explored the trade angle with both policy expert Fred C. Bergsten and conservative economist Robert Barro, and O’Neill’s endorsement may have cemented this particular strategy for Bono, which would soon become the “T” in DATA (Trade). As he explained to Michka Assayas (emphasis added):

[O’Neill had] been telling me the future of Africa is in the hands of business and commerce. And I knew that to be sort of true, but not as much as I needed to, *and this opened my mind to subjects like unfair trade relationships*. It’s a shock to discover that for all our talk of the free market, the poorest people on Earth are not allowed to put their products on our shelves in an evenhanded way. They have to negotiate all kinds of tariffs and taxes. It’s not a level playing field. We can sell to them, but they can’t sell to us. I started to realize that even the most friendly faces to

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Ibid.

²⁰² James Traub, 18 September 2005.

Africa in Congress would obstruct trade reform. It was the left that sponsored the Farm Bill in the United States, which subsidizes American agriculture and makes it impossible for African farmers to compete. Imagine the shock of walking through the markets in Accra, Ghana, where ghettos have been swollen with out-of-work rice farmers, to find cheap American and Vietnamese rice on sale to people who used to produce their own.

Bono's comments here starkly illustrate both his quest and his capacity for learning the details of the issues, of which his eventual issue-knowledge and expertise are results. His comments also highlight his open-minded, non-ideological mindset which is surely beneficial in pursuing his nonpartisan, coalition building strategies.

O'Neill became particularly interested in the incomprehensible African dirty water situation, which confounded the Treasury Secretary considering the "billions" in aid monies that have poured into Africa. O'Neill had calculated a \$25 million price tag for a system of new wells that could provide clean water to an entire African country such as Uganda. O'Neill presented his \$25 million plan to Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni during the African trip, who somberly told the Treasury Secretary, "it will cost many times your price."²⁰³ Museveni was citing the results of a Ugandan water system study commissioned from a U.S. consulting firm that put the cost at \$2 billion. After O'Neill examined the consultant's study, he perplexedly deciphered it for the Ugandan president: "...this is recommending you build a water system like in Detroit or Cleveland. You won't need that

²⁰³ Suskind, 2004, 254.

for a hundred years. You just need to drop wells, and mostly maintain them. Your people can handle the rest. We can do this quickly, maybe a year or two.”²⁰⁴

After the African adventure O’Neill “returned to Washington with the fervor of a convert” and began pitching his \$25 million water project to anyone who would listen – reporters and administration officials alike.²⁰⁵ On June 3 he met with Condoleezza Rice and relayed his experience of African HIV, hunger, and dirty water, and rationalized that “We can focus on this and show real results, and that can really help the people of Africa.”²⁰⁶ Rice was aware of his clean water “mission” as “It had been in several newspaper stories” including one in which O’Neill “[breached]” the “message control protocol” of the White House through his “extemporaneous speech with commitments attached.” This was typified in an interview with George Stephanopoulos for ABC’s *This Week* in which O’Neill claimed that the U.S. government “...can insist that our aid money go for tangible results in creating wells and the distribution of water.”²⁰⁷ Nonetheless, Rice was “surprised” by O’Neill’s water plan as “they’d only talked in passing about water before O’Neill left.” Rice was “noncommittal” and as Suskind notes “knew the president might not like [O’Neill’s] edgy, anything-might-happen appeal that had few, if any, precedents for a cabinet secretary.”²⁰⁸

O’Neill also pitched the idea to Secretary of State Colin Powell by appealing to his legacy: “If we bring the water, it’s something, Colin, we’ll be remembered for – and

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ Suskind, 2004, 256.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Ibid, 257.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

remembered favorably for – long after the two of us are gone.”²⁰⁹ Powell reportedly “laughed” and exclaimed, “You certainly can stir things up, Paul, just like always... I think you are really on to something,” but confessed that he would “have to think through the geopolitical logistics.” O’Neill then penned an African policy memo to President Bush and outlined the situation “in a broader context of foreign policy” stating the need for a “nonmilitary” foreign policy characterized by value and respect for the developing world.²¹⁰ O’Neill specifically called for “enforcing a rule of law, respect for human rights, and fighting corruption.” He listed “priorities” citing “the plague of HIV/AIDS,” education and clean water, noting that “This is an area where we should be able to make the greatest difference in the shortest time.”

O’Neill finally got a presidential one-on-one on August 12 in Waco, Texas, and thus presented his clean water mission. He told Bush about the \$25 million Ugandan plan, noting that it “would be a real demonstration model... for what America can do to make life better for real people with real struggles.”²¹¹ Bush “asked a few perfunctory questions,” but seemed more concerned with O’Neill’s thoughts on “reordering” structural issues within the World Bank and the IMF. O’Neill felt that if Bush “didn’t connect in the first minute or two, it was a lost cause,” and in this case “There seemed to be nowhere to go.”²¹² O’Neill then “gave it one last shot” and petitioned the president:

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Ibid, 258-259.

²¹¹ Ibid, 266.

²¹² Ibid, 266-267.

For just twenty five million, we should establish a project, with goals of twenty-four to thirty-six months at the outside, to help provide clean water to everyone in Ghana as a demonstration model, demonstrating our values as Americans, and our ingenuity, and that this can be done for a reasonable cost and it can be done fast. You don't have to leave another generation to the vagaries of whether it rains or not, for chrissake!"

Bush "looked blankly at him," leading O'Neill to "[switch] quickly to AIDS," and pled for an "historic effort." Bush responded that he "was on the case" and stated that "...we need to do something important here. The question is what, and how big?" O'Neill replied that he'd "push to the theoretical limits of the possible," a comment that led Bush to nod and change the subject to the economy.²¹³ Nearly four months later on December 5, O'Neill was fired from the Bush Administration in what had been a long brewing showdown between the pragmatic Treasury Secretary and the ideologue president. Suskind writes that Bush required a loyalty "O'Neill could never swallow."²¹⁴ O'Neill explained that Bush required "a false kind of loyalty, loyalty to a person and whatever they say or do," and added: "...that's the opposite of real loyalty, which is loyalty based on inquiry, and telling someone what you really think and feel – your best estimation of the truth instead of what they want to hear."²¹⁵ Bono called to offer his condolences and told O'Neill, "You're not a politician, that was always your strength," noting that he "had tried to make a difference but found out it was

²¹³ Ibid, 268.

²¹⁴ Ibid, 326.

²¹⁵ Ibid, 326.

about winning.”²¹⁶ In an interview with O’Neill biographer Ron Suskind, Bono spoke well of the former Treasury Secretary: “O’Neill is amazingly loyal – an old fashioned thing, really – and he inspires great loyalty in others. That’s because he looks at you as an equal; there’s no arrogance there. He just wants to know what you’re thinking – and he really listens.”²¹⁷

The O’Neill episode is one of the more fascinating political conversions of which Bono has been a part. On the surface O’Neill was portrayed as a stiff corporate CEO who was tapped by the conservative Republican administration to efficiently guide the Treasury Department – but he has been known to be more than just a coldhearted capitalist, especially on his environmental stance. O’Neill discussed his environmental proclivities in an interview with Robert F. Kennedy Jr., in which he called pollution a “leadership failure,” and recounted the time when he told the Alcoa board that “We are environmentalists first and industrialists second.”²¹⁸ O’Neill also gave a speech on global warming that was published as a booklet. The point is that O’Neill’s African conversion was not a miracle, and probably had more to do with facts on-the-ground as opposed to Bono’s influence, especially considering as Treasury Secretary he initially refused to meet Bono. It is also important to note that O’Neill may have never visited Africa sans Bono. As in most incidents that this work investigates, there were more factors involved than simply Bono, but the rock star’s efforts have been substantial, and even integral in some cases.

²¹⁶ Ibid, 321.

²¹⁷ Ibid, vii.

²¹⁸ Robert F. Kennedy Jr., *Crimes Against Nature: How George Bush and His Corporate Pals Are Plundering the Country and Hijacking Our Democracy*, New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2004, 107.

International Efforts

Although it was apparent that Bono was primarily focused on lobbying the United States during the early years of the new millennium, he had not abandoned his international efforts. In June 2002 the annual G8 summit was being held in Alberta, Canada, and was ostensibly focused on Africa, thanks in large part to Bono's lobbying of Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chrétien. Chrétien promised Bono that Africa would be "center stage" and "Canada was prepared to open trade to all of the poorest countries of Africa."²¹⁹ There was hope that 2002's G8 summit would accomplish what the 2001 Genoa, Italy G8 debacle, which was surrounded by protest, rioting, and violence, failed to do – create an historic plan to help Africa. It was during the 2001 summit that Chrétien had originally approached Bono and the two met on a "luxury cruise ship" in Genoa.²²⁰ Bono was roundly criticized during the 2001 G8 meeting when photos appeared of the rock star laughing with world leaders in the safety of the summit compound as Genoa descended into chaos. Bono explained to Michka Assayas that the picture caught his amused response to Russian President Vladimir Putin, who jokingly asked Bono "to go to work for him on Russia's debt."²²¹ Bono also acknowledged that it was "one of the worst moments for me ever captured in a photograph." He recalls: "The city looked like a war zone. A lot of people got hurt in riots. A young man lost his life to an Italian policeman, and I was documented [on] the other side of the riot line, laughing with the politicians."

²¹⁹ Charles Cobb Jr., "AAGM: Rock Star Bono's Agenda for Africa," *Financial Times*, 1 March 2002.

²²⁰ Anne Dawson, "Chrétien Rocks with Bono; Rockers Ask PM to Help End Debt In Third World," *The Toronto Sun*, 22 July 2001, 4.

²²¹ Assayas, 2005, 237.

In February 2002 Bono and Chrétien met again to discuss the upcoming Canadian G8 plan at a New York Hotel where both were in town attending the World Economic Forum. Bono praised the Canadian leader's integrity noting: "It's just great to have a Prime Minister, you know, walk like he talks," and exclaimed that Chrétien "really is leading the world on this."²²² Bono had also struck-up a friendship with Canadian Finance Minister Paul Martin, who would succeed Chrétien as Prime Minister in December 2003. Bono spoke glowingly of both: "These Canadian politicians keep taking the lead on issues that really concern us, the people who are in what you might call the movement for change in the developing world."²²³ Chrétien challenged international leaders to "join with committed Africans in a new partnership for development, growth, and prosperity" during his speech at the World Economic Forum.

One week later at the meeting of the G7 finance ministers in Canada, Chrétien charged Paul Martin with "[stirring] interest" in his "African initiative."²²⁴ Martin may have attempted to pitch the initiative to his fellow finance ministers, but U.S. Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill wasn't impressed. When reporters queried O'Neill about the G7's discussion of Chrétien's African initiative, he noted that it was "touched on in only the most general of terms," and then as *The Ottawa Citizen* reported, "launched into an unprompted appreciation

²²² David Gamble, "Canada Singing Bono's Tune; U2 Star Praises PM, Liberals," *The Toronto Sun*, 2 February 2002, 4.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Mike Blanchfield, "Treasury Secretary Lauds Bono's Efforts to Help Poor," *The Ottawa Citizen*, 10 February 2002, A5.

of Bono,” noting that Bono had become “the real driving force behind raising the profile of Africa on the world stage.”²²⁵

In April 2002 Chrétien took his own seven-nation trip to Africa in an attempt to highlight his upcoming G8 African initiative. The Montreal newspaper *The Gazette* observed that “Not since the end of the Cold War... has the issue of foreign aid lit up the global radar screen as brightly as it does now,” and gave credit to Bono noting: “For a while there, it was starting to seem that Canada’s foreign policy was being set by Bono of the Irish rock group U2, whose lobbying on the issue of Third World debt relief seems to have been a major factor prodding Canada into playing a leading role among industrialized nations.”²²⁶ *The Toronto Sun* had also credited Bono with Finance Minister Paul Martin’s fall 2000 \$1 billion poor-country debt cancellation deal.²²⁷

As the G8 summit approached rumors began to circulate that Bono would attend the summit, but due to touring conflicts with U2 he was unable to appear. Bono called the Prime Minister offering “his regrets” and thanked him “for keeping the African issue at the forefront of discussion.”²²⁸ Bono did manage to lobby one more G8 leader before the Canadian summit, when in mid-June he met with French President Jacques Chirac in Paris. In the days preceding the summit Chrétien had to repeatedly defend his African agenda to the other G8 leaders, most notably American President George W. Bush, who wanted Iraq to

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ *Foreign Aid in Focus*, *The Gazette*, 1 April 2002, B2.

²²⁷ Anne Dawson, “Chrétien Rocks with Bono; Rockers Ask PM to Help End Debt In Third World,” *The Toronto Sun*, 22 July 2001, 4.

²²⁸ *Bono Not Attending Summit, Sends Regrets to Chrétien*, *Ottawa Citizen*, 27 June 2002, A3.

be the focus.²²⁹ Chrétien responded to the reports in a “feisty” manner and “insisted” that “his African aid plan [wouldn’t] be shoved aside,” and candidly reminded reporters that he was “the chair” of the summit.²³⁰ The initiative was being viewed as politically definitive for Chrétien (*The Toronto Sun* reported that Chrétien’s African initiative “is vital to [him] and has been billed as the legacy of his nine-year leadership.”), and it was no surprise that he voraciously defended his agenda.

The super-hyped deal that was brokered by G8 leaders that weekend in the Canadian mountain resort town of Kananaskis, Alberta, offered Africa a seemingly paltry \$1 billion – an amount *The Daily Telegraph* noted that G8 nations spent everyday on farm subsidies.²³¹ Numerous aid organizations panned the deal, but British Prime Minister Tony Blair was more astute, calling the deal a “significant step” considering “the summit should spend a day discussing an African Action Plan,” and predicted that “This rightly will be remembered and known as the summit that devoted the lion’s share of its attention to Africa.” Blair sounded historic when he explained: “We are going to help Africa help itself. This is not old-fashioned aid – it’s a genuine partnership for the renewal of Africa.”²³² *The Financial Times* reported that Blair “had been lobbying vigorously for extra money” at the summit.²³³ French President Chirac also “made a strong plea for increased assistance to Africa” and called “on all countries to react,” adding that “the evils which are overcoming Africa wound us as

²²⁹ Maria McClintlock and David Gamble, “Agenda Not Lost: PM; African Plan Top Priority at Kananaskis G8 Conference,” *The Toronto Sun*, 25 June 2002, 18.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*

²³¹ Andy McSmith, “Leaders ‘Lack the Will to Solve World Poverty,’” *The Daily Telegraph*, 28 June 2002, 14.

²³² *Ibid.*

²³³ Christopher Adams and Ken Warn, “Africa Rescue Plan Sadly Inadequate, Say Aid Agencies,” *The Financial Times*, 28 June 2002, 10.

well.” Bono was blunt in his criticism of what he perceived as Chrétien’s failure “to convince world leaders to fork over significant aid money for Africa.”²³⁴ He complained: “It was an inspired thing, I think, of Prime Minister Chrétien... to have it as the centerpiece at this year’s G8, but really what I’m looking at is a lot of rhetoric, a lot of the old numbers just kind of fiddled with. Basically, the scale of the response does not match the scale of the problem.”²³⁵

DATA - Debt AIDS Trade Africa

Bono’s think tank and lobbying firm DATA was conceived at least a year earlier in 2001 when Bono had begun to recruit staff and gather funding.²³⁶ Seth Amgott, who worked with Bono during the Jubilee 2000 Campaign as Media Spokesman for Oxfam and eventually became DATA’s Communication Director, explained why DATA was formed: “[Bono] was enormously successful as a lobbyist and attracting attention to these issues, and the idea was to formalize it somehow, and have staff and lobbyists, and access to the best policy minds, and to work with the rest of Washington in a continuous fashion.”²³⁷ Amgott noted that Bono “cast a wide net” that included co-founder Bobby Shriver and director Jamie Drummond in brainstorming ideas that eventually materialized into DATA. In 2002 DATA opened its two offices in London and Washington D.C and currently has 25 full-time

²³⁴ Maria McClintlock, “Bono: Chrétien Failed Africans,” *The Toronto Sun*, 29 June 2002, 10.

²³⁵ Ibid.

²³⁶ Cathleen Falsani, “Bono’s America,” *Christianity Today*, March 2003, 44; and *Bono-Think*, *The Wall Street Journal*, 17 June 2002, A18.

²³⁷ As reported to the author in a personal telephone interview with Seth Amgott on 9 December 2005.

staffers.²³⁸ DATA's two-part mission consists of raising public awareness and lobbying governments in the "world's wealthy nations (The United States, Europe, Canada and Japan)" about Africa's unsustainable debts, HIV/AIDS crisis and unfair trade position, and is detailed in Figures 1 and 2.²³⁹ Figure 1 is taken from a section on the website entitled "What is DATA?" Figure 2 contains sections from the website entitled "What does DATA do?" and "What is DATA proposing?" Figure 1 also outlines DATA's goal in persuading governments to provide "more resources towards Africa, and to adopt policy that helps rather than hinders Africa in achieving long-term prosperity." In return DATA calls on African governments to provide "democracy, accountability and transparency." DATA also networks with other African-focused "grassroots organizations" and NGOs, which include "international networks" in Australia, Canada, Japan and "Africa itself." DATA also uses celebrities to "[focus] public attention on Africa," and consults with other policy "experts" to inform their debate. DATA cites humanitarian, economic and security reasons to justify its position. Birdsall and Williamson explain the strategy behind DATA's complex mission noting the importance of addressing several development issues (emphasis added):²⁴⁰

Debt relief is not a magic bullet for getting the development process in poor countries back on the rails. Indeed, elementary arithmetic tells us that – if the estimates of the costs of achieving the millennium development goals are anywhere near the mark – even complete debt cancellation would not come close to sufficing.

Any campaign directed to achieving these goals needs to focus on the issues of trade

²³⁸ DATA website: <http://data.org/whydata/faqs/>; Eamon Javers, "Bono's K Street Connection," *CQ Weekly*, 28 March 2005, 762-3.

²³⁹ Figures 1 and 2 were taken directly from DATA's website www.data.org on 28 September 2005.

²⁴⁰ Birdsall and Williamson, 2002, 101.

and aid, not just on debt – *as does Bono’s new campaign leading up to the 2002 Group of Eight summit*. There is also, of course, a whole agenda of domestic reforms that developing countries themselves need to pursue, spanning governance, macroeconomic discipline, the institutional infrastructure of a market economy, public expenditure based on social services, and other priorities, as emphasized in the Monterrey consensus.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the “Monterrey consensus” mentioned by Birdsall and Williamson refer to a set of eight U.N. goals that were developed from the September 2000 U.N. Millennium Declaration and are meant to “work toward a world that would promote peace and social justice, eradicate chronic poverty, and support sustainable development.”²⁴¹ The goals and their year 2015 targets were formally adopted by the U.N. General Assembly in December 2001 and signed at the March 2002 U.N. inaugural International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey, Mexico, by “all 191 U.N. member states.”²⁴² Several of the goals mirror those of DATA’s for the African continent. The goals are as follows:

1. Eliminate extreme hunger and poverty
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases

²⁴¹ Shalendra D. Sharma, “The Promise of Monterrey: Meeting the Millennium Development Goals,” *World Policy Journal* (Fall 2004), 51.

²⁴² Sachs, 2005, 25.

7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

DATA's United States Efforts

DATA's inception created an indistinguishable line between the actions of Bono and his organization. Bono's political lobbying now presumably represents DATA, but in actuality represents minimal divergence from his past lobbying actions. It is at this point he fully evolved from being just a "rock star with a cause" to an institutionally legitimate lobbyist within the Washington machine. This work from this point forward will treat Bono's actions as synonymous with and representative of DATA's, as he and his think tank/lobbying firm rarely make the distinction.

DATA's first public entrée on to the American landscape was the December 2002 "Heart of America Tour," in which Bono, actress Ashley Judd, comedian/actor Chris Tucker and bicyclist Lance Armstrong visited a host of public and private institutions including churches, colleges and truck stops to "spread awareness of the AIDS emergency."²⁴³ The tour hit towns from Nebraska to Tennessee, and featured financial guru Warren Buffet at its December 1 kickoff in Lincoln, Nebraska, who offered his support to DATA as well as his feelings about Bono: "I admire him enormously and believe his cause is just. As a Nebraskan, I am proud that Bono chose to begin his Heart of America tour here in

²⁴³ *Heart of America Tour: Africa's Future and Ours' Kicks Off on World AIDS Day*, DATA press release, 11 November 2002.

Lincoln.”²⁴⁴ Buffet also advised Bono not to “appeal to America’s conscience,” but rather “Appeal to its greatness.”

²⁴⁴ *Warren Buffet Joins Activists Bono, Ashley Judd, and Lance Armstrong to Kick Off the Heart of America Tour in Lincoln, Nebraska*, DATA press release, 1 December 2002.

DATA aims to raise awareness about, and spark response to the crises swamping Africa: unpayable Debts, uncontrolled spread of AIDS, and unfair Trade rules which keep Africans poor.

DATA is part of a rising tide of action by people like you to beat back these crises.

The organization was founded in 2002 by Bono, the lead singer of U2, along with Bobby Shriver and activists from the Jubilee 2000 Drop the Debt campaign. At the core of DATA's mission is a view that these issues are not about charity, but about equality and justice.

DATA calls on the governments of the world's wealthy nations — the United States, Europe, Canada and Japan — to put more resources towards Africa, and to adopt policy that helps rather than hinders Africa in achieving long-term prosperity. We also call on Africa's leaders to strengthen Democracy, Accountability and Transparency toward their own citizens- to make sure that support for African people goes where it's intended and makes a real difference.

DATA is bringing people and organizations from all around the world together to stop the spread of AIDS and extreme poverty in Africa. From our offices in Washington D.C. and Los Angeles, we work in partnership with grassroots organizers and other non-governmental organizations across the US to build a movement of Americans who want to help Africans achieve a better future and want their government to do the same.

In Europe, our office in London works with other organizations to raise awareness and put pressure on governments, especially the members of the G8 and the EU (U.K., France, Germany, Italy) who, alongside the US, are the world's largest economies. Through international networks, we also work with campaigners in other countries such as Australia, Canada and Japan as well as in Africa itself.

DATA has focused public attention on Africa through trips to the continent with high-profile celebrities (such as Bono, Bob Geldof and Chris Tucker), politicians and media, as well as inviting African activists from Uganda and Ghana to tour with celebrities through the United States (such as Ashley Judd, Warren Buffett and Lance Armstrong), as well as through reports on whether politicians are keeping their promises to Africa.

We talk to the experts, so we know what is really working — and what's not. We pull together, summarize and explain cutting-edge research on what works in Africa — and use our access to deliver those insights to top officials who might otherwise not hear the message of hope. And above all, we work to tell our leaders and politicians that people like YOU want to see action.

Again and again, politicians tell us they want to do more for Africa. Then they don't. Why? Because they don't hear from YOU — their citizens, voters and taxpayers — that you care and want to see something done. We're here to get the word out that you do care — and to give YOU the best ways to get the word out for yourself.

Fig. 1. What is DATA?²⁴⁵

²⁴⁵ Figure 1 was taken directly from DATA's website on 28 September, Available [Online]: www.data.org 2005.

DATA works to raise awareness of the crisis facing Africa and to increase support in the United States and abroad to address this issue. We lobby the governments of wealthy nations to increase funding and promote policies which will benefit Africa. We also work to inform citizens of wealthier countries and to increase grassroots support for better policies towards Africa.

What is DATA Proposing?

DATA advocates a comprehensive and sustainable solution to the crises of poverty and disease that plague the African continent. For humanitarian, economic and security reasons, DATA is asking for a real commitment from richer countries to:

Relieve unpayable debts — Many African countries are paying more in old debts to rich countries than they pay for health care or education for their own people! These countries have developed clear and budgeted plans for how they could fight poverty if only the resources were available and debt relief is one way to provide those resources. The rich countries that have already committed to forgiving African debt need to follow through and they also need to work with the World Bank and the IMF to forgive the debts owed to these international organizations.

