

*Civic Foreign Policy: U.S. Religious Interest Groups and Central
America, 1973 - 1990*

Dissertation
von
Svenja Blanke
zur Erlangung
des akademischen Grades
Dr. phil.

Freie Universität Berlin
Fachbereich Geschichtswissenschaften
John F. Kennedy Institut
Berlin, 1. Mai 2001

Erstgutachter: Prof. Dr. Knud Krakau
Zweitgutachter: Prof. Dr. Willi-Paul Adams

Datum der Disputation: 20. Juli 2001

Preface

Most of us have multiple identities. For the dissertation topic, my "American" one played a large role. International interaction has fascinated me since I have been an exchange student at Yuma High School in Arizona, only a few miles from the border to Mexico. While studying international relations and U.S. history, I looked for ordinary human faces. The exploration of the recent history of nongovernmental and religious activities in inter-American relations combined my interests.

Inter-American relations are a large field. Traditionally, European scholars either concentrate on the United States or on Latin America. This dissertation does not break with the tradition. As a student of U.S. history, I emphasize the U.S. side. My primary interest lies in the "Latin America-related activities" of U.S. religious actors and their impact on U.S. policies and politics, not on Latin America. But in order to comprehend these activities, it was important to look at the Latin American as well as the U.S. context. Thus, I was able to explore the influence of "Latin American" developments on U.S. actors. In that sense, I hope to bridge the natural tendency to ignore one side of the relationship. Nevertheless, readers will not find an even analysis of the two sides.

Many people contributed to this study and its realization. I am deeply indebted to Prof. Dr. Knud Krakau from the John F. Kennedy Institute at the Free University of Berlin. His support for my studies and research at the Free University of Berlin was extraordinary and encouraging. He promoted my inquiry into religious activities and foreign policy by pointing out the Sanctuary movement. His fine academic advice and humanity make him an exceptional mentor.

I would also like to thank the professors of the Graduiertenkolleg "Demokratie in den USA" at the John F. Kennedy Institute for inspiration and advice: Prof. Dr. Willi-Paul Adams, Prof. Dr. Winfried Fluck, Prof. Dr. Hans Joas, Prof. Dr. Heinz Ickstadt, and Prof. Dr. Margit Mayer. My special debt of gratitude goes to Professor Dr. Lars Schoultz from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, for sharing his time, his insight, and humor with me. Without his suggestions and encouragement, the study and the idea of civic foreign policy would not have matured.

The financial help of various institutions enabled me to do research abroad and to write the thesis. Being a member of the Graduiertenkolleg at the John F. Kennedy Institute was an indispensable financial support. The Kolleg was an important forum for the intellectual debate of the many facets of U.S. democracy. Civic foreign policy is one of these aspects. I would like to thank the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) for providing me with a three-year dissertation scholarship through the Graduiertenkolleg. The Deutsche Akademische Austauschdienst (DAAD) and the German Historical Institute (DHI) in Washington, D.C., granted additional funding for research trips in the years 1998 and 2000, which made months-long archive work and the interaction with diverse academic communities overseas possible. Furthermore, I would like to express my special gratitude to Mr. Joseph and Mrs. Alison Fox. The Fox Fellowship Program at Yale University enabled me to deepen my research and studies in the United States, to use Yale's enormous resources and its superb working conditions.

I owe very much to my interview partners from the United States. I am very grateful to Reverend Bill Wipfler for sharing his personal history with me and for his hospitality. Furthermore, I would like to express thanks to Tom Quigley, Philip Wheaton, Michael Myers, Kay Bellor, Cora Weiss, Michael McConnell, Kathleen DeSautels, Bernice Kita, Virginia Bouvier, Patrick Taran, and Thomas Marti, among others.

I would like to thank the librarians, archivists, and staff of the John F. Kennedy Institute, the Maryknoll Mission Archive and Library, Columbia University's Rare Books and Manuscript Library, Rutgers University's Manuscript Collection, the Presbyterian Historical Society, the National Security Archive, the World Council of Churches, the American Friends Service Committee, the Library of Congress, the National Council of Churches, the Washington Office on Latin America, Yale University's Sterling Memorial Library and its Government Document Center.

The work at Maryknoll was especially fruitful and enjoyable. The kindness of the Maryknollers is outstanding. Of the many people that I met I would like to thank especially Sister Martha and Brother Kevin for tracing down material and for finding interview partners.

John Backer of the Church World Service and Kathy Todd of the International Justice and Peace Office of the National Council of Churches (NCC) helped me to locate material and sources in the files of their respective offices and allowed me to review the material during office hours. With their help and the openness of the NCC I found very recent material, otherwise not accessible.

The dissertation did not develop in an academic vacuum. My family and friends were willing and supportive listeners. My mother, Dr. Lore Blanke, was invaluable in developing and refining ideas, whether over the phone or at tea-time. Julie Plaut, Adam Ehrlich, and Jennifer Blanke helped me to master the English language and to comprehend life and politics in the United States. Hauke Hartmann, Pablo Pozzi, Jürgen Scheunemann, Astrid Eckert, Kathy Alberts, and Felicitas Hentschke gave input and inspiration. Thank you. Without Andrés Reggiani I would still be wandering. He was my anchor through furious outbreaks, emotional breakdowns, and moments of hyperactivity in the stormy sea called dissertation.

This book is dedicated to my parents. They always gave me the feeling of being able "to do it." I cannot ask for more.

Abbreviations

AFSC	American Friends Service Committee
CAL	Pontifical Commission for Latin America
CALC	Clergy and Laity Concerned
CEB	Christian base community (<i>Comunidad eclesial de base</i>)
CELAM	Latin American Episcopal Conference (<i>Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano</i>)
CICOP	Catholic Inter-American Cooperation Program
CLAI	Latin American Council of Churches (<i>Consejo Latinoamericano de Iglesias</i>)
COPACHI	Committee for Cooperation for Peace in Chile (<i>Comité de Cooperación para la Paz en Chile</i>)
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CRTF	Chicago Religious Task Force on Central America
CWS	Church World Service
EPICA	Ecumenical Program for Interamerican Communication and Action
FDR	Revolutionary Democratic Front
FMLN	Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (<i>Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional</i>)
FCNL	Friends' Committee on National Legislation
INS	Immigration and Naturalization Service
IRTF	Inter-Religious Task Force on Central America
LAB	Latin America Bureau
LASC	Latin American Strategy Committee
LIRS	Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service
LWR	Lutheran World Relief
MCC	Mennonite Central Committee
NCC	National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.
NCCB	National Council of Catholic Bishops
NCWC	National Catholic Welfare Council
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
RTF	Religious Task Force on