Fight the AIDS crisis — Africa is home to 30 million living with HIV/AIDS; 6,500 die every day and there are already 11 million orphans. AIDS is a global emergency and the whole world needs to work together to fight it. It will cost more than \$10 billion per year to fight this killer; so far, we're spending less than half that amount. Every year we wait to fully fight the epidemic, more people die and the overall cost of stopping AIDS gets bigger. Rich countries need to work with Africa to raise the money needed, to fight the stigma attached to living with AIDS, and to make sure the drugs that are needed to fight AIDS and other diseases are available to Africans.

Provide more development assistance — Development assistance is critical to helping countries pay for education, health care, clean water, roads and other development priorities. We've set a global goal of dedicating 0.7% of our nations' wealth on the poor people of the world — but most rich countries aren't even close to that goal. While increasing the quantity of development assistance, we also need to improve the quality of development to make sure that every dollar, euro, and yen we send is as effective as possible.

Make trade fair so that Africa can work to boost its own economic growth — Africa is currently limited in its ability to earn resources through trade because international trade rules limit Africans' ability to sell their products abroad and allow for U.S. and European goods to be 'dumped' into African markets at disproportionately low prices. The U.S. should open its market quota and duty free to all African exports and remove agricultural subsidies which hurt African farmers.

We're not asking for cookie-cutter solutions or band-aids. We're looking for the richer countries of the world to stand up and say enough is enough. Only by making a long-term commitment can the U.S. truly help Africa achieve the internationally agreed upon Millennium Development Goals to cut poverty in half.

Fig. 2. What Does DATA Do?²⁴⁶

²⁴⁶ Figure 2 was taken directly from DATA's website on 28 September, Available [Online]: www.data.org 2005.

During the tour DATA activists distributed a total of 10,000 “action cards” that could be sent to Congress or the president, and which “[demanded] that the crisis in Africa be answered with an historic AIDS initiative.”²⁴⁷ In Chicago Bono met with pastor Bill Hybels of suburban mega-church Willow Creek, who “came away convinced that Bono’s faith is genuine, his vision to relieve the tragic suffering in Africa is God-honoring, and his prophetic challenge to the U.S. church must be taken seriously.”²⁴⁸ Bono spoke to numerous churches and “repeatedly” told congregations that the African AIDS crisis “is the defining moral issue of our time.”²⁴⁹ Bono also commented on the sometimes incongruous relationship between HIV/AIDS and the Christian church during a speech at JFK airport in New York where 80,000 gift boxes were being sent to African children with HIV by Franklin Graham’s Operation Christmas Child: “It brings out the best in the church, like you see today in response to these children suffering HIV. But if we’re honest, it has also brought out the worst in the church. Judgmentalism [sic], a kind of sense that people who have AIDS, well, they got it because they deserve it. Well from my studies of the Scriptures, I don’t see a hierarchy to sin. I don’t see sexual immorality registering higher up on the list than institutional greed – or greed of any kind, actually; Problems we suffer in the West.”²⁵⁰

Bono’s coalition building strategy strongly manifested itself during DATA’s Heart of America tour. Bono felt it was imperative to gather ground support from the Christian contingent to win his African policy battle in America – no matter the denomination. Bono

²⁴⁷ Ibid and Cathleen Falsani, *Bono’s America*, Christianity Today, March 2003, 44.

²⁴⁸ Cathleen Falsani, March 2003, 40-41.

²⁴⁹ Ibid, 41.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

and DATA hit St. Paul's United Methodist Church in Lincoln, the "evangelical Mecca" Wheaton College outside Chicago, Northeast Christian Church in Louisville, Kentucky, and several others. Bono explained his strategy in a *Christianity Today* interview, which was ultimately the same reason he granted an interview to the Christian publication: "This is what's important and why I would be doing this interview with *Christianity Today*, to implore the church to reconsider grace, to put an end to the hierarchy of sin... All have fallen short. Let's stop throwing stones at people who've made mistakes in their life, and let's start throwing drugs."²⁵¹ It was now obvious that DATA would utilize Bono's strategies of nonpartisanship and coalition-building, and exemplified by DATA's goal of "uniting liberals and social conservatives."²⁵²

In early 2003 Bono's and DATA's efforts to increase U.S. assistance for the African AIDS epidemic were unexpectedly addressed during the President's January 28 State of the Union speech. Africa received top billing as Bush unveiled his new unprecedented plan to combat African HIV/AIDS – the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Bush asked Congress to treble its current U.S. African AIDS spending, an amount that would total \$15 billion over the next five years. Kofi Annan reflected the importance of the announcement noting: "This is an enormous breakthrough. It's the first time in the history of this pandemic that we are seeing a commitment for anything on the scale that is necessary."²⁵³ *The Washington Post* reported that Bush "even surprised many Republicans"

²⁵¹ Ibid, 43.

²⁵² Eamon Javers, 28 March 2005, 762-3.

²⁵³ Mike Allen and Paul Blustein, "Unlikely Allies Influenced Bush to Shift Course on AIDS Relief," *The Washington Post*, 30 January 2003, A1.

with the African announcement and noted that it “represented a marked change from the position shortly after Bush took office...”²⁵⁴ *Foreign Affairs* called the president’s “dramatically” increased foreign aid “One of the greatest surprises of George W. Bush’s presidency,” citing both the MCA and the AIDS bill, and called PEPFAR “a huge step forward for an administration in which several top officials had publicly questioned whether Africans have the capacity to implement treatment programs effectively.”²⁵⁵ In addition, *Foreign Affairs* credited “the Helms conversion, coupled with quiet backing from conservative religious leaders such as Franklin Graham,” as providing “enough support” to enact the revolutionary AIDS program. *The Washington Post* credited Bush’s “remarkable turnabout” to “An unlikely coalition of Christian evangelicals and liberal activists.” It was also reported that Bush administration officials “[were] convinced of the scale of the crisis in part because of trips to Africa last year by outgoing Treasury Secretary Paul O’Neill and Commerce Secretary Donald L. Evans.”²⁵⁶ The *Post* also mentioned that “Several administration officials [had] become friends of Bono.”

Although Bono had been a postscript in the *Washington Post* article, his involvement was imperative to the PEPFAR announcement, as evidenced by his many lobbying meetings and resulting ideological converts such as Paul O’Neill. And there was the promise for an AIDS initiative from Condoleezza Rice. In addition, the Bush administration’s summoning of key DATA personnel for the MCA showed their reliance on the policy wonks for the

²⁵⁴ Ibid

²⁵⁵ Steven Radelet, “Bush and Foreign Aid,” *Foreign Affairs*, (September/October 2003), 82, no. 5 104-117.

²⁵⁶ Mike Allen and Paul Blustein, “Unlikely Allies Influenced Bush to Shift Course on AIDS Relief,” *The Washington Post*, 30 January 2003, A1.

development of legislation. Bono had also written an editorial in *The Washington Post* the day before the State of the Union Speech, which urged the president to talk about the AIDS crisis “for a few minutes... and define a historic American response.”²⁵⁷ President Bush appeared to answer Bono’s challenge directly in the State of the Union speech when he noted: “Ladies and gentlemen, seldom has history offered a greater opportunity to do so much for so many.”²⁵⁸ Bono’s article also recounted his meetings with Bush who had “promised that despite the deficit... these efforts would not go without funding.” In addition, Bono wrote of “[hearing] the rumblings of a movement” on DATA’s Heart of America tour. It is probable that Bono knew about the State of the Union speech beforehand, as his article seemed prescient, and Bush seemed to respond directly to Bono’s pleas.

In the subsequent DATA press release Bono sounded like a seasoned political lobbyist when he acknowledged the Congressional funding reality that lay before PEPFAR: “Now we must work with Congress to turn this vision into a funded reality and demand measurable results in the war against AIDS on the ground...”²⁵⁹ President Bush’s plan called for \$15 billion over five years, \$8.5 billion of which would be new monies distributed from a new U.S. bilateral account called the Global AIDS initiative aimed at 14 of “the hardest hit countries.” In addition, a new AIDS ambassador position was created within the State Department, with the inaugural appointment going to ex-Eli Lilly CEO Dr. Randall Tobias. \$1 billion would also be earmarked for multilateral funding through the U.N.’s Global AIDS

²⁵⁷ Bono, “Mr. President, Africa Needs Us,” *The Washington Post*, 27 January 2003, A19.

²⁵⁸ *DATA’s Reaction to President Bush’s Emergency Plan for AIDS relief*, DATA press release, 1 February 2003.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

fund. Although announced with historical overtones, these new monies would be continually contested throughout the appropriations process of the U.S. Congress.

The new AIDS funding hit political reality upon first discussions within the House of Representatives, where it initially became snared in partisan wrangle. The first issue surrounded the U.S. contribution to the U.N.'s Global Fund – which Democrats were intent on funding and argued that it was an obligation considering Congress authorized U.S. agencies to help create the fund.²⁶⁰ Other issues involved House Republicans who intended to attach conditions to the new funding, including provisions which would prohibit aid to groups that supported abortion and condom distribution.²⁶¹ The White House became involved in the fray when it helped kill a March 17 bipartisan agreement, bowing to conservative pressure over the aforementioned concerns.²⁶² Bush eventually prodded lawmakers to move on the amended version that guaranteed priority for abstinence education and allowed faith-based groups to opt-out of condom distribution. The president spoke to members of Congress, the ambassadorial corps, and AIDS activists at a White House AIDS event two days before a House vote on the amended Hyde-Lantos bill that sponsored the international AIDS funding.²⁶³ There were no subtleties in the purpose of Bush's speech when he pled with his audience: "We are here today to urge both Houses of

²⁶⁰ Niels C. Sorrells, "Bright Hope for AIDS Bill Dim in New Round of Debate," *CQ Weekly*, 8 March 2003, 570.

²⁶¹ Jonathan Riehl, "Bush Cites Uganda's Anti-AIDS Program as Template for Action," *CQ Weekly*, 8 March 2003, 571.

²⁶² Bob Cusack, "White House Derails AIDS Funding Bill; Rep. Hyde to Revise Assistance Legislation," *The Hill*, 1 April 2003, 11.

²⁶³ *Bush to Urge Action on Global AIDS Bill*, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 29 April 2003, 5A; *President Urges Congress to Act Quickly on Global HIV/AIDS Initiative*, White House Office of Press Secretary Press Release, 29 April 2003.

the United States Congress to pass the emergency plan for AIDS relief, which will dramatically expand our fight against AIDS across the globe.” Bush once again referenced the historic implications of the legislation when he starkly offered “only two possible responses” to the suffering brought on by AIDS: “We can turn our eyes away in resignation and despair, or we can take decisive, historic action to turn the tide against this disease and give the hope of life to millions who need our help now. The United States of America chooses the path of action and the path of hope.”²⁶⁴ Bush also described the self-labeled crisis citing the horrific AIDS numbers in the three months since he announced PEPFAR including 760,000 deaths, 1.2 million new infections, and 175,000 babies that had been born with the virus. He lastly urged Congressional “speed and seriousness,” and urged “all nations...to join with us in this great effort.”

On May 1 the House of Representatives overwhelmingly approved the bill 375-41, which was then sent to the Senate.²⁶⁵ A DATA press release praised the vote and noted it was “the first major legislative effort since Bono founded DATA to advance the goals he has been working on for over five years of informal work with members of Congress, heads of state and international leaders on behalf of Africa.”²⁶⁶ On May 16 the Senate speedily passed the House version unchanged – due in large part to pressure from the Bush White House. Indiana Republican and Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Richard Lugar initially pressed for his own version of the bill, but Bush “urged him to drop his own bill”

²⁶⁴ Ibid

²⁶⁵ Niels C. Sorrells, “House Passes Bush Anti-AIDS Plan; Democrats Challenge GOP Changes,” *CQ Weekly*, 3 May 2003, 1056-7.

²⁶⁶ *Bono’s Group: House Vote Advances Historic AIDS initiative*, DATA Press Release, 1 May 2003.

and pass the House bill “so Bush could have a global AIDS bill in hand” for the June G8 Summit in France.²⁶⁷ The final version did include “one minor change,” which recommended “debt relief for nations hit hardest by AIDS,” which the House accepted on May 21 and was signed into law by President Bush on the 27th. Bono was also pushing for a Congressional deal before the G8 Summit and an attached debt relief provision, positions that he outlined in a May 15 DATA press release: “Congress needs to work its will quickly to get an historic bipartisan bill by the time of the G8 Summit in France. Debt relief is a critical component of the AIDS fight; it doesn’t make sense to give AIDS cash with one hand and take debt service back with the other.”²⁶⁸

The new AIDS bill pledged up to \$1 billion per year for the U.N.’s Global Fund, but contingent on a funding match by other wealthy nations – which is partially why Bush wanted to have bill in hand at the G8 Summit. Bono quickly turned to his European ally Tony Blair, who along with new U.K. international development secretary Baroness Amos, hosted “breakfast talks” on May 22 at his Downing Street home for Bono and fellow African campaigner Bob Geldof. Blair’s official spokesman cited the occasion as an “opportunity to take stock of progress on the action plan for Africa agreed at last year’s G8 Summit.”²⁶⁹ Bono also spoke with Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi and French President Jacques Chirac “to increase pressure on the G8 to deliver something meaningful on AIDS at the G8

²⁶⁷ Niels C. Sorrells, “Political Expediency Takes Over As Senate Passes AIDS Relief Bill,” *CQ Weekly*, 17 May 2003, 1210-1.

²⁶⁸ *Bono’s Statement on Congressional Action on AIDS*, DATA Press Release, 15 May 2003.

²⁶⁹ Liane Katz, “Blair to Hold Africa Talks With Stars,” *The Guardian*, 21 May 2003.

Summit.”²⁷⁰ In addition, DATA sent all the G8 leaders a strategy package complete with a note from Bono. President Chirac responded and called for “Europe to join with the United States in the war on AIDS.”²⁷¹

The G8 Summit was mostly overshadowed by the much-publicized rift between Presidents Bush and Chirac, who had questioned the U.S. invasion of Iraq. *The Independent* reported that “discussion of the most contentious issues had been kept at a general level to avoid headlines about ‘summer splits,’ which could destabilize the world economy.”²⁷² G8 members did meet with the leaders of five African countries (Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa) to discuss progress on Africa’s New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), a 2002 deal African leaders had struck with donor countries that obliged them to “improve their economic and political governance.”²⁷³ *The Financial Times* reported that “it was still hard to find common ground both among the EU leaders and with the U.S. over their agricultural subsidies to Africa.”²⁷⁴ EU leaders also postponed their planned matching of U.S. AIDS monies to a June 20th European Council Meeting in Greece. Jamie Drummond of DATA noted that “The Europeans put off a real commitment on AIDS for three weeks...”²⁷⁵ At the June 20th meeting, Tony Blair announced that Europe would be unable to match the U.S. contribution, blaming “the smaller of the 15 existing EU members

²⁷⁰ *President Signs AIDS Bill with Added Debt relief; Clarifies Greater Support for Global Fund to Fight AIDS*, DATA Press Release, 27 May 2003.

²⁷¹ *DATA Reaction to European AIDS Funding Announcement*, DATA Press Release 1 June 2003.

²⁷² John Lichfield, “G8 Summit: Third World Attacks Failure of Evian to Tackle its Problems,” *The Independent*, 4 June 2003, 12.

²⁷³ Robert Graham and Michael Peel, “France Wants Dollars 6bn Africa Pledge to be Honoured,” *The Financial Times*, 2 June 2003, 9.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁵ *DATA Reaction to Evian G8 Summit*, DATA Press Release, 2 June 2003.

and 10 countries joining next year” as “budget problems” rendered them unable to commit the money.²⁷⁶ Bono went after the European laggards by penning an open letter to German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder that appealed for German share of EU match, and claimed that “a small group of countries including Germany are blocking this agreement.”²⁷⁷ A German government spokeswoman rebutted Bono’s accusations claiming they were “simply wrong” and added that “All claims that the present government is not doing enough in the fight against AIDS do not correspond to reality.”²⁷⁸ It was apparent that Bush was serious about the matching European contingency when he actually “undercut” the U.S. AIDS bill by requesting only \$1.65 billion in the 2004 budget.²⁷⁹ In addition, his budget request for the Millennium Challenge Account was only \$1.3 billion, \$400 million less than anticipated.²⁸⁰

In early July Bush became only the third U.S. President to visit sub-Saharan Africa when he took a week long tour of Senegal, South Africa, Botswana, Uganda and Nigeria.²⁸¹ *The Washington Post* reported that “Africa gave Bush a generally polite but indifferent welcome.”²⁸² Bush used the trip to tout the new AIDS bill and the Millennium Challenge Account, and prodded Congress to fund both. DATA simultaneously launched its “Keep America’s Promise to Africa” campaign, which was formed in response to the attempted funding cuts in Bush’s two African initiatives. The campaign sought to “raise awareness

²⁷⁶ *EU Will Not Match US AIDS Donation*, *The Guardian*, 20 June 2003.

²⁷⁷ *U2 Lead Singer Bono Calls on Schröder to back AIDS fund*, *Deutsche Presse-Agentur*, 15 July 2003.

²⁷⁸ Derek Scally, “Germans Deny Bono Claims on Blocking Funds to Fight AIDS,” *The Irish Times*, 18 July 2003, 15.

²⁷⁹ Carolyn Skornek, “Overseas AID for ’04: Back to Status Quo,” *CQ Weekly*, 14 June 2003, 1442.

²⁸⁰ *DATA Responds to Today’s Congressional Activity and Calls for America to Help Keep President Bush’s Promise to Africa*, DATA Press Release, 22 July 2003.

²⁸¹ Taken from White House website; <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/07/>

²⁸² Dana Milbank, “Bush to Congress: Fund AIDS Fight; President Vows to Work for Peace in Africa,” *The Washington Post*, 13 July 2003, A18.

across America” about the initiatives and announced a “major partnership” with America Online (AOL) designed to bring “unprecedented awareness” and educate “millions of Americans” about the African crisis.²⁸³ The campaign also enlisted a large contingent of “prominent” Christians including musicians, and nonprofit and church leaders.²⁸⁴ The Christian groups engaged in numerous activities including a pledge card drive that was distributed at concerts, festivals and churches. In addition, Bono filmed a public service announcement about the “AIDS emergency” that was shown at many of the same events.

The new DATA campaign was reacting to a July move by the House Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee that proposed \$2.1 billion for the AIDS bill, almost a third less than originally promised in Bush’s State of the Union address six months earlier and during his recent speeches in Africa.²⁸⁵ Subcommittee Chairman and Arizona Republican Jim Kolbe explained the political reality noting the original \$15 billion authorization “is a floor, not a ceiling,” even though the subcommittee’s AIDS bill budget request was actually more than Bush’s June request.²⁸⁶ Kolbe also “chided” Bush for “complicating the job” noting that Bush “compounds the problem by continuing to talk about the \$3 billion, the \$15 billion, in Africa.” The subcommittee’s ranking Democrat, Nita

²⁸³ *With President Bush in Africa, Congress Holds the Fate of Historic Presidential Promise to Africa in its Hands*, DATA Press Release, 8 July 2003.

²⁸⁴ *Churches, Christian Artists and Faith Community Play Vital Role in Urging Americans to Keep Promise to Africa, as Congress Holds Fate of Historic Presidential Promise in its Hands*, DATA Press Release, 14 July 2003.

²⁸⁵ In a July 9 meeting with South African President Thabo Mbeki Bush said: “Over the next five years, we will spend \$15 billion in the global fight against AIDS.” And In a July 11 Ugandan speech Bush noted: “over the next five years, my country will spend \$15 billion on the fight -- (applause) -- to fight AIDS around the world, with special focus here on the continent of Africa.” *President Bush Meets with South African President Mbeki*, July 8, 2003; *President Bush Discusses Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief*, White House Press Releases, 11 July 2003.

²⁸⁶ Carolyn Skornek, “House Panel Expresses Regret Over Lack of Funding for Plan To Fight HIV/AIDS Overseas,” *CQ Weekly*, 12 July 2003, 1766.

Lowey of New York perhaps interpreted Bush's pronouncements most aptly when she accused him of creating the "illusion" of funding \$3 billion for the AIDS bill in 2004, when "In reality, he requested only \$2 billion."²⁸⁷ On July 24 the House passed a \$17.2 billion foreign operations spending bill that included \$2 billion for the AIDS bill and \$800 million for the Millennium Challenge Account, a move which then sent the bills on to the Senate for consideration²⁸⁸

In September Bono began his fall American budget-time lobbying blitz anew, something that was becoming a trend for the rock star. Bono also engineered private meetings with President Bush, Condoleezza Rice, Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, Senate Minority Leader and South Dakotan Democrat Tom Daschle, and House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi.²⁸⁹ He first met with President Bush to press him on the remaining \$1 billion for the AIDS bill in a September 16 Oval Office session. Bono explained the urgency of the additional funding in an interview with *Roll Call*: "For the extra \$1 billion, this contentious extra \$1 billion, you're going to be able to prevent 1.6 million – one million, six hundred thousand people – from getting infected."²⁹⁰ Bono felt that Bush would "face long term political fallout" if the promised funding wasn't approved. He candidly noted: "It will be seized upon as proof that George Bush is insincere, that his so-called 'historic AIDS initiative' wasn't in fact. That it was an incremental improvement in AIDS numbers, [Bush's Africa trip in July] was a showpiece and that the Irish rock star was an idiot for standing in

²⁸⁷ Ibid

²⁸⁸ Carolyn Skorneck, "AIDS Program Supporters Hope Senate Will Come Through With Full Funding for Program," *CQ Weekly*, 26 July 2003, 1922.

²⁸⁹ John Bresnahan, "Bono Plays the Money Game," *Roll Call*, 16 September 2003.

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

the photographs.” Bono’s meeting with the president wasn’t his typical genial lobbying engagement as he and the president “had a good ole row” over the AIDS funding.²⁹¹ Bono reported feeling “depressed” afterwards and noted that he and the president “[couldn’t] agree on the numbers.” White House Press Secretary Scott McClellan cited aid infrastructure concerns as reason for under-funding the program in its first year. He assured reporters that funding would “continue to ramp up over time” and that it would be “a total of \$15 billion over five years.”²⁹²

Bono and DATA also hosted a Washington “Keep America’s Promise to Africa” event that “called on President Bush and Congress” to fully fund the AIDS bill and the Millennium Challenge Account.²⁹³ The event featured numerous Christian groups including the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Bread for the World, World Vision, the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. DATA claimed that the groups wrote “thousands of letters to Congress, urging support of the MCA and AIDS initiatives.” DATA also bought promotional radio ads “in targeted states” that included Pennsylvania and Ohio, home states of key U.S. Senators. The ads featured actress Ashley Judd calling out Senators Arlen Specter, Rick Santorum and Mike DeWine and asked them “to keep America’s promise of \$3 billion in the next year to fight AIDS in

²⁹¹ Mike Allen, “Bono Recounts ‘Row’ With President Over AIDS Funds; Africa Needs More Money Sooner, Singer Says,” *The Washington Post*, 17 September 2003, A3.

²⁹² White House Press Briefing by Scott McClellan, 16 September 2003.

²⁹³ *Bono, Bishops, Africa Experts Call for Full Funding on Global AIDS and Anti-Poverty Promises*, DATA Press Release, 16 September 2003.

Africa,” and called the disease “the worst plague in human history.”²⁹⁴ Judd also provided a toll-free number from which listeners could reach their respective Senator’s office in Washington.

The New York Times reported that Senator Santorum eventually became one of Bono’s “key conservative allies” and has “tried to persuade White House officials that the MCA is ‘part of our war on terror’ and should be financed accordingly.”²⁹⁵ In December 2004 Santorum wrote an op-ed in *Roll Call* where he called out Republicans noting they “have an obligation to lead the fight against the pandemic of HIV/AIDS,” and called HIV/AIDS “one of the greatest challenges of our time.”²⁹⁶ Santorum also challenged all of Congress noting it has “the responsibility to extend aid and adequate funding to the men, women and children affected by HIV/AIDS around the world.” Santorum said of Bono that he is “above anybody I’ve run into among celebrities,” and added: “He came with the proverbial baggage because of previous celebrities. He knows he has to be better than that. He has to have the knowledge...tangible, discernable goals, tangible discernable data. That, to me, is really what he has brought.”²⁹⁷ Santorum’s accolades highlight yet another instance of Bono’s talent with the facts – the rock star was beginning to become a policy expert.

The DATA ads may have had their intended effect as Ohio Republican Senator DeWine proposed a \$289 million amendment to the AIDS bill, which was passed 89-1 on

²⁹⁴ Ashley Judd Speaks Directly to Voters: Tell Senators Specter and Santorum to Fully Fund the Global AIDS Initiative, DATA Press Release, 30 September 2003; and Ashley Judd Speaks Directly to Voters: Tell Senator DeWine to Fully Fund the Global AIDS Initiative, DATA Press Release, 1 October 2003.

²⁹⁵ James Traub, 18 September 2005.

²⁹⁶ Rick Santorum, “How do Republicans and Democrats Plan to Lead in the 109th Congress?; GOP Must Keep Campaign Promises,” *Roll Call*, 6 December 2004.

²⁹⁷ *What Washington Says About Bono*, The Associated Press, 7 June 2005.

October 30 and boosted the total to \$2.4 billion – \$400 million more than the original Bush budget request. DeWine and Oklahoma Republican Don Nickles skirmished over the amendment, the latter of whom “stalled the measure for three days” because it was not offset by cuts in other foreign aid monies.²⁹⁸ Although DeWine may have been motivated by the DATA ads, he has been a noted African proponent and a “top Republican lawmaker on the AIDS issue.”²⁹⁹ DeWine was also part of a Senatorial contingent headed by Bill Frist that went on a 10 day African visit the previous August, noting he “saw pain, death and orphaned children left in the wake of this epidemic.”³⁰⁰ Bono responded in a DATA press release noting it “was a key move from the Senate” and praised the involved Senators including DeWine, and called them “the bodyguards of the world’s poor.”³⁰¹ The final funding for the AIDS bill and the Millennium Challenge Account were not officially available until January 22, 2004, as the omnibus spending bill was passed as a part of the fiscal year 2004 budget, with the AIDS bill receiving \$2.4 billion and the Millennium Challenge Account \$1 billion. DATA’s executive director Jamie Drummond called the new monies “the largest increase in U.S. assistance to poor countries in 40 years.”³⁰²

Bono’s academic advisor Jeffrey Sachs discussed the rock star’s involvement with the AIDS bill and noted he had a “front row seat in the shaping of a political coalition that

²⁹⁸ Tom Diemer, “Senate Boosts U.S. Spending to Fight Global AIDS Epidemic,” *Plain Dealer*, 1 November 2003, A7.

²⁹⁹ Jack Torry and Kevin Joy, “U2 Lead Singer Bono Hails DeWine’s Efforts to Help Poor,” *Columbus Dispatch*, 2 November 2003, 6A.

³⁰⁰ Tom Diemer, “Senate Boosts U.S. Spending to Fight Global AIDS Epidemic,” *Plain Dealer*, 1 November 2003, A7.

³⁰¹ *DeWine Amendment on Global AIDS Passes Senate by 89-1; Bono and DATA Reaction*, DATA Press Release, 31 October 2003.

³⁰² *DATA on Federal Budget Passage: Biggest Increase for Poor Countries in 40 Years*, DATA Press Release, 22 January 2004.

delivered a package of aid initially derided as preposterous.”³⁰³ Sachs also took credit for pitching the idea of “a \$3 billion per year program to the Bush administration,” and notes he briefed Condoleezza Rice “twice in the early days of the Bush administration.” Sachs told her of the “need and potential for a major expansion of AIDS treatment,” and argued for its practicality and affordability. Sachs’ ex-student and new Chief Economic Advisor to President Bush Lawrence Lindsay wasn’t hopeful when told Sachs not to “hold his breath for the \$3 billion per year.” Sachs credits the success of the AIDS bill to the broad coalition that had formed and backed the issue. He cited a contingent of “liberals, the religious right, NGOs, and a broad public far more sympathetic to action than the political leaders suspected.” Sachs saved his Bono-praise for last by noting:³⁰⁴

Once again, Bono played a unique role in pulling the coalition together, not just as a celebrity and entertainer, but as a rare individual who could reach deeply into the hearts and minds of a remarkable range of individuals. ...Bono brilliantly brought the AIDS tragedy to the attention of several key leaders of the religious right, and this in turn showed the White House that AIDS legislation was not a political trap, but actually a political boon. ...In the end this coalition was even more inclusive than usual. It involved experts from the public health and biomedical community. ...It involved celebrities, religious leaders, liberals and conservatives. And ultimately, the president.

Bono surpassed his own political efforts for the third time in as many years with the PEPFAR AIDS legislation. PEPFAR was more financially robust than the MCA legislation,

³⁰³ Sachs, 2005, 343.

³⁰⁴ Sachs, 2005, 344.

and was delivered with historic overtones. It is unknown whether DATA assisted in writing PEPFAR legislation, similar to their role in the MCA process, but it is known that Bono-mentor Jeffrey Sachs presented the idea to the Bush Administration and probably assisted in writing the bill. As Sachs' ebullient praise of Bono explains, the rock star used his remarkable coalition building talents to build the consensus that ultimately forced the issue.

The African aid that was secured for FY 2004 with the help of Bono and DATA was no small victory, but offered little time for celebration as the vicious Washington money game began anew. Ten days after DATA announced "the largest increase in U.S. assistance to poor countries in 40 years," President Bush submitted his fiscal 2005 budget proposal, which included \$2.8 billion for the global AIDS bill and \$2.5 billion for the millennium challenge account.³⁰⁵ The \$2.8 billion Bush requested for the AIDS bill was close to what was expected, as the administration had always insisted that funding would "ramp up" over five years. The MCA request was further off of the \$3.3 billion that had been anticipated. The U.N. Global Fund for AIDS took a big hit from Bush as he proposed only \$200 million for the multilateral program, down from \$550 million in Fiscal 2004. DATA's Jamie Drummond reacted by announcing plans to "work with the Administration and Congress to fully fund the Global AIDS fund, as well as the bilateral AIDS program and the Millennium Challenge, without cuts to other life saving programs."³⁰⁶ In May the first eligible MCA countries had just been announced, and half were in Africa. DATA also released a report,

³⁰⁵ U.S. Department of State Webpage, Available [Online]: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2004/28709.htm> ; International Affairs-FY 2005 Budget, Fact Sheet. Office of the Spokesman, 2 February 2004.

³⁰⁶ *Reaction to the President's Budget Request on Global AIDS and Poor Countries*, DATA Press Release, 2 February 2004.

'Meeting the Millennium Challenge,' which "[demonstrated] the existing plans and capacity" for African countries "to utilize" MCA funding.³⁰⁷

On April 20 DATA's Director of Government Relations Thomas Hart testified before the House's Subcommittee on Domestic and International Monetary Policy, Trade and Technology, and pressed the case for greater debt relief with fewer conditions for African nations. Bono also joined the Congressional testimony circuit when on May 18 he appeared as a witness representing DATA, along with AIDS ambassador Randall Tobias, before the Senate's Foreign Operations Subcommittee chaired by Kentucky Republican Mitch McConnell. Ohio Senator DeWine explained that the purpose of the hearing was to examine current and future U.S. AIDS funding in regard to Bush's Global AIDS Initiative. DeWine also used the Bono sound byte "historic" in reference to the initiative, and praised Bono's efforts noting: "We don't know anyone else who has really had the vision in this area and who has captured the attention of the public, not only in the United States, but all around the world, and we salute him for his great work as well."³⁰⁸ Vermont Democrat Patrick Leahy noted that he was "delighted that longtime friend, Bono, is here," and explained: "He is a close friend of the Leahy family. We have spent time together, each member of the family with him, and we think the world of him." Dr. Tobias continued the Bono encomiums exclaiming that "it would be hard to find anybody who's worked harder on this issue than he [has]."

³⁰⁷ *DATA Report: Meeting the Millennium Challenge*, DATA Press Release, 15 May 2004.

³⁰⁸ Transcript of U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs Holds a Hearing on FY '05 Budget Request for HIV/AIDS Programs and Research, 18 May 2004.

Tobias began by discussing the programmatic foci of the AIDS bill, noting that \$350 million had just been released to the respective countries for “antiretroviral treatment programs, prevention programs, safe medical practice programs and programs to provide care for orphans and vulnerable children.”³⁰⁹ McConnell, DeWine, Leahy and Illinois Democrat Richard Durbin then questioned Tobias about various aspects of the aforementioned programs including the organizational capacities of the involved agencies and actors. After a recess, Bono took the stand and received a glowing introduction from McConnell: “Our second witness needs no introduction. In this town, he’s known as much for his music as he is for his work on behalf of HIV/AIDS and debt relief. He’s an effective spokesman for these causes, and his political skills are as good as any on this subcommittee, perhaps even better.” Then, in a seemingly unexpected political move, McConnell mentioned a *Time* article in which Bono discussed his admiration for Burmese National League for Democracy leader and political prisoner Aung San Suu Kyi. He subsequently requested that Bono help publicize her situation with a straightforward plea: “I unabashedly use this opportunity while the spotlight shines on a high profile activist such as yourself to highlight her plight,” and added, “Bono, I know you agree that we cannot fail Suu Kyi or freedom in Burma.” The Bono/McConnell Burma connection stems from a mutual interest in Suu Kyi’s plight, and culminated with a January 2004 jointly-penned open letter to the United Nations. In the letter Bono and McConnell called for increased sanctions to help “push the Yangon regime towards democracy,” and warned that “The future of Myanmar rests with the return of democracy and the release of Aung San Suu Kyi and her

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

colleagues.”³¹⁰ It also requested involvement from U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell and U.N. leader Kofi Annan. It became clear that McConnell and Bono also wanted to use the Congressional hearing to publicize their Burmese political objectives.

After McConnell’s Burmese detour Bono gave his opening remarks, in which he recalled his previous work with McConnell on debt relief, and cited some of the accomplishments that the freed monies afforded including “three times the amount” of Ugandan children who now attend school. Bono went on to mention his work with the Bush administration on the MCA, and urged the Senators to support the president’s \$2.5 billion budget request. He also pled for more dollars for the U.N.’s Global Fund, offering commonsense reasoning: “Every dollar counts, but some dollars count for triple. By this, I’m talking about the Global Health Fund, an essential part of the fight and a vital partner to what the U.S. is doing. Every contribution America makes gets other countries to kick in more. Tony Blair says so. So does President Chirac. So does Paul Martin. I know because I’ve spoken to all these people recently. I make their lives miserable, too, you’ll be relieved to hear.”³¹¹ Bono also brought AIDS activist and African nurse Agnes Nyamayawo to testify, who after having been diagnosed HIV positive 15 years ago, offered living proof of the effectiveness of antiretroviral drugs.

The questioning from the Senators thus began, and once again, the Burmese situation surfaced when McConnell asked Bono “for the record” if he supported the “renewal of

³¹⁰ *Rock Star Bono Leads Call for Action Against Myanmar Junta*, Agence France Presse, 19 January 2004.

³¹¹ Transcript of U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs Holds a Hearing on FY '05 Budget Request for HIV/AIDS Programs and Research, 18 May 2004.

import sanctions against the Burmese Hunta [sic].” Bono enthusiastically responded, “I don’t just support it, I applaud it as loudly as I can,” and added, “Let me say on your leadership on this, there’s no one leading support for Aung San Suu Kyi like you, and to have Senator Leahy by your side and make sure that this has the support of all of America is amazing.” McConnell then sought Bono’s advice on convincing the EU for “a tougher approach...towards the generals in Rangoon,” and dryly noted, “I thought the attempted assassination of Suu Kyi last year might have gotten their attention, but apparently not.” Yet before Bono could answer, McConnell rephrased his original question more directly: “What thoughts do you have about how we get the Europeans fully engaged in the sanctions regime?” Bono’s response was astonishing considering it came from a rock star (emphasis added):

I am deeply ashamed as a European on the pitiful lack of volume in support for her. I think Prime Minister Blair has been doing some good work, but we need more and we need the rest of Europe to pay attention. *I will personally speak to Romano Prodi, who’s the president of the EU, about this and see at their next meeting if we can get a resolution.*

The testimony immediately went back to HIV/AIDS and the MCA, with the capacity issue resurfacing, to which Bono addressed: “I think what we need to say, ‘Yes, there are difficulties spending the money effectively and efficiently, but we have to spend on building the capacity.’ That’s what you do in an emergency, in a war. You know, you just have to build the infrastructure, and this is a war.” Senator Leahy also provided a working example of Bono’s personal charisma when he cited the personal effect of a previous comment from

Bono's testimony: "I was struck by something you said in your statement – and I wrote it down – 'A better world is also a safer world,' and that really goes to the bottom line on everything you're trying to do." Leahy added, "I mean, you've seen probably more than anybody of this effect of AIDS and what's being done to combat it. You've traveled everywhere."³¹² Senator Durbin used the opportunity to seek Bono's opinion regarding the "appropriate approach" for expediently getting "affordable medications" to those in poor countries with HIV/AIDS. Bono expressed his desire for "the brains... the know-how...the scientists" of the pharmaceutical companies, noting "they could really be the heroes of the tour here." Bono acknowledged that they should make a profit, "just not on the greatest health crisis in 600 years on the backs of poor people." DeWine's closing remarks were again effusively complimentary of Bono, and again offered testimony to Bono's charismatic appeal and issue expertise, as the Senator queried the rock star on his political tactics (emphasis added):

Bono, thank you very much for being with us again. Again, very, very compelling testimony as well. You know, you really have been at the forefront, if you look at the issues that matter: the Millennium Challenge Account – you've advocated for that; debt relief – you know, that matters so very much; AIDS. You know, on all three of those issues, you know, you have been there. You've been the leader. Your testimony today, I think, has been so compelling because you've talked about AIDS from a holistic point of view, that we can't just look at AIDS separately... You know, you truly understand this issue. You have done such a good job, I think, of

³¹² Ibid.

focusing the public's attention on AIDS, *and I would just ask you, as you've gone around, not just in the United States, but in other countries, what works and what doesn't work when you're either addressing people in towns in the United States or when you're dealing with leaders in other countries? What's compelling and what's not compelling when you talk about this issue? What works and what doesn't work, and how are we doing with other countries, too?*

While in Washington for his Congressional testimony, Bono was Senator Richard Lugar's guest of honor at a reception to promote an extension of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), a Clinton trade bill that was enacted in 2000. This was the third time the Senator and the rock star had worked on legislation together, with the previous interactions being related to debt relief.³¹³ AGOA Passage was nearly assured in the House, but there were worries about the bill "becoming bogged down in the Senate."³¹⁴ The House passed the new bill which extended AGOA until 2015 on June 14 and the Senate passed it unanimously June 24. A *Washington Post* editorial reported that "Senate passage... was deemed almost impossible...but an imaginative coalition proved the impossible possible."³¹⁵ The "imaginative coalition" included the business lobby, religious groups, the Congressional Black Caucus and Bono. DATA called AGOA's passage "a win for Africa and America" and reported that renewal was "never certain," crediting the leadership of several Senators including Lugar.³¹⁶

³¹³ *Lugar Hosts Bono on African Trade Promotion*, 18 May 2004; Taken from Lugar Press Release on Website, <http://lugar.senate.gov/pressapp/record.cfm?id=221715>

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*

³¹⁵ *Fresh Trade Politics*, The Washington Post, 14 July 2004, A18.

³¹⁶ *DATA on AGOA: A Win for Africa and America*, DATA Press Release, 25 June 2004.

A few weeks after Bono's Congressional testimony he met with the European Union Development Ministers in Dublin at a June 1 "informal Council meeting," which focused on "debt relief, support for peacekeeping in Sudan and the EU's long-term aid budget."³¹⁷ Bono was invited by the meeting's host, Irish development minister Tom Kitt, who invited the rock star "because of his experience and influence with the issue," and noted that "his participation...will add a valuable non-governmental perspective to our discussion." Kitt sought to utilize Bono's powerful public influence, and explained that his presence "could also help to mobilize a larger EU-wide audience in support of development objectives at a time of major political, financial and institutional change within the EU." It is not known if Bono used the opportunity with the EU officials to discuss the Burmese situation, as promised to Senator McConnell. In September Bono did join a group of fellow musicians who were recording a benefit album for the imprisoned Burmese politician Aung San Suu Kyi by donating the song "Walk On," by U2, which was written about Suu Kyi for their 2001 record *All that You Can't Leave Behind*.³¹⁸ On October 7 European Commission president Romano Prodi threatened increased sanctions against the Burmese junta, citing increased European pressure surrounding the issue: "the problem of Myanmar was raised by all on the European side."³¹⁹ Bono and Senator McConnell's Burmese wish was finally answered four days later on October 11 as the EU announced further economic sanctions.³²⁰

³¹⁷ *Development Council: Bono to Join Dublin Talks on Debt relief*, European Information Service European Report, 29 May 2004.

³¹⁸ Anita Singh, "Music Stars Join Forces for Democracy Activist," *The Press Association*, 22 September 2004.

³¹⁹ *EU Threatens Myanmar with Increased Sanctions at Asia-Europe Summit*, Deutsche Press-Agentur, 7 October 2004.

³²⁰ *E.U. Tightens Sanctions on Myanmar*, Deutsche Presse-Agentur, 11 October 2004.

Bono's 2004 work in Washington was unfinished as concerns about Congressional funding for the AIDS bill and the MCA were still looming. In March the House Budget Committee chaired by Iowa Republican Jim Nussle proposed a \$4.7 billion cut to the international affairs account in the House Conference Report and made "no... assumption" that funding for the AIDS bill was included.³²¹ DATA went on the offensive, and straight to Nussle's "politically marginal" Iowa district.³²² First an "action alert" was sent out to DATA activists, which urged them to call Congressmen Nussle's Washington office using a DATA-provided toll-free number. DATA also placed radio ads in several Iowa towns charging Nussle as the one person "standing in the way" of the "bi-partisan plan to save lives" and urged listeners to call the toll-free number.³²³ In addition, DATA recruited several aid organizations including Bread for the World and the Global AIDS alliance, who pressed their Iowa members to contact the Congressman. Nussle, a Lutheran, then heard from the Bishop of the Iowan Lutheran church, Philip Hougen, who helped the campaign by writing letters to newspapers in Nussle's district.³²⁴ Nussle also heard from Catholic, Presbyterian and Ecumenical church leaders, some of whom were "initially... refused meetings" with the Congressman.³²⁵ DATA's former Communication Director Seth Amgott explained the strategy:

Everything we've experienced over the years is that hearing from constituents and local leaders is the most effective way. It's great that Bono and others can make a

³²¹ Emily Pierce, "Nussle Feeling the Heat from Locals," *Roll Call*, 22 April 2004.

³²² Emily Pierce, "Nussle Heeds Call, Boosts AIDS Funds," *Roll Call*, 1 June 2004.

³²³ *DATA in Iowa: Don't Cut Budget for AIDS in Africa*, 23 March 2004; Available [Online]: <http://www.data.org/archives/000409.php>

³²⁴ Jane Norman, *Advocates of AIDS Relief Seek Money*, 18 March 2004.

³²⁵ As reported to the author in a personal telephone interview with Seth Amgott on 9 December 2005.

good case and have a good case on global poverty and AIDS and those issues, but in a democratic system, the most effective thing is to have constituents and local leaders weigh in.

Nussle eventually buckled and added an additional \$2.8 billion to the House Conference Report. In a press release Nussle admitted he “heard from a number of Iowa constituents who were concerned about funding for international programs fighting AIDS and other diseases,” and offered the budget increase to “support historic levels of funding for those efforts.”³²⁶ *Roll Call* reported that Nussle spokesman Sean Spicer “acknowledged... Nussle agreed to come closer to the Senate funding number...partly because of his constituents’ complaints,” adding that Nussle “wanted to make sure they understood that he was truly supportive of [AIDS funding].”³²⁷ The House passed the final foreign aid budget on July 15, which allocated the full amount of Bush’s \$2.8 billion for the AIDS bill, but only half the president’s requested \$2.5 billion for the MCA. Amgott called the Nussle reversal “exceptional” in that “he changed his mind visibly and publicly and said exactly why afterwards... That is unusual in my experience,” and explained that “More often you see people changing their behavior to avoid such things happening to them in the future.”³²⁸

DATA also began targeting the home states of U.S. Senators Mitch McConnell and Mike Dewine in July with telephone and letter-writing campaigns. Once again, other aid organizations joined the effort including “Bread for the World, Kentucky Global AIDS Campaign, the University of Louisville Global Justice, AIDS volunteers of Cincinnati and

³²⁶ *House Passes Conference Report on Nussle Budget*, Jim Nussle Press Release, 19 May 2004.

³²⁷ Emily Pierce, “Nussle Heeds Call, Boosts AIDS Funds,” *Roll Call*, 1 June 2004.

³²⁸ As reported to the author in a personal telephone interview with Seth Amgott on 9 December 2005.

the Northern Kentucky Association of African Charities.”³²⁹ The Senate eventually agreed to \$3.1 billion for the AIDS bill and only \$1.12 billion for the MCA. The final budget agreement appropriated \$2.8 million for the AIDS bill, matching Bush’s request, and \$1.5 billion for the MCA, which was \$1 billion less than the president’s request.

A March 2005 *CQ Weekly* article detailed DATA’s use of two Washington lobbyists who are paid nearly half a million dollars annually for their services; ex-Tom Delay aide and former director of the National Republican Congressional Committee Scott Hatch, who hits the Republicans, and veteran Democratic lobbyist Tom Sheridan.³³⁰ DATA’s government relations director Tom Hart explained the rationale behind the lobbyists noting that “The poorest people on Earth need the same sort of representation in Washington that any other special interest receives... We’re making decisions that affect millions of lives here. Bono realized that he needed to play by the rules of Washington, and that’s what we’re doing.”³³¹ Lobbyist Hatch spoke about working for Bono with *CQ Weekly* and noted the similarities to his other Washington jobs, yet stressed its uniqueness – “The only difference is, my guy’s wearing blue glasses.” Senator Rick Santorum is on a first name basis with the lobbyists and acknowledged that he sees “Tom and Scott quite a bit,” and added that he “usually sees Bono when he comes to town, too.”³³² Santorum also discussed Bono’s lobbying abilities

³²⁹ Feoshia Henderson, “Activists Lobbying Senators to Fund Foreign Aid Program,” *The Kentucky Post*, 28 July 2004.

³³⁰ Eamon Javers, “Bono’s K Street Connection,” *CQ Weekly*, 28 March 2005, 762-3.

³³¹ *Ibid.*

³³² *Ibid.*

noting that he “stands out from the other celebrities that hit the hill because he comes to a meeting prepared – and follows up.”³³³

In January 2005 the fiscal 2006 budget game was beginning to churn as President Bush’s budget requests were announced. The president requested an expected \$3.2 billion for the AIDS bill, the total of which was consistent with previous administration pronouncements, but requested funding for the U.N.’s Global AIDS Fund had decreased for the second year in a row despite pledges by Bush two years earlier.³³⁴ In addition, Bush did not deliver on his full commitment to the MCA by requesting only \$3 billion of the promised \$5 billion for fiscal 2006.³³⁵ DATA called Bush’s request for the MCA a “significant step back from his repeatedly promised level of \$5b for the FY06 budget.”³³⁶ DATA also chided the Administration for “not [prioritizing] implementation” of the MCA. DATA did praise Bush’s request for the AIDS bill cautiously noting “it fills the U.S. commitment to ramp up its 15 country bilateral focus program...,” but complained that it did not include the “U.S. share” of the U.N.’s Global Fund.

The MCA was originally slated to receive \$1.6b in 2004, \$3.2b in 2005 and \$5b in 2006, but has been consistently under-funded in both the president’s budget requests and Congress’ final appropriations.³³⁷ In the *New York Times* Jeffery Sachs called the “operation

³³³ Ibid.

³³⁴ Michael M. Phillips, “Bush Falls Behind on Promises to Antipoverty, AIDS Funding,” *The Wall Street Journal*, 27 January 2005.

³³⁵ *Bush to Pledge \$3.2B to Combat AIDS Abroad*, The Associated Press, 27 January 2005. Available [Online]: <http://www.data.org/archives/000697.php>

³³⁶ *The President’s Budget Request for FY 2006*, DATA Policy Release, 7 February 2005.

³³⁷ Sachs, 2005, 218.

of the MCA a disgrace,” to which Bono empathized, “I understand his rage; I share it.”³³⁸

Bono also admitted that the MCA was “a brilliant idea, but has been very slow to get going.”³³⁹ Bono recounts his “row” with Bush concerning MCA funding where he “roundly criticized him for the slowness in the Millennium Challenge,” to which a senator retaliated by throwing a newspaper his direction and scolded the rock star, “How dare you disrespect the president of the United States!”³⁴⁰ This may have been part of Bono’s “heated debate” with president Bush over AIDS drugs “not getting out quick enough,” in which Bush “banged the table at” the rock star “to ask [Bono] to let him reply,” and then “smilingly reminded [Bono] he was the president.”³⁴¹ Bono also offered restrained criticism of the Bush Administration in a February 2005 telecasted acceptance speech for the Inaugural T.E.D. Prize (Technology, Entertainment, Design): “I have been, of late disappointed with the Bush Administration. They started out with such promise on Africa. They made some really great promises and, actually, have fulfilled a lot of them. But some of them they haven’t. They don’t feel the push from the ground – it’s the truth...”³⁴² In March the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the U.S. organization formed to operate the MCA, authorized delivery its first round of grants, totaling \$100 million, to Madagascar. The announcement came, as *The Washington Post* dryly reported, “three years to the day after President Bush proposed creating the program...”³⁴³

³³⁸ James Traub, 18 September 2005.

³³⁹ Bono Reader Q & A, *The New York Times*, 21 September 2005.

³⁴⁰ Jann S. Wenner, *Bono: The Rolling Stone Interview*, *Rolling Stone*, (3 November 2005), 986, 67.

³⁴¹ Assayas, 2005, 236.

³⁴² *Bono at TED*, transcript from TED website: http://ted.com/ted2005/moments/bono_transcript.cfm

³⁴³ Paul Blustein, “Program’s First Grants Set to Aid Madagascar,” *The Washington Post*, 10 March 2005, A14.

In February Bono added more international accolades to his resume as he was nominated for his third Nobel Peace Prize, and rumors circulated that he was being considered for the World Bank presidency, a position traditionally nominated by the United States and held by an American.³⁴⁴ The World Bank rumors intensified when a February 25 *Los Angeles Times* editorial championed the Bono presidential appointment.³⁴⁵ The editorial penned Bono as the “most eloquent and passionate spokesman for African aid in the Western world,” and added he could “enhance the World Bank’s image” as well as “mobilize public opinion” to hold nations accountable for their aid commitments. U.S. Treasury Secretary John W. Snow propelled the rumors when he “didn’t rule out” the Bono nomination during an early March appearance on ABC’s *This Week* and professed his admiration for the rock star.³⁴⁶ President Bush ended all speculation when he officially nominated U.S. deputy defense secretary and “key architect of the Iraqi war” Paul Wolfowitz.³⁴⁷ Wolfowitz actually consulted Bono prior to his acceptance of the nomination in what was later revealed by *CQ Weekly* as an effort to “mollify European leaders” concerned about Bush’s controversial nomination.³⁴⁸ Wolfowitz advisor Kevin Kellms told *Reuters* Wolfowitz had “initiated...lengthy conversations” with Bono that were “incredibly substantive about reducing poverty,” and added that the two “clicked.”³⁴⁹ The politically-motivated leak “surprised the Bono camp” in what DATA’s Tom Hart called “an off-the-

³⁴⁴ Inger Sethov, “Bono and Pope Among Nobel Prize Nominees,” *Reuters Online*, 17 February, 2005.

³⁴⁵ *Bono for the World Bank*, *Los Angeles Times*, 25 February 2005.

³⁴⁶ *Could Bono Handle the Bank?* CNNMoney.com, 8 March 2005: Available [Online]: http://money.cnn.com/2005/03/07/news/newsmakers/bono_worldbank

³⁴⁷ *Wolfowitz Discusses World Bank Mission with Bono*, *Reuters*, 17 March 2005.

³⁴⁸ Eamon Javers, 28 March 2005.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

record conversation” in *CQ Weekly*. In June Wolfowitz officially assumed the World Bank presidency and immediately took a four-nation African trip. During interviews he publicly assured that “reducing poverty and supporting economic development in Africa will be his top priority...”³⁵⁰ Wolfowitz later complemented Bono’s political style: “Pomposity and arrogance are the enemies of getting things done. And Bono knows how to get things done.”³⁵¹

In late May Bono managed to get a lunch appointment with U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice while in D.C. for a U2 concert. The two talked about the upcoming U.K.-hosted 2005 G8 summit, African aid and foreign operations spending.³⁵² Bono also met with Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman and Mississippi Republican Thad Cochran, and Senate Minority leader Harry Reid to further press his case. *Roll Call* reported that “Everyone in Reid’s office went gaga” over Bono, and noted that Reid warned the Irishman not to “let the White House use him,” to which Bono cracked, “Well, I’m not a cheap date.”³⁵³ Two weeks later in early June Tony Blair visited the White House, and participated in a joint press conference with President Bush that focused largely on Africa. Bush also announced \$674 million in additional 2005 funding for what he called “humanitarian emergencies in Africa,” which would be skimmed from a recent supplemental appropriations bill that was originally slated for “ongoing military operations in Iraq and

³⁵⁰ Albert Eisele, “Alleviating African Poverty is a ‘First Priority,’ Wolfowitz Says,” *The Washington Post*, 22 June 2005, 4.

³⁵¹ Josh Tyrangiel, “The Constant Charmer,” *Time*, (26 December 2005): 166, no. 26, 46-62.

³⁵² Donna Cassata, 7 June 2005.

³⁵³ Mary Ann Akers, “Heard on the Hill,” *Roll Call*, 7 June 2005.

Afghanistan.”³⁵⁴ *The Washington Post* called the proposal “a gesture to Blair,” in referencing the U.K. leader’s recent attempts to garner international support for his plan that would double aid to Africa and eliminate all remaining African international debt, a proposal which Bush had “been cool to.” It is unknown whether Bono’s late May 2005 lobbying specifically targeted the \$674 million appropriation, or if indeed the new African aid was just “a gesture to Blair.”

Ten days later Bush held White House meetings with the African presidents of Mozambique, Botswana, Ghana, Namibia and Niger, and assured them the U.S. “will work harder and faster to certify” MCA countries.³⁵⁵ At the end of June and with the G8 summit approaching, Bush pledged funding for a new \$1.7 billion African aid package, which included \$1.2 billion over five years to fight malaria, \$55 million over three years to promote women’s justice and empowerment in Africa, and \$400 million for African teacher-training.³⁵⁶ Malaria and access to education were “the two issues Bono raised with the White House in May.”³⁵⁷ Bush also called for G8 backing of Tony Blair’s \$40 billion Africa debt deal, and cited the leadership of “Great Britain and the United States.” Bush also proposed to “double aid to Africa once again” by 2010 and told Africans they “can be certain...America will be your partner and your friend.” In a DATA press release Bono

³⁵⁴ Bush quote taken from *President Welcomes British Prime Minister Blair to White House*, White House office of the Press Secretary Press Release, 7 June 2005; and Peter Baker, “U.S. to Increase Funding for Africa; In Gesture to Blair, Bush to Announce \$674 Million Addition,” *The Washington Post*, 7 June 2005, A19.

³⁵⁵ Michael A. Fletcher, “President Pledges to Speed up African Aid,” *The Washington Post*, 14 June 2005, A04.

³⁵⁶ *President Discusses Trade Summit, Progress in Africa*, White House Office of the Press Secretary Press Release, 30 June 2005.

³⁵⁷ James Traub, 18 September 2005.

praised the president's commitment, but cautiously added they'll "fight about the numbers."³⁵⁸ Bono further complimented Bush's "great speech," and called the president "a man who means to understand the challenges in Africa and America's opportunity to help solve them as partners."

Throughout the 2005 budget process DATA had campaigned for a \$400 million increase in Bush's \$3.2 FY 2006 AIDS bill request. The House of Representatives fully funded Bush's \$3.2 billion request, albeit with what DATA called "shifted priorities" in what amounted to minor programmatic financial reshuffling.³⁵⁹ In August 2005 the Senate allocation for the AIDS bill was at \$3.6 billion, which matched DATA's request. Bono was back in D.C. in mid-October for another U2 show during the third leg of the *Vertigo* tour, in what happened to be just before the final markup of the FY 2006 foreign operations bill. Bono's publicized political stops included a White House lunch with President Bush, a meeting with National Security advisor Stephen Hadley, a drop-in at a weekly House Democratic meeting where he lobbied for the full \$3.6 billion AIDS funding, and a "private lunch" with Democratic Senators John Kerry (Mass.), Patrick Leahy (Vt.), Barack Obama (Ill.), Dick Durbin (Ill.), and Representatives Nancy Pelosi (Ca.), Steny Hoyer (Md.) and Nita Lowey (N.Y.).³⁶⁰ White House Press Secretary told reporters the Bono/Bush meeting was a follow-up "on their discussion at Gleneagles during the G8 summit" regarding Bono

³⁵⁸ *Reaction to President Bush's Pre-G8 Africa Speech*, DATA Press Release, 30 June 2005.

³⁵⁹ *\$3.6B for Global HIV/AIDS in the FY06 Budget*, DATA Policy Release, 15 August 2005.

³⁶⁰ *Press Briefing by Scott McClellan*, White House Office of the Press Secretary Press Release, 19 October 2005; *Bono Urges House Democrats to Support Global AIDS Funding in FY06*, DATA Press Release, 18 October 18, 2005; and Josephine Hearn, "Musician Bono drops in on House Dems' Meeting," *The Hill*, 20 October 2005.

and the administration's "common priorities." One reporter even asked McClellan about the possibility of Bono receiving a position within the administration. McClellan confessed he "[hadn't] heard that," to which the reporter asked if Bono was "considered an advisor or a supporter of the administration." McClellan explained that Bono is "someone who has a lot of influence," and acknowledged that "[Bush and Bono] had some discussions over the last few years, and we appreciate the opportunity to visit with him."

In August the United States ruffled the African aid community when it appeared to distance itself from the Millennium Development Goals. First the Bush Administration added "more than 750 amendments" to a draft agreement set for signing at the September World Summit on Poverty and U.N. Reform in New York, one of which called for "striking any mention of the Millennium Development Goals."³⁶¹ In addition, newly appointed U.S. ambassador to the U.N. John R. Bolton claimed "the Bush Administration never agreed to support the goals," and the *Washington Post* reported that a Bush Administration official accused U.N. officials of "manipulating the truth" about "backsliding" on U.S. foreign aid commitments.³⁶² The Administration was specifically opposed to the 2015 0.7% of GDP aid target that European countries accepted at the 2005 G8 summit, and had been previously endorsed by Bush in March 2002 as a part of the Monterrey Consensus. The *Washington Post* also reported that "a senior administration official" claimed that "U.S. negotiators made it clear at the time that the administration opposed the idea of committing to a numerical

³⁶¹ Colum Lynch, "U.S. Wants Changes in U.N. Agreement," *The Washington Post*, 25 August 2005, A01.

³⁶² Colum Lynch, "U.N. Accused of Distorting U.S. Aid Commitments; Administration Denies Having Endorsed Specific Targets Known as Millennium Development Goals," *The Washington Post*, 2 September 2005, A06.

target but did not want to block language supported by many of its allies.”³⁶³ Jeffrey Sachs said Bolton’s claims were “without ground,” and claimed the administration “is simply trying to ‘wriggle out’ of its commitments.” In President Bush’s speech at the World Summit he assuaged fears by specifically affirming the U.S. commitment to the Millennium Development Goals, but called them “an ambitious agenda.” Bush did not specifically mention the 0.7% of GNP foreign aid rate, but instead equated the establishment of the MCA as “[seeking] to implement the Monterrey Consensus.”³⁶⁴ In a DATA press release director Jamie Drummond offered restrained praise, welcoming Bush’s “explicit endorsement of the Millennium Development Goals,” but added, “Had the American position been so positive from the start this summit might have made overall progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals.”³⁶⁵

A political controversy of sorts erupted in October when several politicians including Senators Rick Santorum and Hillary Clinton announced that political fundraisers were being held at U2’s two D.C. concerts.³⁶⁶ DATA was quick to correct “inaccurate media statements” that portrayed the U2 shows as political fundraisers.³⁶⁷ The fundraisers were held in private suites at D.C.’s MCI Center, which were purchased by the politicians and then resold at significant increases – Senator Clinton’s 18 spots went for \$2500 per piece. In a DATA press release director Jamie Drummond explained that it “is not uncommon for

³⁶³ Ibid.

³⁶⁴ *President Addresses United Nations High-Level Plenary Meeting, United Nations Headquarters, New York, New York*, White House Office of the Press Secretary Press Release, 14 September 2005.

³⁶⁵ *Jamie Drummond’s Reaction to President Bush’s Speech to the World Summit*, DATA Press Release: 14 September 2005.

³⁶⁶ Jonathan, E. Kaplan, “Bono Winces, but Money Chase Goes On,” *The Hill*, 18 October 2005.

³⁶⁷ *DATA Reaction to Inaccurate Media Statements on U2 Shows as Political Fundraisers*, DATA Press Release, 11 October 2005.

politicians...to organize events of all kinds at music concerts and other entertainment events.” Drummond further distanced DATA and Bono citing their noninvolvement and lack of knowledge about the events, noting “U2 concerts are categorically not fundraisers for any politician – they are rock concerts for U2 fans.” Bono’s stage antics no doubt influenced the politicians as he “[shouted] out to the likes of Condi, Pelosi, et al.” at the D.C. concerts.³⁶⁸ *The Hill* reported that rock concerts have been increasingly utilized as political fundraisers, citing recent events at Paul McCartney and Rolling Stones shows. It is interesting to note, and probably not coincidental, that Bono has found the travel schedule of the 2005 U2 *Vertigo* tour politically opportune, as he has met with various elites in the cities that U2 perform, including President Bush in D.C., Jesse Helms in Charlotte, Warren Buffet daughter and DATA board member Susan Buffet in Omaha, and New York Democratic Representative Brian Higgins in Buffalo.³⁶⁹

The ONE Campaign

In 2004 DATA announced the formation of The ONE Campaign, a new American-based coalition of aid and religious groups that back an “effort to rally Americans – one by one – to fight the emergency of global AIDS and extreme poverty.” The campaign was started with a \$3 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and could be considered the US-based grassroots version of DATA, focusing its lobbying efforts on the

³⁶⁸ Mary Ann Akers, “Heard on the Hill,” *Roll Call*, 24 October 2005.

³⁶⁹ *Brian and Bono*, *The Buffalo News*, 17 December 2005; *Rocker Bono Dines with Ex-Senator*, *The Olympian*, 19 December 2005; *Bono Raises Awareness of African Crisis*, *The Associated Press*, 19 December 2005.

American public instead of the D.C. power brokers.³⁷⁰ As Bono explained, The ONE Campaign was envisioned to help build an American movement “so that in the future if a politician fails to keep their promises, there is a political price to pay.”³⁷¹ He added, “...if they do the right thing they deserve to get the applause.”

The ONE Campaign pursues the same issues as DATA including African poverty and AIDS, government corruption, trade, and debt cancellation. Drawing on its moniker, The ONE Campaign also seeks an additional 1% of the U.S. federal budget for international aid. The campaign uses celebrity power to highlight the issues and attract public support, which has been led by high-profiled actors such as Brad Pitt, George Clooney, Jamie Foxx and Angelina Jolie, whom have been featured in televised “public-service” announcements.³⁷² Bono was present on May 16, 2004 for the official launch of The ONE Campaign in front of Philadelphia’s Independence Hall. DATA was joined by several other NGOs in founding The ONE Campaign including Bread for the World, CARE, International Medical Corps, International Rescue Committee, Mercy Corps, Oxfam America, Plan USA, Save the Children US, World Concern and World Vision.³⁷³ By November 2005, two million Americans had signed on to The ONE Campaign.³⁷⁴ In an interview with the *San Francisco Chronicle* Bono reported that “conservative” estimates put membership numbers at five million by “the next [U.S. presidential] election, an amount Bono wryly notes “will

³⁷⁰ *The ONE Campaign Receives \$3 Million from Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation*, DATA Press Release, 1 December 2004.

³⁷¹ Bono Reader Q & A, *The New York Times*, 21 September 2005.

³⁷² Brian Hiatt, “Bono Assembles an Army,” *Rolling Stone*, 20 April 2005 Available [Online]: http://www.rollingstone.com/news/story/7266479/bono_assembles_an_army/u2

³⁷³ Taken from *The ONE Campaign* website, Available [Online]: <http://www.one.org/Background.html>

³⁷⁴ As reported by Bono in a November 2005 interview posted as a podcast on the *San Francisco Chronicle*’s website, Available [Online]: <http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/blogs/sfgate/indexn?blogid=5>

be bigger than the National Rifle Association,” and which makes him “very, very, very happy.”

The ONE Campaign is mirrored by the U.K.’s *Make Poverty History* campaign, both of which are national affiliates of the transnational coalition *Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP)*,³⁷⁵ which is self-described on its website:³⁷⁶

The Global Call to Action against Poverty is a worldwide alliance committed to making world leaders live up to their promises, and to making a breakthrough on poverty in 2005... It is an alliance between a range of actors around the common cause of ending poverty: existing coalitions, community groups, trade unions, individuals, religious and faith groups, campaigners and more.

The international symbol of GCAP is the white wristband, which is distributed to supporters by each of the campaign’s respective national affiliates such as The ONE Campaign. It is worn by “more than three million” people in the U.K. including Prime Minister Tony Blair.³⁷⁷ In 2005 GCAP organized three worldwide white band mobilization days to coincide with the G8 Summit, the U.N. World Summit and the WTO meetings.³⁷⁸ Ciara Gaynor, Co-Chair of the GCAP Media Group, explained the significance of the white band for GCAP:

[The white band] is the symbol uniting all actors all around the world. And while they might have different demands or different issues that they need to prioritize, or

³⁷⁵ There are hundreds of *Global Call to Action Against Poverty* affiliates throughout the world

³⁷⁶ Taken from the *Global Call to Action Against Poverty* website, Available [Online]: <http://www.whiteband.org/Lib/about/about/en>

³⁷⁷ Eric Pfanner, “This Ad is Aimed at a Group of 8,” *The International Herald Tribune Online*, 20 June 2005; Sally Pook, “Blair Joins Wristband Celebrities Who Make Charity Cool,” *The Telegraph Online*, 25 March 2005, <http://www.telegraph.co.U.K./news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2005/03/25/nband25.xml>

³⁷⁸ Personal Interview with Ciara Gaynor, Co-Chair GCAP Media Group, 19 January 2006.

pressure points, ultimately they are all unified in a call for governments to do much more to eradicate poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals, [which] is sort of the overarching framework under which everyone is operating, or mobilizing, and reaching out to the media and the general public.

Gaynor also attested that Bono was not involved in GCAP's initial creation, but did note that he "has lent his support," and added that The ONE Campaign is "very much a part of the media side of things." Gaynor did note that DATA representative Oliver Buston was present at the first international GCAP strategy meeting where the alliance was first named and the white band symbol was enacted, which was held in Johannesburg, South Africa in October 2004. In addition, many of the organizations that finance GCAP activities including the U.N. Millennium Campaign, OXFAM, and World Vision are also ONE Campaign partners.

The ONE Campaign has also relied on technology to help deliver its message, as evidenced by Bono's campaign pitch to U2 audiences amid the rock group's 2004-5 *Vertigo* tour. During U2's set Bono invites fans to join the campaign by simply using their mobile phone to text-message their name to UNITE (86483), and a Sun Microsystems-designed aerial beams the information back to The ONE Campaign.³⁷⁹ Fans in turn get a "thank you" reply text from Bono, and a lucky few will see their name scrolled across the gigantic onstage video screen. This method of recruitment for The ONE Campaign collects thousands of new supporters per night.³⁸⁰ In addition, during the run-up to the 2005 G8

³⁷⁹ Sebastian Mallaby, "High-Profile Help for Africa," *The Washington Post*, 23 May 2005, A19.

³⁸⁰ Eric Gwinn, "U2 Fans Send Out Message by Using their Cell Phones," *Chicago Tribune*, 20 May 2005; This article mentions a May 12 Chicago U2 concert where 1,980 names were sent to UNITE and a *Los Angeles Times* article reported that the campaign has yielded "as many as 10,000 names per night; Ronald Brownstein, *Hearts that Beat as 'One' Could Shake Up American Politics*, 24 October 2005.

Summit in Scotland, The ONE Campaign teamed with visual technology company Viewpoint and Unicast Advertising for an awareness campaign that placed one billion online ads on to donated web space from companies including Time Warner, Google, Microsoft, The New York Times, MSNBC and Viacom.³⁸¹ The ONE Campaign created a “podcast” in December 2005 – which is a recent communication innovation that features digitally downloadable radio programs for digital audio players such as Ipods. The first broadcast featured Nelson Mandela, Chris Martin of rock band Coldplay and Bono.³⁸²

In May 2005 Seattle, Washington became the first U.S. city to embrace The ONE Campaign as Mayor Greg Nickels proclaimed Seattle “A City of ONE.”³⁸³ In December another 32 cities, along with the states of Connecticut, Illinois, Iowa and Maine, officially joined The ONE Campaign and would recognize “White Band Day.”³⁸⁴ Illinois actually introduced a “State of ONE” joint resolution in their State Legislature. In July the network was tested as The ONE Campaign urged its members to contact their senators in support of a \$100 million AIDS and Malaria amendment, which resulted in 25,000 calls to the senators.³⁸⁵ *The Los Angeles Times* reported that amendment sponsor Senator Richard Durbin’s (D-Ill.) spokesman Joe Shoemaker noticed the “very different feeling” that the amendment was creating: “All of the sudden people in the hallways were talking to us about

³⁸¹ Viewpoint and ‘ONE: The Campaign to Make Poverty History’ Partner to Deliver One Billion Online Ads Leading up to the G8 Summit in July, DATA Press Release, 15 June 2005.

³⁸² ONE Campaign Joins with Gcast to Use Podcast Technology to Help Fight Global AIDS and Extreme Poverty, The ONE Campaign Press Release, 30 November 2005.

³⁸³ Mayor Greg Nickels Proclaims Seattle “A City of ONE,” The ONE Campaign Press Release, 16 May 2005.

³⁸⁴ Four Governors and 37 Mayors Agree: Join Fight Against Global AIDS and Extreme Poverty with the ONE Campaign, The ONE Campaign Press Release, 9 December 2005.

³⁸⁵ Ronald Brownstein, *Hearts that Beat as ‘One’ Could Shake Up American Politics*, 24 October 2005.

it.”³⁸⁶ *The Los Angeles Times* assuredly noted that “The amendment passed.” Another successful test of the network occurred in the days before the 2005 U.K.-hosted G8 Summit, as The ONE Campaign members sent 500,000 emails to the White House “urging more aid, more action against AIDS,” and “fewer farm subsidies.”³⁸⁷

DATA’s International Efforts

Germany

Bono recalls his atypical first meeting with German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder when the two “drank beer” together – an atmosphere in which the Chancellor was “relaxed” and “smiling.”³⁸⁸ In between drinks Bono “implored him not to be on the wrong side of history,” in referencing Germany’s stance towards African aid. Bono wanted a 0.7% of GDP German aid commitment, which then “lagged” behind several other European countries at 0.28%. In April 2004 Bono lobbied Chancellor Schröder again, a meeting in which Bono “didn’t like [the Chancellor’s] body language,” noting that Schröder “avoided eye contact.”³⁸⁹ The German economy had been less than stellar, and a Schröder official “insisted that spending any more on Africa would ‘bankrupt Germany.’” Afterwards “a network of campaigners” began to pursue the Chancellor, which culminated in a celebrity backed open letter to Schröder in December.

³⁸⁶ Ibid.

³⁸⁷ *Pro Bono*, *The Economist*, 5 November 2005.

³⁸⁸ Bono in interview with Michka Assayas; Assayas, 2005, 236.

³⁸⁹ J.F.O. McAllister, “Promises to Keep: With Some Nudging From Activists, European Politicians Try to Make Good on Pledges to Africa,” *Time Europe*, (14 March 2005): 165, no. 11.

In early 2005 Bono attended the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, where *Agence France Presse* reported that he “wants to convince [Chancellor Schröder] to deliver more aid to poor countries,” and added that Bono had dreamed of a trip to Africa with the German leader. Bono admitted he “would love to go with somebody like Chancellor Schröder,” adding that he “would love to show him what German, hard earned Euros, can do to transform the community...”³⁹⁰ During a speech at the World Economic Forum Schröder “for the first time formally backed” British international aid proposals, to which British Chancellor Brown “hailed [as] a breakthrough in the fight against poverty.”³⁹¹ After Schröder’s speech he met “privately” with Bono and committed Germany to 0.7% international aid by 2015.³⁹² *Time Europe* cited Bono’s involvement as reason for Schröder’s African aid “pirouette.”³⁹³ Bono credited the inspiration of German Foreign Minister Joschka Fisher and the “encouragement of the corporate sector,” who thinks “it’s time for Germany to take up its place in the world again.”

Canada

In 2004 DATA’s strategic efforts began to mirror those of Bono’s, which were characterized by multilateral lobbying. Although the United States was DATA’s primary focus, they continued to pursue the world’s wealthiest nations – the so-called G8 countries.

³⁹⁰ *AFP Interview: Music Stars Ready to Buttonhole Leaders About Poverty*, Agence France Presse, 28 January 2005.

³⁹¹ Jeremy Warner, “Germans Back Brown Plan to Tackle Global Poverty,” *The Independent*, 29 January 2005, 49.

³⁹² J.F.O. McAllister, “Promises to Keep: With Some Nudging From Activists, European Politicians Try to Make Good on Pledges to Africa,” *Time Europe*, (14 March 2005): 165, no. 11; and James Traub, 18 September 2005.

³⁹³ J.F.O. McAllister, “Promises to Keep: With Some Nudging From Activists, European Politicians Try to Make Good on Pledges to Africa,” *Time Europe*, (14 March 2005): 165, no. 11.

At the November 2003 Canadian Liberal Party convention Paul Martin was being formally elected Canada's Prime Minister, and he invited Bono to be the keynote speaker.³⁹⁴ Bono accepted, but first penned a letter to outgoing Liberal Prime Minister Jean Chrétien drenched in accolades – calling his leadership on African issues “a legacy that lives on and flourishes way beyond your time in office,” and explained that his convention speech “will give [Bono] the opportunity to thank both Chrétien and incoming Prime Minister Paul Martin.”³⁹⁵

Once in Canada, Bono sounded suspiciously Canuckish when he told an awaiting airport crowd that he is “a fan of Canada” because “a certain kind of idealism still seems to be alive in this country.” He added that Canadians “always look outside [themselves] beyond the line of the horizon.”³⁹⁶ During Bono's Liberal Party convention speech the Canadian kudos kept flowing: “I believe the world needs more Canada. Can any one country make a difference? Yes, Canada can. Canada already has. And Mr. Martin is the man to do it. Then Canada, Oh Canada, will show the world.” Bono also pressed DATA's agenda during the speech by requesting passage of Canadian drug patent laws that would provide generic AIDS drugs to Africa. In addition, he suggested that Canada “take the lead in debt forgiveness” and then went into the technicalities surrounding the percentage of Canada's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) that was spent on international aid. Bono reminded the Liberal Party that in 1969 Canadian Prime Minister Lester Pearson had set the foreign aid

³⁹⁴ *Bono Will Add Glitter to Martin Coronation*, *The Calgary Sun*, 5 November 2003, 7.

³⁹⁵ *U2's Bono Says Chrétien's Help to Developing World a Lasting Legacy*: *Globe*, Canada Press Newswire, 11 November 2003.

³⁹⁶ David Bruser, “World Needs More Canada, Bono Says,” *The Toronto Star*, 15 November 2003, A1.

target rate at 0.7%, which in 2003 was stalled at 0.29%.³⁹⁷ He then reminded the politicians that he was “there for Paul Martin” and then forewarned that “he was going to be the biggest pain in [Martin’s] ass,” duly noting that, “A year down the line, he’s going to regret tonight.” *Canadian Business and Current Affairs* reported that “hours before” his speech Bono held a strategy session with policy-wonks from “Canada’s most informed” international development NGOs and known Liberal Party critics to “gather input and hone his message.”³⁹⁸

Bono’s promise to be “a pain in the ass” came sooner than the one year he had mentioned in his speech. Only three months into Martin’s new post as Prime Minister, legislation was being considered that would allow brand name drug firms bidding options on the generic counterparts. Jamie Drummond of DATA sent a letter to Martin voicing his concerns about the legislation noting that the clause “would undermine the very purpose of the law.”³⁹⁹ Canadian New Democratic Party leader Jack Layton joined the fray when he penned a six-page letter to Bono exposing Prime Minister Martin’s promised aid shortcomings. Layton discussed the drug company legislation, Martin’s budget – which left out promised monies to the UN Global Fund – and Canada’s aid as a percentage of GDP, which hadn’t increased.⁴⁰⁰ Layton also pled for Bono to “help put [Martin’s] words into action.”

³⁹⁷ Dan Rath, “In Praise of Bono: The Liberals Learn the Risks and Rewards of Borrowing a Rock Star’s Cool,” *Canadian Business and Current Affairs*, 24 November 2003.

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁹ *Bono’s Pressure Group Says Canada Must Live Up to AIDS Commitments*, Agence France Presse – English, 12 March 2004.

⁴⁰⁰ Jack Aubry, “NDP Calls On Irish Rock Star to Hound Martin,” *Times Colonist*, 28 March 2004, A4.

In April Martin's government removed the legislation that favored the brand name drug manufacturers, a move which prompted Bono to call the Prime Minister and "convey his approval for the turnaround."⁴⁰¹ In early May Martin anted-up again, this time with a \$100 million commitment to an upstart World Health Organization (WHO) AIDS program that was in danger of stalling because of funding concerns.⁴⁰² Martin also announced the creation of "Canada Corps," an initiative that would "recruit professionals and volunteers to assist failing states such as Haiti in building stable democratic, social and economic institutions." In a DATA press release Bono was ecstatic: "Wow. A politician who doesn't break his promises. This is real leadership. I hope Canadians will know what this means to the rest of the world."⁴⁰³ Bono was then off to Canada to attend another AIDS spending announcement with Paul Martin. The Ottawa appearance with Martin happened to precede an upcoming election call, to which the *Toronto Star* observed, "The federal Liberals have appeared to be deliberately seeking favour with the traditional left side of their constituency this week..."⁴⁰⁴ The May 12 announcement by Martin and Bono highlighted the doubling of Canada's contribution to the UN's AIDS Global Fund, from \$35 to \$70 million. Bono was candid when he admitted that "Yes, I'm being used," and added: "I want to be used. That's my job here – to provide applause when someone does the right thing and courageous thing and to provide cynicism when they don't. The price we are talking about here are lives – hundreds of thousands of lives these Canadian dollars are going to change. You understand

⁴⁰¹ Susan Delacourt, "'Drugs For Africa' Bill Amended," *The Toronto Star*, 20 April 2004.

⁴⁰² Hubert Bauch, and Mike Blanchfield, "Martin Give \$100 Million to Global Fight Against AIDS: Rock Star Bono Wowed by 'Politician Who Doesn't Break Promises,'" *The Vancouver Sun*, 11 May 2004, A4.

⁴⁰³ *Canada Announces Increase in Support to WHO*, DATA Press Release, 10 May 2004.

⁴⁰⁴ Susan Delacourt, "Bono Rocks Liberal Vote," *The Toronto Star*, 12 May 2004, A1.

that this is an issue that you wouldn't mind bending over just a little bit for, if I could be so crude."⁴⁰⁵ Bono's justifications proved correct again in September 2004, when Canadian Finance Minister Ralph Goodale announced a \$9 million debt relief deal for three of Africa's poorest nations – Senegal, Ghana and Ethiopia.

In February 2005 Martin approached Bono for another favor – a U2 concert in Ottawa. U2 was not scheduled to play the Canadian capital on their 2005 *Vertigo* tour, and had not played there for 20 years when an Ottawa radio station, *BOB-FM*, began a U2 concert campaign. Prime Minister Martin called the morning show and offered to “point out” to Bono “that given his tremendous interest in AIDS, in the relief of third world debt, that the people in Canada, the public servants who make those decisions in External Affairs and in CIDA, and all of those agencies, they're all here in Ottawa.”⁴⁰⁶ In March U2 announced it would play at Ottawa's Corel Centre on November 25, 2005, and Bono admitted that “Paul Martin asked us to play the gig.”⁴⁰⁷ Bono revealed that U2 was “delighted” to play and listed three reasons: “One, 18,000 Ottawans is going to be a great night out... two, because if Paul Martin agrees to give 0.7% national income to the poorest people in the world it will be a great celebration party,” and “Three, if he doesn't it will be a great protest party. 18,000 Canadians calling and requesting their prime minister to give 0.7% GNP to aid will be an historic night out.”

⁴⁰⁵ Anne Dawson, “Bono Only Too Happy to Plug PM,” *The Star Phoenix*, 13 May 2004, C5.

⁴⁰⁶ Tony LoFaro, “BOB-FM Could Become PAUL-FM if PM Lures Buddy Bono, band to Ottawa; Martin Coy on Air Over Whether He Can Attract Stars,” *Ottawa Citizen*, 16 February 2005.

⁴⁰⁷ Lynn Saxberg, “Hello, Bono? Can You Please Play Ottawa?” *Ottawa Citizen*, 8 March 2005.

In April Martin's Liberal government released its "foreign policy review," which did not include Bono's requested 0.7% aid figures. Martin went on the defensive explaining that Canada "is not in a position to make an 'unalterable guarantee' the country could reach the 0.7% target by 2015."⁴⁰⁸ Bono said in obvious disappointment that he was "bewildered" and "disappointed" by the policy statement and added, "We were looking for Canada to lead rather than be a laggard." In a Vancouver interview Bono asked Canadians to call the Prime Minister Office, and offered listeners the number.⁴⁰⁹ Martin downplayed the criticism and told reporters that he and Bono "are old friends" and that "Bono is doing what he ought to do." Martin also defended his integrity, claiming he "didn't break the promise," and then apparently contradicted himself and his party's recent foreign policy statement noting "he will meet the 0.7% target," although he "does not know precisely when."⁴¹⁰ Bono then took his appeals to Canadian U2 fans at an April 2005 Vancouver show. The U2 audience booed the prime minister when his phone number was flashed on to the video screen. Bono urged the crowd to call Martin with their "dangerous little devices," referring to the now ubiquitous mobile phone, and added the prime minister "can do what we want him to do, to lead the world out of despair and poverty, this year."⁴¹¹ Bono was more encouraged by Martin at a Toronto September U2 show noting, "He's a good man and he's been improving," but lashed out again in November.⁴¹² While in Ottawa for the Martin-negotiated concert, Bono held a press conference noting he was "mystified" and "crushed" by Martin's

⁴⁰⁸ Kathleen Harris, "Bono Bashes Martin," *Edmonton Sun*, 23 April 2005.

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁰ Kelly Toughill, "Bono Still My Friend, PM Says," *The Toronto Star*, 2 May 2005, A06.

⁴¹¹ *U2 Fans Boo Martin*, *The Halifax Daily News*, 30 April 2005.

⁴¹² Angela Pacienza, "Bono Says Martin 'Improving' On Aid," *Ottawa Citizen*, 14 September 2005, E8.

refusal to commit to the 0.7% aid target.⁴¹³ Martin once again offered a noncommittal retort: “[Bono’s] role is to push me forward.”

United Kingdom

The U.K. leadership of Tony Blair has been exceptionally receptive to Bono, beginning with the rock star’s Jubilee 2000 debt relief work. It was during the Jubilee campaign that Blair and Bono began to meet regularly and the Prime Minister recommitted Britain to helping Africa. U.K. Chancellor Gordon Brown and rocker Bob Geldof also become important characters in this bizarre alliance. In September 2003, Gordon Brown called for the G8 countries to provide an extra \$50 billion in new aid for “the poorest countries,” which would “double aid and halve poverty.”⁴¹⁴ Brown proposed his new “International Finance Facility” would focus on health care and removing agricultural subsidies. A DATA press release said Brown “is again showing inspiring leadership on the need for a massive injection of new money to fight poverty in the poorest countries,” and reminded that “there are few voices within governments” calling for the money that would help fulfill the Millennium Development Goals.

In January 2004 Tony Blair pulled an extraordinary political move by setting up the United Kingdom’s Commission for Africa, an idea “sold” to the Prime Minister by Bob Geldof.⁴¹⁵ The commission was charged with producing a spring 2005 report that would help place Africa “at the top of the agenda” of the 2005 U.K.-chaired G8 summit. The

⁴¹³ Stephen Thorne, “Bono Says Martin Mystifies Him,” *The Toronto Star*, 25 November 2005.

⁴¹⁴ *What Comfort is there for the 40 Million Suffering from HIV/AIDS?*, DATA Press Release, 29 September, 2003.

⁴¹⁵ J.F.O. McAllister, 14 March 2005.

Commission for Africa featured a plethora of international leaders including chair Tony Blair, U.K. Chancellor Gordon Brown, former IMF director Michel Camdessus, former US Senator Nancy Kassebaum Baker, South African Finance Minister Trevor Manuel, Bob Geldof, Kenyan Secretary to the Economic Commission for Africa K.Y. Amoako, Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi and U.K. Secretary of State for International Development Hilary Benn.⁴¹⁶ Tony Blair said the commission's task was "a comprehensive assessment of the situation in Africa and policies toward Africa – what has worked, what has not worked and what more can and should be done." Blair also cited concerns that the Millennium Development Goals were not being met. Blair said that he hoped the report would "regalvanise the international community to act," and noted "it is easier to get people to take action if a report is published just before a summit."⁴¹⁷

A DATA press release said the formation of the Africa Commission was "a bold and exciting move from the Prime Minister and puts Africa at the top of the international agenda where it desperately needs to be," and added that "Tony Blair and Gordon Brown are showing great leadership."⁴¹⁸ President Bush also acknowledged the importance of Blair's move when he agreed with a reporter who asked if the Africa Commission "raised the ante quite a lot in Africa." Bush added that "it's a great opportunity," and that he was "honored to be working with the Prime Minister on this important subject."⁴¹⁹ Geldof confessed that he

⁴¹⁶ Paul Valley, "Blair Backs New Drive to Transform Africa's Dire Outlook," *The Independent*, 27 February 2004.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid.

⁴¹⁸ *Tony Blair Announces Commission for Africa*, DATA Press Release, 26 February 2004.

⁴¹⁹ *President Welcomes British Prime Minister Blair to the White House*, White House Press Release, 7 June 2005.

“secretly hoped for a political breakthrough” with the African Commission and “hoped for a tough public debate on what is clearly the greatest political problem of our time.”⁴²⁰

In May 2004 Tony Blair was a guest at Bono’s Irish home while the Prime Minister was in Dublin for the signing ceremony that welcomed ten new European Union member states.⁴²¹ The two sounded like old chums as they spent time “chatting, laughing and fiddling with the musical instruments...” They talked about “guitars and music” and “a little bit about Africa as well.” Tony Blair referred to Bono as a “top man” and said “he really enjoyed himself.”⁴²² The chumminess ended as quickly as it had begun when Bono went back to lobbying for Africa. In a June pre-G8 open letter to Tony Blair and Gordon Brown backed by DATA, Bono and other celebrities began a public push to increase EU country aid totals to 0.7% of GDP – an amount to which the “rich world” had “famously” committed to providing in official development assistance (ODA) in 1978 with the “Health for All by the Year 2000” pledge.⁴²³ Bono also criticized the EU at a Dublin press conference that was held after an “informal” aid meeting with development ministers “from all 25” EU member states.⁴²⁴ Bono criticized the EU for “breaking pledges on aid,” and blamed “bureaucratic bottlenecks” for preventing a pledged \$14 billion from being spent. He then warned: “We are after billions, not millions. And that’s what it’s going to take to sort out the problems of our next-door neighbor. A lot of these people are doing some great things but there are

⁴²⁰ Bob Geldof, “Don’t Blink: The World is Tilting on its Axis,” *Times Online*, 14 June 2005.

⁴²¹ Bernard Ginns and Mary Carr, “Blair’s Other EU Summit...With ‘Top Man’ Bono,” *Mail on Sunday*, 9 May 2004, 23.

⁴²² *Ibid.*

⁴²³ Sachs, 2005, 213.

⁴²⁴ Marie Woolf, “Blair is Warned of African Aid Shortfall,” *The Independent*, 2 June 2004, 16.

promises being broken and that's unacceptable. You can't make promises and not keep them. There are some laggards hanging out here and I'm just going to be putting my hand in their wallets. We are getting there, but we just have to hurry them along."

The 2004 U.S.-held G8 summit occurred a week after the Bono letter and corresponding public admonition. DATA and Bono were reportedly "disappointed" by the failure of G8 leaders "to commit to the proposal for 100% cancellation of poor country debt owed to the World Bank and IMF" – a plan proposed by U.K. Chancellor Gordon Brown.⁴²⁵ DATA did "welcome" a series of "micro-initiatives" that were agreed upon including "finding an AIDS vaccination, fighting famine and structural food deficits in Ethiopia, beating polio, African peacekeeping and fighting corruption." A DATA press release also aggressively challenged U.K. Prime Minister Tony Blair's role: "Tony Blair talked the talk for Africa down here in Georgia. But this is irrelevant if he does not walk the walk back in London next week when he and Gordon Brown set the aid budget. The Prime Minister needs to put money in the bank if he wants his G8 in 2005 to deliver the comprehensive and historic plan that Africa really needs and which will set him and his G8 apart from Georgia and all the others."⁴²⁶

In July 2004 Blair and Brown responded with increased U.K. HIV/AIDS funding from £300 million to £450 million in 2005, £500 million in 2006 and £550 million in 2007.⁴²⁷ In addition they announced £150 million over three years for AIDS orphans

⁴²⁵ DATA: *Disappointment, but Door Left Open to Progress on Debt relief*, DATA Press Release; 10 June 2004; and Alison Hardie, "Brown Urges Debt Write-Off," *The Scotsman*, 31 May 2004, 2.

⁴²⁶ DATA – *Crunch Time for Blair in Africa*, DATA Press Release, 10 June 2004.

⁴²⁷ DATA *Responds to New U.K. AIDS Strategy*, DATA Press Release, 21 July 2004.

funding and a twofold per year increase through 2007 in funding to the UN's Global Fund. The favor dance continued as Bono agreed to speak at the U.K. Labour Party convention in September. Bono used the occasion to dub Blair and Brown the "John and Paul of the global development stage," and added, "Lennon and McCartney changed my interior world – Blair and Brown can change the real world."⁴²⁸ Blair made the next move at an October Commission for Africa meeting when he "vowed to put Africa at the top of the agenda" at the 2005 G8 Summit in Scotland, which Tony Blair would be chairing – a proclamation that matched Jean Chrétien's 2002 Canadian plan.⁴²⁹ *BBC News* reported that Blair called the summit "a tremendous opportunity to put before the international community a plan for Africa," cautioning that "the time for excuses will be over" when his Africa Commission report is delivered, and added that it was "time to turn international attention into international action."

In December 2004 Chancellor Brown announced that the U.K. would "work with other countries to speed up the development of an AIDS vaccine" in a World AIDS day speech.⁴³⁰ December also provided Brown the opportunity to join Bono on the BBC's Radio Four morning show, *Today*, which the rock star was guest editing. Bono also invited former U.S. President Bill Clinton to be a guest. Brown used the December 28th appearance to "renew his call for a change in the way rich countries tackle poverty."⁴³¹ Brown told listeners that "We shouldn't have to choose, as we are at the moment, between the

⁴²⁸ *Bono' Speech to Labour Party Conference*, Brighton, U.K., 29 September 2004, Available [Online]: <http://www.data.org/archives/000605.php>

⁴²⁹ *Blair Calls for Action on Africa*, BBC News, 7 October 2004.

⁴³⁰ *Britain Backs HIV Vaccine Studies*, BBC News, 1 December 2004.

⁴³¹ Wall, 2005, 314.

temporary emergency relief that we are giving and the long-term tackling of the underlying causes of poverty,” noting that “We should be able to do both.” He then called for “something akin to the Marshall Plan of the 1940s, which is a bold effort at reconstruction, a very substantial increase in resources.” Clinton admitted on the program that “it [is] easier for world leaders to talk about Africa after leaving office,” because of the political unpopularity of asking for billions in charity.⁴³² He also added that he agreed to the BBC interview with Bono “because Tony Blair is genuinely committed to this.”

In January 2005 Brown revealed the details of his new “Marshall Plan” as he championed a new International Finance Facility (IFF) that would borrow against future rich country aid budgets to significantly increase immediate aid spending.⁴³³ The plan received backing from the European Union, China, India and Brazil, but was rejected by United States Treasury Under Secretary John Taylor, who claimed the “U.S. had ‘bold’ proposals of its own for debt relief which included channeling more aid through grants as opposed to loans.”⁴³⁴ Brown offered his rationale for the IFF in a March 2005 interview with *TIME Europe*, explaining that “if we front-load and raise the extra \$4 billion now, 10 million lives would be saved over the next 20 years.” He then candidly admitted, “The truth is, unless we front-load resources there is no way we are going to meet the Millennium Development

⁴³² Ibid, 315.

⁴³³ Jeremy Warner, “Germans Back Brown Plan to Tackle Global Poverty,” *The Independent*, 29 January 2005, 49.

⁴³⁴ Michael Harrison, “Brown’s Crusade on Debt Knocked Off Course by the US,” *The Independent*, 5 February, 2005.

Goals. If we're not going to meet them, why did we sign up to them only a few years ago?"⁴³⁵

Tony Blair's Commission for Africa released its report on March 11, 2005, which included five key foci including *Governance and Capacity-Building*, which called for improvements in Africa's higher education system and pan-African organizations such as the African Union, and exhorted both "rich countries" and African leadership to take greater responsibility and offer more transparency.⁴³⁶ Second, it noted *The Need for Peace and Security*, explaining that Africa "has experienced more violent conflict than any other continent in the last four decades," and called for "controlling the trade in small arms." Thirdly, it called for *Investing in People*, which "means rebuilding African health and education systems." Fourth, it cited the twin goals of *Going for Growth and Poverty Reduction*, which will benefit from "the public and private sectors" working together, and will "require a massive investment in infrastructure to break down the internal barriers that hold Africa back." Lastly it noted the need for *More and Fairer Trade*, citing the problems of trade barriers and the lack of commodities. The report noted that its recommendations would require an extra \$25 billion per year in aid by 2010, which should be doubled to \$50 billion per year by 2015, and also stipulated continued growth in "good governance" and the quality of aid delivery from aid donors. It further requested the oft-repeated aid figure of

⁴³⁵ "No Child Should Die if it's Avoidable," Interview with Gordon Brown, Time Europe, (14 March 2005), 165, no. 11.

⁴³⁶ *The Report of the Commission for Africa*, 11 March 2005, Available [Online]: <http://www.commissionforafrica.org/english/report/introduction.html#report>

0.7% GDP from rich nations, Gordon Brown's goal of front-loading the aid monies through the IFF, and "100 per cent debt cancellation as soon as possible."

Summer 2005 provided several opportunities for African campaigners, including the 2005 G8 Summit which was chaired by British Prime Minister Tony Blair and held at the Gleneagles Hotel and golf course in Perthshire, Scotland July 6-8. In addition, the 25th anniversary of Live Aid was being remembered with a last minute July 2 African-awareness concert dubbed Live 8 that would coincide with the G8 summit. Bono began his summer politicking by securing May meetings with U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, and White House staffers Joshua Bolten and Karl Rove.⁴³⁷ The first move by the G8 occurred in late May when European Union Development Ministers agreed to increase foreign aid spending to 0.51% of GDP by 2010 and 0.7% by 2015, a position World Bank President Paul Wolfowitz also "embraced" in June.⁴³⁸ DATA's Jamie Drummond noted that the announcement would "help ONE and the other campaigns to make poverty history put healthy pressure on the U.S., Japan, and Canada to increase their effective aid commitments." Bono met with EU president Jose Manuel Barroso on June 9 in Brussels to discuss Africa, and afterwards urged EU leadership "to do more than just pay lip-service to the issue."⁴³⁹ Bono also publicly called for G8 protesters to "turn up en masse at this golf

⁴³⁷ James Traub, 18 September 2005.

⁴³⁸ Ibid and *Reaction from Sir Bob Geldof and ONE Campaign on European Move to Boost Assistance to the Poorest*, DATA Press Release, 24 May 2005.

⁴³⁹ Jonathan Cohen, "Bono Stumps for African Aid in Brussels," Billboard Online; http://www.billboard.com/bbcom/search/google/article_display.jsp?vnu_content_id=1000954211

course,” an apparent follow-up to fellow-campaigner Bob Geldof’s call for one million protestors to show.⁴⁴⁰

Bono’s challenge to the G8 leadership was honored by the G7 finance ministers in a June 11 \$40 billion debt relief deal for 18 poor countries, the majority of which were African, and covered monies owed to the World Bank, the IMF and the African Development Bank, and could increase to 27 countries and \$55 billion within 18 months.⁴⁴¹ The G8 leaders also committed to an additional \$25 billion in African aid, and universal access to HIV drugs, both by 2010.⁴⁴² The financing for the new debt-deal would come from numerous sources including reshuffled current funds, new monies and a “previously unknown [IMF] reserve fund,” that Stephen Rand from the Jubilee Debt Campaign likened to “finding grandma’s forgotten Post Office savings account.”⁴⁴³ *The Christian Science Monitor* credited the “long campaign of persistent persuasion by British Prime Minister Tony Blair and Irish rock star Bono,” and added that “they won a victory for the world’s poorest continent.”⁴⁴⁴ *The Financial Times* reported that Germany and Japan initially wanted to “write off a smaller portion” of the debt if certain criteria weren’t met, but “bowed in the end to the ‘political reality’ of strong public support for the deal.”⁴⁴⁵ *The New York Times* reported that Bono had met with Treasury Undersecretary John Taylor at the World

⁴⁴⁰ Michael Settle, “‘Descend on Gleneagles’, Bono Tells Protesters,” *The Herald*, 13 June 2005, Web Issue 2287, Available [Online]: <http://www.theherald.co.U.K./politics/41081-print.shtml>

⁴⁴¹ Owen Bowcott, “Deal Praised But More Help Wanted,” *The Guardian*, 13 June 2005.

⁴⁴² *G8 Leaders Agree \$50bn Aid Boost*, BBC News, 8 July 2005, Available [Online]: <http://news.bbc.co.U.K./2/hi/business/4662297.stm>

⁴⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴⁴ *Blair, Bono Win One for Africa*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, 13 June 2005.

⁴⁴⁵ Chris Giles and Friederike Tiesenhausen Cave, “Caution Over G8 Plan for Debt Relief,” *The Financial Times*, 13 June 2005.

Economic Forum “to try and move the Bush Administration’s position on the [debt] issue.”⁴⁴⁶

The Live 8 concerts weren’t announced until May 31, but were quickly organized and easily rivaled that of its predecessor 20 years earlier. The July 2 concerts were held in 10 cities including Philadelphia, London, Paris, Berlin, Rome, Johannesburg, Tokyo and Moscow, and featured a July 6 finale in Edinburg, Scotland to coincide with the G8. Dozens of acts performed at the various venues including U2, Paul McCartney, Elton John, R.E.M., Sting, Madonna, the Dave Matthews Band, Stevie Wonder, Jay-Z, Andrea Bocelli, Brian Wilson and the highly-anticipated Pink Floyd reunion – who played together for the first time in 24 years.⁴⁴⁷ The concerts were free, and instead of raising dollars for Africa they sought to raise political awareness and pressure G8 leadership in the run-up to the Gleneagles summit. Nelson Mandela spoke via a pre-recorded video message to the 60,000 people gathered at the Live 8’s “Final Push Gig” in Edinburgh, and asked the crowd to “work together to make poverty history this year.”⁴⁴⁸ The event spectacular was broadcast worldwide on more than 140 TV channels to an audience of “several hundred million,” heard on nearly 400 radio stations, and watched by more than 5 million viewers via “live streams” on America Online – an internet record.⁴⁴⁹ The Philadelphia show attracted more

⁴⁴⁶ James Traub, 18 September 2005.

⁴⁴⁷ Richard Harrington, “Live 8 Concerts to Amplify Problem of Global Poverty,” *The Washington Post*, 1 June 2005, C01.

⁴⁴⁸ *Mandela Addresses Live 8 Finale*, BBC News, 7 July 2005, Available [Online]: <http://news.bbc.co.U.K./2/hi/entertainment/4653511.stm>

⁴⁴⁹ *Millions Rock to Live 8 Message*, BBC News, 3 July 2005, Available [Online]: <http://news.bbc.co.U.K./2/hi/entertainment/4641999.stm>; *Media Spread Live 8 Around the Globe*, BBC News, 3 July 2005, Available [Online]: <http://news.bbc.co.U.K./2/hi/entertainment/4645097.stm>; Brian Hiatt, Austin Scaggs and David Sinclair, “Live 8’s Global Uprising,” *Rolling Stone*, (28 July 2005) 979, 32-34.

than 800,000 fans, and the London, Berlin and Rome shows all drew 200,000 each. Live 8 also received a record 26.4 million text messages in support of the campaign. The concerts also unintentionally provided \$12 million in surplus earnings that was generated from sponsors, merchandising, TV and DVD rights, and was subsequently slated for “relief projects in Africa.”⁴⁵⁰

Blair and Bono spoke “regularly” the week before the G8 summit, and the two devised a plan for Bono to visit a 10 Downing Street meeting of the assistants to the G8 heads of state, whom the rock star called “the eight sherpas.”⁴⁵¹ Blair told *Time* that “while having a beer” with Bono, the two “decided [they] would talk to these people who’d done an incredible amount of work, to give them a sense of the importance of this.”⁴⁵² *The New York Times* candidly noted that “Lobbying sherpas is simply not done,” but “Bono dropped in on their meeting as he just happened to be in the neighborhood.” After introducing himself, Bono asked them “to please go a bit further,” and explained that “in 20 years, this week will be one of the things you’ll be most proud of in your lives.”⁴⁵³

With the onset of the G8 approaching, Bono was stationed at a DATA war room in a Scotland hotel, along with “key aides,” and Bob Geldof. On the first day of the summit Bono and his cronies “chopped over to Gleneagles,” where Bono spoke with German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and Tony Blair about “issues that were still up in the air” including “finance mechanisms and trade reform.” The rock star also got time with Bush

⁴⁵⁰ Emmanuel Legrand, “Live 8 Yields a Windfall,” *Billboard*, (5 November 2005): 117, no. 45, 9-10.

⁴⁵¹ James Traub, 18 September 2005.

⁴⁵² Josh Tyrangiel, “The Constant Charmer,” *Time*, (26 December 2005): 166, no. 26, 46-62.

⁴⁵³ *Ibid.*

again when “he dropped by his suite for a final nudge,” and told the president, “On so many issues it’s difficult to know what God wants from us, but on this issue, helping the desperately poor, we know God will bless it.”⁴⁵⁴ G8 leaders held “a formal signing ceremony” for the African commitments on the final day of the summit – a formality that was “against G8 tradition” – but advanced by Blair after Bono had presented the idea.⁴⁵⁵

John Kirton of the University of Toronto G8 research group told *BBC News* that the 2005 G8 summit “was the single most successful in the 30-year history of the event and claimed that the “strong public support” that was also cited by German and Japanese officials was not accidental.⁴⁵⁶ He explained that “a key part of the summit” was “the unprecedented opportunity it offered for civil society to take part in central deliberations,” noting the *Make Poverty History* and Live 8 campaigns which “[showed] how civil society can exert real pressure and influence the agenda and outcome.” The British “sherpa,” Sir Michael Jay, credited Live 8 for the African initiatives and noted that without the concerts “there could have been no deal.”⁴⁵⁷ Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin credited Bono, noting “it’s difficult to imagine much of it would have been done without him.”⁴⁵⁸

Doubts surrounding the finalization of the G8 debt-deal surfaced in September when several Northern European countries and the World Bank admitted to having reservations

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁵ James Traub, 18 September 2005.

⁴⁵⁶ Steve Schifferes, “Can G8 be Considered a Success?,” *BBC News Online*, 8 July 2005, Available [Online]: <http://news.bbc.co.U.K./2/hi/business/4663659.stm>

⁴⁵⁷ *Geldof’s Year*, The Guardian, 28 December 2005.

⁴⁵⁸ Josh Tyrangiel, “The Constant Charmer,” *Time*, (26 December 2005): 166, no. 26, 46-62.

about the plan.⁴⁵⁹ The aid community was relieved when the deal received an important approval from the World Bank and the IMF on September 25.⁴⁶⁰ Bono issued a statement though DATA hailing victory for “the greatest protest movement since anti-apartheid in the 80s and civil rights in the 60s.” He also credited the diverse coalition that was involved: “The politicians have had to listen. Their consciences have been pricked from every imaginable corner – by the church, student groups, the NGO community, musicians, movie stars and soccer moms.”⁴⁶¹

Bono also targeted the next piece of his African crusade: “The next injustice to be torn down is the bullying tactics at the WTO (World Trade Organization).” Jamie Drummond expounded on DATA’s latest efforts, which were focused on the December 2005 Hong Kong round of WTO talks: “To be clear, DATA has been lobbying hard, both USTR [United States Office of the Trade Representative], the White House, Brussels, Number 10 Downing Street, the Irish government, the French government – we’ve been working with all the G8 leaders to try and get the best possible outcome.”⁴⁶² In late November DATA was rewarded for its efforts as U.S. Trade Representative Rob Portman sought Bono and DATA’s assistance in securing a trade deal at the December WTO meetings, after earlier in the month his office had “briefed the Irish singer and top staffers...

⁴⁵⁹ Paul Blustein, “Objections Emerge to G-8 Debt relief Plan; One Time Cancellation for 18 Nations Seen by Some as Damaging Institutional Capacity,” *The Washington Post*, 13 September 2005, A14.

⁴⁶⁰ *DATA Reaction to IMF-World Bank Debt Cancellation*, DATA Press Release, 25 September 2005.

⁴⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶² *Rockin’ in the Free Trade World*, Marketplace Radio Program, American Public Media, 23 November 2005, p.m. edition, Available [Online]: Available [Online]: <http://marketplace.publicradio.org/shows/2005/11/23/PM200511232.html>

on the U.S. agenda...”⁴⁶³ A Portman spokesman admitted, “We just want them to be involved. That’s our objective.” The Canadian International Trade Minister also approached Bono about attending the Hong Kong talks, and even gave the rock star “a letter pointing out the benefits of free trade for developing countries.”⁴⁶⁴ Bono did not attend the WTO Hong Kong trade talks because of touring commitments with U2, as reported to the author in a brief pre-concert discussion on December 14, 2005 in St. Louis, Missouri – the week of the Hong Kong WTO meetings.

⁴⁶³ Greg Hitt, “Wanted: Rocker-Activist’s Support,” *The Wall Street Journal*, 23 November 2005, A4.

⁴⁶⁴ Stephen Thorne, “Bono Says Martin Mystifies Him,” *the Toronto Star*, 25 November 2005.

CHAPTER 4

THEORETICAL ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

I've never been keen on celebrities in politics. But Arnold [Schwarzenegger] told me Bono knew what he was talking about. As it turned out, Bono really did know what he was talking about.

- *Former U.S. Representative John Kasich (R-Ohio), in interview with Cleveland Plain Dealer Music Critic John Soeder*

I can't figure out why President Bush keeps asking me back, but he does. I scratch my head going, 'He's a Republican. I'm a rock star, uuhhh.'

- *Bono in an Interview with the Christian Broadcasting Network*

After reading the preceding historical analysis there should be no doubt that Bono has engaged in a lifelong pursuit of social and political activism, and has indeed secured considerable political achievements and influence during his career as front-man for U2. It should also be obvious that Bono's influence and political successes increased significantly in the late 1990s and the early 2000s when his political activist strategy deliberately shifted upon joining the Jubilee 2000 campaign and with the eventual formation of his think tank/lobbying firm DATA and the related grassroots organization The ONE Campaign, all of which focused solely on issues related to reducing abject poverty on the African continent. Figure Three summarizes the numerous documented political activities in which Bono has participated and that this work has investigated. A quick glance at Figure Three should provide ample evidence of at least Bono's substantial political involvement.

<p>1982: Bono befriends Irish Prime Minister Garret Fitzgerald in Heathrow airport. The PM visits U2 in the studio on the last day of his reelection campaign. The U2-Fitzgerald connection is featured “heavily” in the Irish press. The PM wins reelection and later admits that “Bono spoke favorably about my party during the election and that was politically helpful.”</p>
<p>Summer/Fall 1992: U2 spends time with Bill Clinton in the run-up to the 1992 presidential election. Bono also harasses presidential incumbent George Bush nightly from stage. Clinton wins presidential election and tells Irish Prime Minister Albert Reynolds U2 “played a big part in getting [me] elected.”</p>
<p>1998: U2 endorses Irish Good Friday peace agreement. Political opposition leaders John Hume (Ulster Unionist Party) and David Trimble (Social Democratic and Labor Party) publicly shake hands a pre-referendum U2 benefit gig. Referendum passes by a landslide.</p>
<p>February 1999: Bono endorses Jubilee 2000 at Brit Awards and in a Guardian newspaper editorial. U.K. Chancellor Gordon Brown announces £50 million debt relief package a few days later.</p>
<p>1999: Bono lobbies Bill Clinton to cancel 100% of HIPC debt owed to the United States instead of Clinton’s previous 67% offer.</p>
<p>September 1999: Clinton announces 100% bilateral debt relief and seeks the funding from Congress over four years. Clinton publicly praises Bono’s efforts representing Jubilee 2000.</p>
<p>September 1999: Bono asks the Pope to publicly support Jubilee 2000. After the Bono-meeting The Pope publicly embraces Jubilee 2000 and then appeals to world leaders on behalf of the campaign.</p>
<p>1999: Bono lobbies Dick Arme about IMF gold revaluation that would pay for debt relief. In November 1999 Arme eventually supports IMF gold revaluation and Congress passes \$123 million bilateral debt-deal.</p>
<p>1999: Bono helps convince U.S. Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers to back debt relief. Summers pens Washington Post editorial backing debt relief and becomes a key Bono-ally in the Clinton Administration.</p>
<p>July 2000: Bono “ginned up” clergy constituents of House debt relief holdout Sonny Callahan (R-AL). Callahan admits “he gave in” to the debt relief lobbying and backs the House bill which provides \$225 million in multilateral debt relief.</p>
<p>2000: Bono meets with noted conservative Jesse Helms about debt relief. Helms is brought to tears and admits Bono “changed his mind about debt relief.” He offers to do “anything [he] can to help” Bono. Helms later pushes a \$435 million bilateral debt relief bill through the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee, which Congress passes. The bill also provides an additional \$800 million from IMF gold sales.</p>
<p>June 2001: Bono again meets with Jesse Helms, this time about the African AIDS emergency. Helms is again reduced to tears and publicly repents for his previous AIDS stance. Helms convinces U.S. VP Dick Cheney to “listen to Bono’s ideas.” Helms pens Washington Post editorial about tackling African AIDS. Helms adds \$500 million in African AIDS funding to 2002 supplemental appropriations bill, which is eventually killed by the White House.</p>
<p>2001-2003: Persistent lobbying of Bush Administration officials about African AIDS and responsible African aid monies. In 2002 Bush relies on DATA to help draft Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) legislation, a new foreign aid bill. Bush Administration requires Bono’s public endorsement of MCA. Bono travels to Africa with Treasury Secretary Paul O’Neill. Bush announces \$15 billion AIDS relief plan in 2003.</p>
<p>1999-2002: Bono lobbies Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and Foreign Minister Paul Martin about Africa. Toronto Sun credits Bono with Paul Martin’s fall 2000 \$1 billion African debt cancellation. Chrétien makes Africa the focus of the Canadian-hosted 2002 G8 Summit, and secures \$1 billion in African aid.</p>

Fig. 3 Bono Political Activism Timeline

<p>September 2003: DATA places ads in Ohio, home of Senator Mike DeWine, urging constituents to request full funding of the FY 2004 AIDS bill appropriation. In October 2003 DeWine proposes \$289 million amendment to FY 2004 AIDS bill. Final appropriation for FY 2004 AIDS spending: \$2.4 billion. Final FY 2004 appropriation for MCA: \$1 billion.</p>
<p>March 2004: DATA places ads and mobilizes constituents in House Republican Jim Nussle's Iowa district attacking his proposed \$4.7 billion cut to foreign aid spending, which also removes any promises for AIDS funding. In May 2004 Nussle adds an additional \$2.8 billion to the foreign aid budget – the exact amount Bush requested for the AIDS bill. Nussle admits buckling to his Iowa constituents. Final appropriation for FY 2005 AIDS spending: \$2.8 billion. Final FY 2005 appropriation for MCA: \$1.5 billion.</p>
<p>May 2004: During Bono's Congressional testimony Senator Mitch McConnell asks him to contact EU leadership about increasing Burmese sanctions. Bono promises to contact EU president Romano Prodi. In October 2004 the EU intensifies Burmese sanctions.</p>
<p>May 2005: Bono lobbies members of Bush Administration about African anti-Malaria funding. In June 2005 Bush announces \$674 million in additional FY 2005 "emergency" African Aid. Bush also announces \$1.7 billion in additional African aid funding, the majority of which supports anti-malaria efforts.</p>
<p>July 2005: The ONE Campaign urges supporters to contact their Congressmen about a \$100 million AIDS and malaria amendment. In October 2005 Senators receive 25,000 calls about the amendment, which passes.</p>
<p>April 2004: Bono meets with German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder to lobby for a German 0.7% of GDP aid target. In January 2005 Gerhard Schröder privately assures Bono he supports the 0.7% target, which was then publicly announced in May 2005.</p>
<p>November 2003: Bono lobbies Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin about generic AIDS drugs for Africa. In March 2004 DATA and Bono attack Paul Martin's generic AIDS drugs legislation, which was partial to pharmaceutical manufacturers. In April 2004 Paul Martin removes language from generic AIDS legislation favoring manufacturers. In May 2004 Paul Martin commits \$100 million to an upstart WHO AIDS program. Martin creates "Canada Corps," which recruits young people to help build democratic institutions in failing states. Martin doubles Canada's contribution to the U.N.'s AIDS global fund to \$70 million. Finance Minister Ralph Goodale announces \$9 million in debt relief for Senegal, Ghana and Ethiopia. In April 2005 Bono attacks the Martin government because it did not endorse the target foreign aid rate of 0.7% of GDP. In May 2005 Martin bumbles and stumbles but acknowledges Canada will work toward the 0.7% target foreign aid rate.</p>
<p>June 2004: Bono and DATA press U.K. Prime Minister Tony Blair and Chancellor Gordon Brown to increase African aid funding. July 2004: Blair and Brown increase African aid funding by £750 million over three years. They also double the per year U.K. contribution to the UN's Global AIDS Fund. 2005: Bono and DATA lobby G8 governments for historic deal at 2005 G8 summit being hosted by the U.K.. May 2005: EU development ministers agree to 0.51% of GDP aid budget by 2010, and 0.7% by 2015. June 2005: G7 finance ministers announce \$40-55 billion African debt relief plan. July 2005: G8 announces \$50 billion extra in foreign aid by 2010, half of which will go to Africa.</p>

Fig. 3 Continued

This section will use social science literature to fully explain the efficacy of the Bono-model of celebrity activism. It will also attempt to provide a deeper case for Bono's political successes using academic literature on celebrity activism, think tanks, interest groups, coalition building, and transnational civil society. The first step in academically explaining and assessing Bono's political success is definitional. One problem in analyzing

Bono's political forays is that they involve activity in both the domestic and international arena, and in both cases include various structural political entities. In addition, Bono uses his influence in numerous ways including in his capacity as front man of U2, where he promotes issue awareness and asks fans to join The ONE Campaign, and as a political lobbyist in his role as co-founder of DATA and The ONE Campaign. This work has primarily focused on Bono's domestic activities within the United States, but has also briefly examined his international political activities as they relate to the G8 countries. For this reason the utilized academic literature on celebrity activism, think tanks and interest groups will focus primarily on situations within the United States.

Limitations

It is important to acknowledge several limitations to this work, which given more time and resources could have been further explored. These issues provide fertile research ground for others. The first issue was briefly mentioned previously and concerns Bono's actual influence. The humanitarian issues that Bono has tackled are numerous and complex, and also feature many other actors with varying agendas. Bono is only one of many international actors, which include thousands of NGOs, academics, bureaucrats, clergy, businessmen, volunteers and citizens that have been actively involved with issues and policy related to the African continent. It is also probable that there are other powerbrokers and groups that have been equally and/or more politically influential than Bono. There is also the issue of political motivation. Were the policy shifts and personal political breakthroughs really the result of Bono's influence and persuasion, or were there other reasons for these

shifts? For example, the security ramifications of a post 9/11 mentality that have been mentioned by numerous politicians and African advocates provide one possible alternate explanation for the policy shifts explored in this work. For example, some in the development community see the increased concern for Africa being motivated “by calculations of Africa’s geo-strategic significance, with the U.S. seeking to foster military and security relationships which advance its own agenda,” or simply “by the quest for Africa’s natural resources” such as oil.¹ These issues concern an entirely different set of pressure groups and actors whom extend beyond the international development community, and politicians might simply be responding to their behind-the-scenes pressure.

It is also important to discuss the difference between political promises and policy, and further, policy enactments and actual policy results. This work did not completely examine the final results of each political promise, especially where arcane and pliable items such as budgets and financial commitments are concerned. For example, this work reported that in March 2002 Jesse Helms proposed an increase in Congressional African AIDS funding of \$500 million. *The American Prospect* reported that the \$500 million was later whittled down to \$200 million by the White House while Helms was “in and out of the hospital,” and further, Bush never even disbursed this reduced amount.² This is just one example of the discrepancies that can exist between political posturing and final results.

¹ Ann-Louise Colgan, “Policy Report: Africa Policy Outlook 2005,” *Foreign Policy in Focus (FPF)*, January 2005.

² Erika Casriel, “Promises, Promise; Big Talk Aside, Bush’s Go-It-Alone Global AIDS Strategy is Hurting More than It’s Helping,” *The American Prospect*, August 2004.

In addition, while this work has provided evidence which suggests that Bono has been politically successful in securing new African policy, this does not guarantee similar successful results for the citizens of Africa. Although it is beyond the scope of this work to thoroughly assess the results of the African policy of which Bono has been a part, preliminary evidence and dissenting voices can be provided. Debt relief was the first major task that Bono undertook, and in gross dollar terms, probably his most successful. *Jubilee Research*, a spin-off from the Jubilee 2000 campaign and a part of the U.K.-based “think-and-do-tank” New Economics Foundation, reports that presently nearly \$30 billion in debt has been cancelled for HIPC countries in net present value.³ An August 2005 joint IMF-World Bank report indicates that the “total cost” of debt relief for the 28 countries that have met HIPC requirements is \$38.2 billion in 2004 net present value.⁴ But there are several critics who claim that the debt relief proposals are neither deep nor broad enough, and are being delivered too slowly.⁵ In addition, these critics contend that HIPC eligibility conditions exacerbate the aforementioned issues.

There are also critics on the right who are opposed to the very concept of aid, citing the development of a “culture of dependency... which will impede rather than accelerate the

³ Taken from Jubilee Research website on 29 November 2005, Available [Online]: <http://www.jubilee2000U.K..org/>

⁴ *Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative – Status of Implementation*, Prepared by the Staffs of the IMF and World Bank, 19 August 2005, Available [Online]: <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTDEBTDEPT/Resources/081905.pdf>

⁵ See Fantu Cheru, “Debt, Adjustment and the Politics of Effective Response to HIV/AIDS in Africa,” *Third World Quarterly* 23, no. 2 (2002): 299-313; Walden Bello and Guttal Shalmali, “Programmed to Fail: The World Bank Clings to a Bankrupt Development Model,” *Multinational Monitor* (July/August 2005): 23-29; Stephen Ellis, “How to Rebuild Africa,” *Foreign Affairs* 84, no. 5 (2005): 135-148; *Deadly Delays: How IMF and World Bank Economic Conditions Undermine Debt Cancellation*, Jubilee USA Report, November 2005, Available [Online]: http://www.jubileeusa.org/resources/reports/deadly_delays.pdf

positive changes needed to haul Africa into the 21st Century.”⁶ These critics continually point to the political corruption that has lent to aid “[enriching] political elites.” Ellis claims that “Many on the continent have come to see foreign aid as nothing more than a cow to be milked.”⁷ Less callous critics note that aid “thinking” is “confused,” as it ignores the “central role of politics and the state in Africa’s development problems.”⁸ In assessing the prudence of the G8’s summer 2005 agreement to double African aid assistance by 2010, Lockwood cites the 130% increase in African aid between 1980 and 1990 – a decade which also saw African per capita incomes fall and poverty increase. Lockwood blames aid that has been “tied to donor country commercial interests, and poorly targeted, coordinated, and harmonized.” In addition, Lockwood explains that recipient governments that “have been bombarded with conflicting advice and schemes from many donors, the international agencies, and NGOs.”

It is also premature to offer thorough assessments of the two major U.S. foreign aid programs in which Bono has been integral, the Presidents Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the Millennium Challenge Accounts (MCA), which later became the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC). This work previously mentioned criticisms surrounding the MCC’s late deployment – a program which is fiscally lagging and still in its development phase. To its credit, as a new agency outside of traditional U.S. foreign aid hubs such as the State Department and USAID, the MCC has had inordinate bureaucratic

⁶ Nile Gardiner, “The Bush/Blair Pre-G-8 Meeting: Tensions in the Anglo-U.S. Alliance?,” *Web Memo #754*, *The Heritage Foundation*, Available [Online]: <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Europe/wm754.cfm>

⁷ Stephen Ellis, “How to Rebuild Africa,” *Foreign Affairs* 84, no. 5 (2005): 135-148.

⁸ Matthew Lockwood, “Will A Marshall Plan for Africa Make Poverty History?,” *Journal of International Development*, 2005, 17, 775-89.

implementation hurdles. As of January 2005, there have been 23 recipient countries identified and five country compacts signed. It is premature to even begin to assess the on-the-ground results of the MCC. PEPFAR has had more initial success than the MCC, with its First Annual Report to Congress providing a plethora of positive statistics. The report starts by boasting that PEPFAR is “the largest international health initiative in history initiated by one nation to address a single disease.”⁹ The report claims that PEPFAR has put 155,000 HIV-positive adults and children on antiretroviral therapy, “supported care for more than 1,727,000 adults and children” with HIV/AIDS, provided 1.2 million women with mother-to-child prevention services, trained more than 6,000 in injection and blood safety, trained 312,000 health care providers (this includes training in basic prevention services, mother-to-child prevention, antiretroviral therapy, palliative care, counseling and testing, and orphan care). In addition, PEPFAR proudly reported that 80 percent of their 1200 partner organizations were indigenous as opposed to Western-operated. PEPFAR also voraciously promoted its controversial “ABC” approach to HIV prevention (Abstinence, Being Faithful, and, as appropriate, correct and consistent use of Condoms) by “supporting national strategies” that sent ABC messages to over 120 million people through mass media campaigns and “other interventions.” It is also beyond the scope of this work to determine if PEPFAR’s results are satisfactory given the allocated resources.

⁹ *Engendering Bold Leadership: The President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, First Annual Report to Congress, March 2005.*

Charisma and Issue-Knowledge

Boston College sociologist and philanthropy expert Paul Schervish categorizes Bono as one of a few celebrity “hyper-agents” – those “with the wealth and time to dedicate to finding new ways of addressing age-old problems, as well as the *charisma* to motivate others,” and who Schervish claims has partially spurred “the first roots of a dramatic change in philanthropy that we’re going to see emerge and become a regular part of our culture in the next 10 years (emphasis added).”¹⁰ This is a bold prediction, and the subject of philanthropy is not one that this work has analyzed, but Schervish’s application of the term “charisma” to the person of Bono is important as it relates to the “Bono-model” of politics. In *Charisma in Politics, Religion and the Media* Aberbach calls the term charisma “the most enduring, abused and controversial legacy of the German sociologist Max Weber.”¹¹ This controversy stemmed from Weber’s reapplication of charisma’s definition from a purely theological reference to one which was applied to secular phenomena, and “above all in politics.” Marshall also discusses Weber’s contributions to the study of charisma, and notes that Weber “[drew] from the original Greek definition,” that “identifies charisma as a ‘gift’ from the Grace of God,” and further explains that charismatic power “is *ultra vires* of institutional and economic forms of legitimation.”¹² In addition, “pure charismatic authority” is characterized by a leader who “is entirely independent of the status of an office,

¹⁰ Alexandra Marks, “Celebrity ‘Hyper-Agents’ Transform Philanthropy,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, 19 September 2005.

¹¹ David Aberbach, *Charisma in Politics, Religion and the Media*, New York: New York University Press, 1996, ix.

¹² David P. Marshall, *Celebrity and Power: Fame in Contemporary Culture*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997, 20.

position, or rank,” which fits Bono’s case. Aberbach also notes that *charisma* “is now commonly applied to individuals who have for good or bad left their mark on society, particularly through politics or the media...” These descriptions of charisma all fit Bono, as he has surpassed traditional institutional celebrity boundaries, and has left significant marks on both politics and media through his activism and his musical career, although he likely falls within Aberbach’s “exceptional” category. Interestingly enough, Aberbach compares the “greatest political charismatics” to artists, claiming that they “use their followers as ‘material’ to raise politics to the level of art.”¹³

Aberbach also explores a continuing debate regarding the structural forces at work outside of the charismatic, and claims that “Crisis creates the need for heroic leadership,” but also finds it difficult to imagine counterfactuals that include a French Revolution without Robespierre or an American Civil War without Abraham Lincoln. Aberbach quizzically asks, “And yet, does crisis create charisma?”¹⁴ Is it not also true that charisma provokes crisis?” Aberbach resolves this chicken-in-the-egg puzzle noting it is within “this paradox that the dynamic nature of charisma lies.” Aberbach also maintains that “Charisma and crisis are dynamic, interlocking forces, feeding on and manipulating each other.” Bono is certainly the leading Western spokesman for the African crisis – what he continually refers to as an emergency. Currently it seems that most of Western society does not consider the ills of Africa a crisis, but it is probable that history will portray it as such. Bono addressed this

¹³ Aberbach, 1996, 1.

¹⁴ Ibid, 5.

subject in a 2005 interview with *60 Minutes* correspondent Ed Bradley, telling him that he thinks his activism “will be forgotten,” because “those problems will have gone away.”¹⁵

Aberbach also claims that the modern media, “especially film and radio,” has “enormously expanded the possibilities and meaning of charisma,” and that several 20th century charismatics used modern mediums to their advantage including Charlie Chaplin, Adolph Hitler, John F. Kennedy and Charles de Gaulle.¹⁶ Aberbach explains that the media “has also magnified as never before the public view of charismatics,” and uncovered what was previously hidden about charisma in its traditional forms and enhanced the possibilities for charismatic religious expression in popular culture,” a telling observation that fits Bono’s case.¹⁷ Aberbach cites Charles Lindbergh’s “semi-religious charismatic authority” after his 1927 cross-Atlantic flight. Bono also arguably commands a “semi-religious charismatic authority,” most notably at U2 concerts where thousands of fans revel in a worship-like atmosphere, with Bono commanding the spotlight. Smyth discusses how U2 concerts were from the outset meant to create “a feeling of intimacy,” a large part of which depended upon “the energy and charisma of Bono.”¹⁸ Smyth further explained how U2 audiences could be seduced by Bono’s charisma and the band’s music:

[Bono’s] stage antics, which frequently included climbing on sets and interacting with members of the audience, amounted to an assault on the artificial space of the stage so that concert-goers would feel they had been a part of, rather than merely

¹⁵ *Bono and the Christian Right*, CBS News Online, 20 November 2005, Available [Online]: <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2005/11/17/60minutes/main1053542.shtml>

¹⁶ Aberbach, 1996, 75.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 79

¹⁸ Gerry Smyth, *Space and the Irish Cultural Imagination*, New York, New York: Palgrave, 2001, 167-8.

witness to, an event... Also at this time, the kind of music U2 produced seemed especially geared to work in the context of live performance. As their popularity grew and the venues got larger, so the music itself seemed to grow in terms of the sonic evocation of space and the characteristic themes of the lyrics...

Neil McCormick, Bono's high school buddy and author of the satirical Bono memoir, *Killing Bono*, claimed that "[Bono's] always had that messianic glint about him."¹⁹

McCormick added: "Everybody loved Bono. He was such a charismatic force and he always seemed to have so much love to give, enveloping everyone in the room around him, whether it was a small photo studio or a huge rock venue."²⁰ In addition, it appears that Bono's charismatic appeal to the masses has increased proportionally with his fame as a humanitarian. *Time* named Bono co-person of the year along with the Bill and Melinda Gates in December 2005, and claimed that Bono "commands attention like no other cultural figure alive."²¹ U2 biographer Bill Flanagan spoke of Bono's escalating VIP status in a 2005 interview with a U2 fan website (emphasis added):²²

I have known Bono for 25 years and he has been a big star for almost 20, *but lately when I'm with him I notice a real change in the way people react to him. It's like going out with Gandhi or something.* In a sort of hopeless time, he is a real beacon... A couple of weeks ago I took a flight with him. It was pretty late at night and we went to the airport and I noticed that the crew on the airplane was acting really whacky. They all seemed to be kind of wired and falling over themselves. I couldn't

¹⁹ John Soeder, "Rocker with a Cause Has Leaders' Ears," *The Plain Dealer*, 10 December 2005.

²⁰ Neil McCormick, *Killing Bono*, New York: Pocket Books, 2004, 135.

²¹ Josh Tyrangiel, 26 December 2005.

²² Angela Pancella, *The @U2 Interview: Bill Flanagan*, 13 December 2005, Available [Online]: <http://www.atu2.com/news/article.src?ID=4171&Key=&Year=&Cat=>

figure out what was going on. We got on the plane and sat down and we were talking and the flight attendant kept interrupting to ask us silly questions and offer us all kinds of treats and drinks and pillows and magazines and about the fifth time I thought, ‘What’s wrong with this woman? Why is she so hopped up?’ And then it dawned on me, it was because of Bono. She and the whole flight crew were flipping out because Bono was on the plane. *It was not how professional people normally react to a rock star or any other kind of celebrity. This was something a lot more intense. I’ve seen people react a little like that to Paul McCartney, Muhammad Ali and Bill Clinton, but I’d have to say that this is even stronger.* It’s like Bono has absorbed the energy that’s been looking for a place to land since the sixties.

It is also fair to ask what marks a charismatic beyond the nebulous term “semi-religious authority” – or what are the characteristics of a charismatic? Conger sought to answer this question in *The Charismatic Leader*, and claims that “historically” charismatic leaders “have always personified the forces of change, unconventionality, vision, and an entrepreneurial spirit” – characteristics that typify Bono.²³ Conger simplifies the point noting charismatic leaders “are by vocation change agents,” and explains that they seem “forever discontent and are in search of new opportunities.” Conger also notes that charismatic leaders “motivate change through a strategic vision,” which “becomes a beacon for subordinates... [and] provides a certain clarity at a time when things may not be very clear.”²⁴ Bono’s vision to eradicate African poverty is a crusade that has drawn thousands of supporters, and he seems to be the one unifying beacon beyond the vision that he has helped

²³ Jay Conger, *The Charismatic Leader: Behind the Mystique of Exceptional Leadership*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1989, 17.

²⁴ *Ibid*, 4-5.

to create. In addition, charismatic leaders are “exemplary” in communicating their vision as well as building-trust and motivating others – traits also exhibited by Bono. Conger concludes that it is insufficient to only have one or two of these skills, and explains that “when leaders possess the full complement of these skills, the odds are high that they will be perceived as charismatic.”²⁵

The historical sections of this work have demonstrated how Bono’s charisma has aided him in numerous successful endeavors including in his role as U2 front-man and as a political activist. His charisma is also the partial second step in the Bono-model of celebrity activism. But in a democratic, pluralistic system where political matters are argued and debated at every turn, issue-knowledge is also critical. Issue-knowledge has been the bookend to Bono’s natural and growing charismatic appeal, and a crucial piece of the Bono-model as it confers legitimacy with politicians. As Republican Senator Rick Santorum explained, “If you really want to be effective, you have to bring something to the table beyond just charisma. The important thing is, Bono understands his issues better than 99% of members of Congress.”²⁶ Jeffery Sachs also testified to Bono’s dual-attack of charisma and issue-knowledge: “Celebrities open doors, without question – everyone wants to meet Bono – but the amazing thing about Bono is that they want to meet him again and again because he’s not only a celebrity but knows far more about the subject under discussion than the politicians do.”²⁷ One example of Bono’s potent blend of charisma and issue-knowledge

²⁵ Ibid, 36.

²⁶ Josh Tyrangiel, 26 December 2005.

²⁷ Jonathan Curiel, “Star Power: When Celebrities Support Causes, Who Really Winds Up Benefiting?,” *The San Francisco Chronicle*, 5 June 2005.

occurred at a meeting with M.I.T.'s Poverty Action Lab that included “economists, mathematicians and policy experts.” Bono excitedly began contemplating the possibilities of objective modeling: “Do you know we’ve been chased down hallways with the words ‘measurable results?’ What you have here is the stuff that can change the world!” *Time* magazine admiringly observed that Bono “[levitated]” the room with his rant, and when his impromptu speech ended there was a brief silence, immediately followed by laughter, “as if everyone had just got off an amusement park ride.”²⁸

Meyer and Gamson discuss issue-knowledge or expertise as it relates to celebrity activism in social movements, but instead use the term *standing*, which derives from legal theory and “allows that only certain agents have recognized interest in making claims before a court.” Meyer and Gamson reapply *standing* in defining celebrities who claim “a recognizable legitimate interest in the outcome of a political question or movement.”²⁹ When applied to social movements, Meyer and Gamson note that standing is a “socially constructed legitimacy to engage publicly in a particular issue.”³⁰ In addition, they note that gaining standing is “especially tricky” for celebrities, because their “‘elite’ status is especially tenuous – as it is based on consumption rather than votes, and on ‘personality’ rather than action.” This was the state of Bono’s standing pre-1999. Bono did not have standing about international political issues – specifically regarding Africa – with politicians until after his 1999 involvement with the Jubilee 2000 Campaign, his subsequent going

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ David S. Meyer and Joshua Gamson, “The Challenge of Cultural Elites: Celebrities and Social Movements.” *Sociological Inquiry* 65, no 2 (1995): 189-90.

³⁰ Ibid, 190.

“back to school” with Professor Jeffery Sachs, and his continual study of the issues that has included “discussions with academics and development experts at Harvard and M.I.T.”³¹ Bono’s standing grew with each of these developments and resulted with politicians increasingly noticing his expertise. In addition, in helping found DATA and The ONE Campaign, Bono created organizations that specifically use issue-knowledge to inform the public and lobby politicians.

DATA and The ONE Campaign are not easily categorized based upon the academic literature. This work has referred to DATA as a think tank/lobbying firm, which may be the most accurate description of their activities. Stone discusses the difficulty of categorizing think tanks into general categories, noting that they “vary considerably in size, structure, policy ambit and significance.”³² Stone explains that “As a consequence of this diversity, alongside cultural variations in comprehending the role of these organizations, there are considerable difficulties in defining ‘think tank,’” and notes the academic consensus surrounding this conclusion. Abelson agrees noting, “Defining a think tank has long posed problems for those seeking to accurately describe what has increasingly become a diverse set of organizations.”³³ Rich points to a dearth of scholarly research noting that there are “Fewer than a dozen books published since 1970 [that] focus on American think tanks.”³⁴

³¹ Jonathan Curiel, “Star Power: When Celebrities Support Causes, Who Really Winds Up Benefiting?,” *The San Francisco Chronicle*, 5 June 2005.

³² Diane Stone, “Introduction: Think Tanks, Policy Advice and Governance,” in *Think Tank Traditions: Policy Research and the Politics of Ideas*, ed. Diane Stone and Andrew Denham. New York, NY: Manchester University Press, 2004, 3.

³³ Donald E. Abelson, *Do Think Tanks Matter? Assessing the Impact of Public Policy Institutes*, Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2002, 8.

³⁴ Rich, Andrew. *Think Tanks, Public Policy and the Politics of Expertise*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004, 6.

Stone does note a general Anglo-American “understanding” of think tanks being “relatively autonomous organizations engaged in the analysis of policy issues independent of government, political parties and pressure groups.” This definition partially fits DATA, but then Stone claims that think tanks “try to influence or inform policy through intellectual argument and analysis rather than direct lobbying.” This definition does not fit DATA, as lobbying is imperative to their tactics. Abelson cites several commonalities among think tanks including their nonprofit, nonpartisan status and their engagement “in the study of public policy.”³⁵ Rich defines think tanks as “independent, non-interest based, nonprofit organizations that produce or principally rely on expertise and ideas to obtain support and to influence the policymaking process.”³⁶ Although Abelson notes that think tanks are mostly nonpartisan, it is important to mention that it has been found that they are also consistently ideological in their philosophy and thus their viewpoints. Rich sees a growing tendency for think tanks to associate with “identifiable ideologies,” and notes the predominance of those with conservative ideologies, but admits the difficulty in making “clear judgments about the presence and nature of organizational ideologies,” because they wish “to avoid the risk of jeopardizing their tax exempt status.”³⁷ The tax code allows think tanks to “produce ideologically consistent work,” but they are prohibited to spend “more than an insubstantial” part of their activities on behalf or in opposition to any particular candidate or party. In sum, think tanks are usually only nonpartisan to the extent that the tax code requires.

³⁵ Abelson, 2002, 9.

³⁶ Rich, 2004, 11.

³⁷ Ibid, 18.

The role of providing information, or issue-knowledge, is the primary and ubiquitous characteristic of U.S. think tanks, hence the nickname. As the previous definitions attest, this is done through educating politicians, the public, bureaucrats, private companies and academics. Abelson notes that for this task think tanks utilize “publications, interviews with the media, appearances before legislative committees, and participation in conferences and seminars,” several techniques of which DATA and The ONE Campaign have used.³⁸ Abelson also credits “the highly decentralized and fragmented political system of the United States, combined with the weak party system,” for U.S. think tanks “[assigning] a high priority to sharing their ideas with members of Congress,” something that Bono has done in numerous documented meetings with members of Congress.

Abelson also points to the “problematic” nature of attempting to assess the influence of think tanks, because of the “major barrier” of determining how to measure policy influence.³⁹ Abelson does note that there are several factors which “may influence how much or how little impact think tanks have” including “their financial resources, the number and quality of their staff, the strong connections some think tank directors have to policymakers, and their ability to convey their ideas to multiple audiences.” In addition, think tank visibility is affected by “the willingness of office holders to embrace” their ideas. By these measures alone DATA has had significant impacts, as their financial backing has been steady and readily obtained, and an obvious link to numerous policy makers through the person of Bono. In addition, the many documented cases of policy makers who have

³⁸ Abelson, 2002, 162.

³⁹ Abelson, 2002, 163.

publicly embraced DATA and Bono's ideas have also propelled their visibility. But Abelson is explicit in the fact that "it is virtually impossible to assign a numerical value to the amount of influence think tanks wield."⁴⁰ Abelson suggests the best method may be by "assessing their involvement in specific policy areas," which can help present "a better sense of how relevant or irrelevant they were." This method is also difficult because of the challenge in "determining how to isolate the views of think tanks from dozens of other individuals and governmental and nongovernmental organizations that actively seek to influence public policy." This work has documented how Bono and DATA have been significantly involved in U.S. foreign policy towards Africa from 2000 onward, a sure sign of influence according to Abelson's definition.

But according to the academic literature, DATA is only partially a think tank. The study of and/or promotion of public policy is only one piece of what they do. Lobbying bureaucrats and politicians is also a major part of their mission, especially in the United States. This is an area that has traditionally been associated with think tanks. Shaiko notes "The most effective organized interests in American politics are the permanent interests – those entities with the financial wherewithal to maintain full-time offices in Washington D.C."⁴¹ DATA would fall within this category along with the ONE Campaign, both of which would be defined by Shaiko as a special or public interest group. Shaiko explains that "individuals may join membership organizations to advance their non-economic goals in a

⁴⁰ Ibid, 164.

⁴¹ Ronald G. Shaiko, "Making the Connection: Organized Interests, Political Representation, and the Changing Rules of the Game in Washington Politics," in *The Interest Group Connection: Electioneering, Lobbying and Policymaking in Washington*, ed. Paul S. Herrnson, Ronald G. Shaiko, and Clyde Wilcox. Washington D.C.: CQ Press, 2005, 10.

collective fashion.” Shaiko also notes that “their collective strength lies in their ability to mobilize and activate the hundreds of thousands, or perhaps millions, of citizens who support their goals.” These definitions would fit both DATA, which has mobilized constituents through organizational connections such as religious groups, and the ONE Campaign, which has a rapidly expanding and organized base.

Wilcox and Kim discuss the tactics used to lobby Congress, which include both “inside strategies” and “outside strategies.” Inside strategies refer to “quietly persuading” members of Congress, usually through meetings, “to act or vote in a particular way.”⁴² Wilcox and Kim note that lobbyists “usually present information in these meetings – probably some combination of technical information about the likely impact of legislation and political information about the constellation of actors who might support and oppose a bill.” It is also important to remember that “insider strategies work only for groups that are able to gain access to members and key congressional staffers” – a group that would include Bono and DATA. Wilcox and Kim explain that outside lobbying “involves using interest group members (or the general public) to pressure congressional lawmakers to support the group’s agenda.” In addition, outside lobbying “brings with it an implicit or explicit threat that group members will work to defeat the targeted member of Congress if he or she refuses to support the group’s policies.” DATA and The ONE Campaign have used both inside and outside lobbying tactics effectively. Inside lobbying appears to be their most common method, especially considering Bono’s numerous Congressional meetings. DATA and The

⁴² Clyde Wilcox and Kim Dong-Young, “Continuity and Change in the Congressional Connection,” in *The Interest Group Connection: Electioneering, Lobbying and Policymaking in Washington*, ed. Paul S. Herrnson, Ronald G. Shaiko, and Clyde Wilcox. Washington D.C.: CQ Press, 2005, 130-9.

ONE Campaign have also used their members and political constituents to lobby Congress – the most notable being DATA’s media campaign in Jim Nussle’s home district that produced considerable public interest and led to an eventual policy reversal by the Iowa Representative, which he publicly attributed to constituent concerns, which were presumably aroused by DATA.

Rich discusses the political role of “expertise,” noting that it “plays a substantial role in American policymaking,” and explains that “members of Congress and their staffs depend on expertise... for insights into new policy directions.”⁴³ Wilcox and Kim also discuss the importance of information, or issue-knowledge, for interest groups that lobby Congress, noting that “members must frequently make decisions on several very large, highly technical pieces of legislation in a single day, especially at the end of the legislative session.”⁴⁴ Wilcox and Kim deftly remark on the salience of Congressional voting records during a reelection campaign. Wilcox and Kim further note that lobbyist arguments and information “do not always carry the day... but they do so often enough...” The technique of lobbying Congressional committee staffers is also common for interest groups, “because these staffers often play a major role in drafting technical legislation,” and can utilize the information that lobbyists provide. Lobbyists also commonly target Congressional office staffs – a technique employed by Bono and DATA – because they “are involved in meetings in which members are deciding key votes or discussing possible legislative initiatives.” Wilcox and Kim conclude that “it is clear that the information provided by interests groups does influence

⁴³ Andrew Rich, “The Politics of Expertise in Congress and the News Media,” *Social Science Quarterly* (2001): 82, no. 3, 583.

⁴⁴ Wilcox and Kim, 2005, 129-31

legislation.” White explains the importance of “understanding” in Congressional lobbying: “Lobbying involves skills of persuasion, a willingness to be insistent, an understanding of the targets, and an understanding of the budget accounts, all of which specialists possess to a far greater extent than do their clients and even some members of Congress.”⁴⁵ This work has thoroughly demonstrated Bono’s use of information, or issue-knowledge, in his lobbying endeavors.

Bono did not just lobby members of Congress – he also spent considerable time lobbying presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. Tenpas discusses the significance of presidential lobbying, noting the “deeper involvement of the White House in the legislative drafting stage and the president’s power to set the legislative agenda.”⁴⁶ Tenpas also examines “reverse lobbying,” or the presidential pursuit of lobbyist expertise, and admits that the “presidency actively seeks support from pivotal interest groups,” which “requires substantial time and effort on behalf of the administration.” This phenomenon of reverse lobbying was utilized by one executive branch office – the Office of the United States Trade Representative – in its pursuit of Bono and DATA’s mediation for December 2005 WTO talks. The Office of the Trade Representative even included a Bono quote in a pre-WTO meeting publicity document on its website entitled “Trade Facts.”⁴⁷ Furlong also discusses

⁴⁵ Joseph White, “Making Connections to the Appropriations Process,” in *The Interest Group Connection: Electioneering, Lobbying and Policymaking in Washington*, ed. Paul S. Herrnson, Ronald G. Shaiko, and Clyde Wilcox. Washington D.C.: CQ Press, 2005, 176.

⁴⁶ Kathryn Dunn Tenpas, “Lobbying the Executive Branch: Outside-in and Inside-out,” in *The Interest Group Connection: Electioneering, Lobbying and Policymaking in Washington*, ed. Paul S. Herrnson, Ronald G. Shaiko, and Clyde Wilcox. Washington D.C.: CQ Press, 2005, 250-6.

⁴⁷ Bono’s quote read: “We welcome the United States’ proposal as a first and important step to jump-start trade negotiations. We hope other nations will engage thoughtfully and arrive at a trade deal for development that boldly breaks down trade-distorting subsidies and market access barriers in rich countries that, at the moment,

the significance of information in executive branch lobbying: “Perhaps more so in the executive branch than in the legislature, access is gained through interest group knowledge of public policies, alternatives, solutions, impacts, and processes” – in short, issue-knowledge.⁴⁸ Furlong also mentions increases in both executive branch lobbying and executive branch involvement in the legislative process.

Coalition Building

In discussing the role of coalition building in American politics Hula explains that “the size and complexity of government, the number of legislators and executive branch officials in decision-making roles, and the number of competing voices in the public arena,” have lent to an environment where “leaders of organized interests often find it beneficial to work together as they pursue their policy goals.”⁴⁹ Hula defines a coalition as “purposive groups of organizations united behind a symbiotic set of legislative or regulatory goals.” In addition, Hula notes that coalitions “[allow] organizations to gather information efficiently about developments in the public policy process and gives them an opportunity to have a voice in framing debates or shaping a compromise position on an issue,” and “also allows group leaders to combine their resources and divide the workload.” Hula notes the tendency for “most groups to find their allies within their own organizational category or issue

rob poor countries of their dignity by preventing them from trading their way out of poverty.” *Trade Facts*, Office of the United States Trade Representative, 9 November 2005.

⁴⁸ Scott R. Furlong, “Exploring Interest Groups Participation in Executive Policymaking,” in *The Interest Group Connection: Electioneering, Lobbying and Policymaking in Washington*, ed. Paul S. Herrnson, Ronald G. Shaiko, and Clyde Wilcox. Washington D.C.: CQ Press, 2005, 285.

⁴⁹ Kevin. W. Hula, “Coalitions, Cloning and Trust,” in *The Interest Group Connection: Electioneering, Lobbying and Policymaking in Washington*, ed. Paul S. Herrnson, Ronald G. Shaiko, and Clyde Wilcox. Washington D.C.: CQ Press, 2005, 229-46.

commodity.” In Hula’s framework, Bono would be considered a “coalition broker” and “is in the business of building bridges.” These bridges are most difficult to build “the deeper the divide and the further apart the parties,” and require an individual that has the trust “of all parties concerned.”

Bono has consistently sought to learn from and potentially convert “those who might oppose” his political aspirations for the continent of Africa. It began when he deliberately met with conservative academics and politicians such as Robert Barro and Jesse Helms. It carried through with DATA’s first public foray, the Heart of America tour, in which Bono worked with Christian Evangelicals, and on through his work with the conservative Bush Administration. In addition, Bono and DATA have purposely pursued bipartisanship, demonstrated by Bono’s meetings with both Democrats and Republicans, and the organization of “bipartisan dinner parties” by Bobby Shriver and DATA lobbyists Tom Sheridan and Scott Hatch “to cement relationships and encourage the sense that at least on one issue, everyone could break bread.”⁵⁰ This is a remarkable strategy in an era where interest group politics has become “clearly more partisan as groups become more tightly linked in coalitions with one party or another.”⁵¹ This bipartisanship and coalition building has likely lent to the successes of Bono and DATA, and supported by Rich, who found that “think tanks of no identifiable ideology have some advantage in gaining congressional and

⁵⁰ Josh Tyrangiel, 26 December 2005.

⁵¹ White, 2005, 177.

media visibility overall,” and are “slightly favored by congressional staff members and journalists to provide guidance on issues and news stories.”⁵²

Bono’s courting of the Evangelical Christians may have also prompted a broader pattern exhibited by Evangelical leadership that pursues unity rather than ideological division. A June 2005 *Washington Post* article profiled a new trend among the religious leadership that seeks “to find common ground” between religious conservatives and liberals “on moral issues,” and quoted Rabbi David Saperstein, a “leader of the religious left,” crediting the seeds of this “phenomenon of strange bedfellows” to Bono’s efforts during the Clinton Administration in which “religious leaders across the political spectrum teamed up to champion debt relief for Africa.”⁵³ Conservative *New York Times* columnist David Brooks wrote that Bono “is at the nexus of a vast alliance between socially conservative evangelicals and socially liberal N.G.O.’s.”⁵⁴ *The Washington Times* reported that “Washington-area and other Christian groups are deeply involved in a wide-ranging coalition that is pushing world leaders to do more to address AIDS and poverty in Africa,” and partially credited Bono.⁵⁵ A 2004 *Foreign Affairs* article credited “recent activism by conservative political and religious groups” for AIDS “finally [gaining] foreign policy attention commensurate with its substantive importance,” which was also duly documented in the discussion of the AIDS PEPFAR bill in this work.⁵⁶

⁵² Rich, 2001, 583.

⁵³ Alan Cooperman, “Religious Right, Left Meet in Middle; Clergy Aim to Show that Faith Unifies,” *The Washington Post*, 15 June 2005, A01.

⁵⁴ David Brooks, “A Natural Alliance,” *The New York Times*, 26 May 2005, A5.

⁵⁵ Jen Waters, “Christian Groups Unite Against Worst African Ills,” *The Washington Times*, 6 July 2005.

⁵⁶ Holly Burkhalter, “The Politics of AIDS: Engaging Conservative Activists,” *Foreign Affairs*, (January/February 2004), 83, no. 1, 8-14.

Bono discussed his strategy of coalition building in an interview with *the San Francisco Chronicle*:⁵⁷

We have an emergency as they say – we can't really afford to divide the country in two – that's probably the only original idea I had, and it doesn't sound that original, but it just made a lot of common sense to me. The vulnerability of these people whom we represent, is such that we cannot afford to divide the country – we have to find a way of working with the right on this – I knew that always. I mean it's just from growing up in the street by the way – in Dublin, North side of Dublin – you know, you find the tough guy, make him your friend – if you're my height. So I've always gone to the people who are the biggest problem and try to get them on side. The way to get to the right, as it happens, is through their religiosity.

In Meyer and Gamson's discussion about the importance of *standing* in social movements they conclude that celebrities “may also redefine the movements in which they engage such that their standing is viewed as legitimate.”⁵⁸ It may be plausible that the ecumenical Bono is helping, if not to redefine, at least refocus the priorities of the American religious right, and potentially the entirety of America's religious network, through his work as a “coalition broker.” Bono's work as a coalition broker was the crucial third step in the Bono-model of celebrity activism. It was again a unique celebrity foray by the noted left-leaning “liberal” rock star to pursue the religious and political right, and politically encircle

⁵⁷ From a November 2005 San Francisco Chronicle interview with Bono posted as a podcast on the San Francisco Chronicle's website, Available [Online]: <http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/blogs/sfgate/indexn?blogid=5>

⁵⁸ Meyer and Gamson, 1995, 189-90.

the African issues for which he fought. As Bono told *Rolling Stone* editor Jann Wenner, “...bipartisanship may take longer but it will get you a lot further.”⁵⁹

International Political Structure

A discussion of the Bono-model of celebrity political activism is not complete without analyzing the condition of the larger structures in which it has resided. It is obvious from reading section two that Bono’s role as a coalition broker was not limited to the political structures in the United States. His work is also part of a larger international network that has coalesced into the enormous Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP), which includes hundreds of organizations, and what is considered a transnational advocacy coalition. Hudson notes that advocacy “has a wide range of meanings for NGOs, but it is most commonly seen as involving efforts to change institutions’ policies in ways that are expected to favour the poor and marginalized Southern communities whose interests NGOs aim to promote.”⁶⁰ Similar to the think tank/interest group activities of DATA, NGO advocacy involves “policy analysis, research and the channeling of information,” and include activities such as “awareness raising, through development education, capacity building, lobbying and campaigning... and direct action.”

The GCAP network has developed during a shift in the global political landscape that has seen an increase in “transnational civil society advocacy” and the academic study of this phenomenon. Price notes the “plethora of... recent works by international relations

⁵⁹ Jann S. Wenner, 3 November 2005.

⁶⁰ Alan Hudson, “NGOs’ Transnational Advocacy Networks: from ‘Legitimacy’ to ‘Political Responsibility,’” *Global Networks* (2001): 1, no 4, 333.

scholars examining the flowering of transnational advocacy.”⁶¹ Khagram, Riker and Sikkink note that transnational advocacy “has become increasingly common in the last two decades,” and claim that “international nongovernmental organizations and transnational social movements are emerging as a powerful new force in international politics and are transforming global norms and practices.”⁶² In addition, they see a phenomenon that includes “the increase in new nonstate actors, new arenas for action, and the blurring of the distinctions between domestic and global levels of politics.” Florini calls transnational civil society networks “the emerging third force in global politics,” and claims that the world has seen “a real, and considerable, increase in the number and effectiveness of transnational nongovernmental networks.”⁶³ Price explains that civil society “is commonly employed to refer to a ‘third system’ of agents, namely, privately organized citizens as distinguished from government or profit-seeking actors.”⁶⁴ Edwards has seen the pragmatic effects of this “radical change in international relations,” noting that “Ten years ago, there was little talk of civil society in the corridors of power, but now the walls reverberate with at least the

⁶¹ Richard Price, “Transnational Civil Society and Advocacy in World Politics,” *World Politics* (July 2003): 55, 579.

⁶² S. Khagram, J.V. Riker and K. Sikkink, “From Santiago to Seattle: Transnational Advocacy Groups Restructuring World Politics,” in *Restructuring World Politics: Transnational Social Movements, Networks, and Norms*, ed. Sanjeev Khagram, Kathryn Sikkink, and James V. Riker. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002, 3-4.

⁶³ Ann M. Florini, “Lessons Learned,” in *The Third Force: The Rise of Transnational Civil Society*, ed. Nihon Kokusai Koryu Senta and Ann Florini. Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2000, 7 and 211.

⁶⁴ Price, 2003, 580.

rhetoric of partnership, participation, and the role of citizens' groups in promoting sustainable development.”⁶⁵

Scholte and Florini partially attribute this growth to improving information and communications technologies, such as “cheap telecommunications and the internet” which make it “easier for new groups to form and maintain bonds, even across boundaries, and to act as collective entities.”⁶⁶ Florini also credits the rise of coalitions in the 1960s, which relied on coordination at strategic places and times rather than a “large permanent base of grassroots activists.” Scholte also sees structural issues at work, notably the “altered contours of governance in the wake of globalization,” and “the spread of liberal, pluralist democracy and the decline of colonial rule and one party states,” which has “created an environment that is conducive to the growth of formally organized civil society.” Finally Scholte credits “a more reflexive modernity,” that has engendered a “heightened awareness of the limitations – if not fundamental flaws – of the cornerstones modernity,” including “rationalist knowledge, capitalist production, bureaucratic administration and mass urban life,” and explains that people are instead “gripped with concerns about ecological degradation, runaway markets, persistent social injustices, democratic deficits, the deterioration of community, and the loss of spirituality.”

Price provides an excellent overview of recent transnational civil society literature, and notes the “numerous terms [that] are used to denote [the] phenomena under

⁶⁵ Michael Edwards, “Introduction,” in *Global Citizen Action*, ed. Michael Edwards and John Gaventa. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001, 1.

⁶⁶ Jan Aart Scholte, “Civil Society and Governance in the Global Polity,” in *Towards a Global Polity*. New York: Routledge, 2002, 150; and Ann M. Florini, *The Coming Democracy: New Rules for Running a New World*. Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2003, 39.

consideration” including “nonstate actors, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), transnational advocacy networks, transnational or global civil society, and so on.”⁶⁷ Florini and Simmons define transnational civil society in three parts, noting that it first includes “only groups that are not governments or profit seeking entities,” secondly it “involves linkages across national borders,” and thirdly “it takes a variety of forms.”⁶⁸ Price provides a helpful summation of the term “transnational civil society” based upon its numerous definitions noting that it refers to “self-organized advocacy groups that undertake voluntary collective action across state borders in pursuit of what they deem the wider public interest.”

In addition, Price mentions the categories of transnational collective action delineated by Khagram, Riker and Sikkink who further provide distinctions between transnational advocacy networks, transnational coalitions and transnational social movements, which “can be viewed as ascending levels of transnational collective action.”⁶⁹ Transnational advocacy networks “are the most informal configuration of nonstate actors,” and are “linked across country boundaries, bound together by shared values, dense exchanges of information and services, and common discourses,” with “the essence of network activity” being “the exchange and use of information.” Transnational coalitions are more formal and “involve a greater level of transnational coordination,” which is characterized by cross-country sharing of strategies or tactics “to publicly influence social change,” of which these strategies and/or tactics are referred to as transnational campaigns.

⁶⁷ Price, 2003, 580.

⁶⁸ Ann M. Florini and P.J. Simmons, “What the World Needs Now?” in *The Third Force: The Rise of Transnational Civil Society*, ed. Nihon Kokusai Koryu Senta and Ann Florini. Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2000, 7.

⁶⁹ Khagram, Riker and Sikkink, 2002, 6-9.

Finally, transnational social movements “are sets of actors with common purposes and solidarities linked across country boundaries that have the capacity to generate coordinated and sustained social mobilization in more than one country to publicly influence social change,” and are characterized by collective action that “often” utilizes “protest or disruptive action.” Using these definitions, DATA, the ONE Campaign, Make Poverty History – as members of the Global Call to Action Against Poverty – would currently be considered the mid-tiered transnational coalition per Khagram, Riker and Sikkink’s definition, as they are formally united across countries and share not only information, but strategies and tactics.

Price also summarizes the “major kinds of activities” that transnational coalitions undertake, including (1) agenda setting, where problems of “international concern” are identified and informational campaigns occur, (2) developing solutions, which involves norm creation and policy recommendations, (3) building networks and coalitions of allies, and (4) implementing solutions – “employing tactics of persuasion and pressure to change practices and/or encourage compliance with norms.”⁷⁰ Agenda setting may be the most important of these functions, because the issues brought to light are often “ignored by governments and corporations.” Donnelly explains how the Jubilee 2000 Campaign was involved in agenda setting, noting that the debt issues “would simply not have been on the agenda had it not been for the work of these diverse networks.”⁷¹ Florini agrees, noting that “Bono is the famous face, but it has taken the combined efforts of thousands of people in many countries, working through Jubilee 2000, to force the rich countries and the

⁷⁰ Price, 2003, 584.

⁷¹ Donnelly, 2002, 169.

international financial institutions to pay serious attention to the world's highly indebted poor countries.”⁷² Ciara Gaynor, Co-Chair of the GCAP Media Group explained how in her view how the transnational campaign and its associated celebrity involvement have affected the campaign's political and public standing.⁷³

...civil society and the campaigning that was done in 2005 has pushed the whole issue of poverty, poverty eradication, the issue of debt, much higher up on to the political agenda. Governments now know that they are being watched, not just by NGOs, and by people that have worked in this sphere many years – the social watchers – but now it's becoming a much broader issue that the general public are now becoming educated and aware... And there is so much more being written about it as well, and even the media as well, because I'd say apart from media that would cover those issues traditionally, a lot of the mainstream media wouldn't necessarily have known about this. But now because of celebrity involvement, they're actually having to read about it and get informed...

It is somewhat difficult to measure the extent to which Bono actually set the political agenda, or even influenced it, but spurious or not and as Ciara Gaynor attested, the African issues on which he has focused since 1999 have surely risen on several domestic agendas, as well as the international agenda.

Donnelly also details how debt activists “created and expanded diverse networks in all parts of the globe and engaged in far-reaching efforts to educate publics on issues,” which would fall under “building networks and coalitions of allies” according to Price. The

⁷² Price, 2003, 166.

⁷³ Personal Interview with Ciara Gaynor, Co-Chair GCAP Media Group, 19 January 2006.

Jubilee 2000 Campaign also witnessed “reverse lobbying,” where the network was approached for either members’ support or technical expertise – the point being that Jubilee’s solutions were used. It could also be argued based upon the historical data presented in this work that all of the organizations that Bono is affiliated with, as members of the transnational coalition the Global Call to Action Against Poverty, have performed all four of the “major kinds of activities” that Price cites – especially in the United States. Bono explained his coalition’s tactics surrounding developing and implementing solutions in an interview with the *San Francisco Chronicle*:⁷⁴

We generally arrive with solutions more than problems. So it’s not like if you take a meeting with us, we’re just going to tell you all the things you’re not doing. We tend to have meetings and point people in the direction of things they could be doing – and how maybe we can help them there.

Price also provides an academic synthesis explaining why transnational advocacy actors have the authority to engage in their respective issues, and lists “three principal sources” including “expertise, moral influence, and a claim to political legitimacy.”⁷⁵ It is Bono’s expertise, as part of his charisma, that has been constantly present in his political activities, and which has also lent to his legitimacy. Price notes that expert influence is “often most pronounced” in the “prenegotiation stage of an emergent norm,” and “revolves around the genesis and circulation of new ideas that later become embedded in policy or institutional change.” This was witnessed firsthand in the United States by DATA when

⁷⁴ From a November 2005 San Francisco Chronicle interview with Bono posted as a podcast on the San Francisco Chronicle’s website, Available [Online]: <http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/blogs/sfgate/indexn?blogid=5>

⁷⁵ Price, 2003, 587.

their policy experts were “summoned” to the White House to help draft the MCA legislation, which was based upon ideas, or possibly norms, that policy-wise were in their infancy, and were developed by members of the emerging transnational advocacy coalition. Price also explains that moral authority can be a form of power, and it is utilized when “decision-makers and/or citizens often believe that activists are not only (objectively) right in the sense of providing accurate information but also morally right in the purposes for which such knowledge is harnessed.”⁷⁶ Khagram, Riker and Sikkink note the importance of “key individuals” acting as “moral entrepreneurs” – a role that Bono has fulfilled.⁷⁷ In discussing the source of actor legitimacy, Price could be quoting an interview with Bono in noting that it can often “derive from claims to represent affected communities” – a claim Bono consistently makes about Africa’s impoverished.⁷⁸

In sum, the Bono-model of celebrity political activism did not occur in a vacuum. The changing structure of global politics, expressed through an increase in transnational activism, was the stage on which Bono acted. It is not coincidental that the Bono-model, piqued initially through the transnational coalition Jubilee 2000, and further expressed through the transnational coalition Global Call to Action Against Poverty, evolved alongside the emergence of a new global reality. This new global political reality is the last piece to the Bono-model. Bono and his affiliated transnational networks have also utilized the methods, and garnered their authority, from traditions normally associated with transnational advocacy coalitions as described in the literature.

⁷⁶ Price, *Ibid*, 589.

⁷⁷ Khagram Riker and Sikkink, 2002, 11.

⁷⁸ Price, 2003, 590.

Conclusion

In December 2005 Bono was named *Time Magazine's* annual “person of the year,” along with Bill and Melinda Gates for “being shrewd about doing good, for rewriting politics and re-engineering justice, for making mercy smarter and hope strategic and then daring the rest of us to follow...”⁷⁹ In explaining these accomplishments *Time* attributes Bono’s celebrity (“just about everyone in the world wants to meet him”), his charisma and issue-knowledge (“Bono moves in political circles like a very charming shark), and his coalition building (“He gets Pat Robertson and Susan Sarandon to do a commercial together...”). *Time* is not the first publication to note the innovational tactics that Bono has used as a political celebrity. This work’s central premise is that Bono has reinvented celebrity activism through his commitment to ending African poverty, thus creating the Bono-model of celebrity politics. The model has evolved alongside Bono’s expanding political activism during his career as front-man for U2 and was fully realized through the strategies he pioneered as an activist for Africa. These strategies include using pre-established political methods such as lobbying, the creation of a policy organization, and grassroots mobilization in conjunction with the traditional routes available to a rock star celebrity, such as political music, without actually becoming a politician. The Bono-model has proven the most effective in pluralist, Democratic countries with multiple political access points such as the United States and the United Kingdom, and their corresponding arms of international control – the Bretton Woods institutions (The IMF, the World Bank, and the related WTO).

⁷⁹ Nancy Gibbs, “The Good Samaritans,” *Time*, (26 December 2005), 166, no. 26, 8.

The question that remains is whether future capable celebrity activists will in fact effectively utilize the Bono-model. There is already evidence that other celebrities are learning from Bono's model. DATA director Jamie Drummond admitted that actors Brad Pitt and George Clooney are "studying closely how Bono works."⁸⁰ The answer to this question lies in the one area that the *Time* article did not analyze – the global political structure. The global power and influence of transnational civil society has rapidly expanded during the last two decades. In addition, this community has been the driving force, from the beginning, behind Bono's issues – from African debt relief to AIDS. They have coalesced and formed a transnational alliance that has been crucial in achieving all of the political successes of which Bono has been a part, including the placement of these issues on to the international agenda. If celebrity activists hope to be effective in the Bono-model, the said political issue must also reflect the concerns of the transnational civil society community.

⁸⁰ Donna Cassata, 7 June 2005.

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Mr. Jackson worked in the corporate community in various marketing and merchandising roles before returning to the University of Missouri-Kansas City for graduate school in 2003, where he was appointed Graduate Research Assistant in the Urban Leadership and Policy Studies Department in the School of Education. He graduated with a Master of Arts in Political Science in May 2006.

Mr. Jackson's thesis research created an interest in international poverty issues and he began volunteering for the ONE Campaign shortly after completion of the thesis. He hopes to obtain a position in the international development community after graduation.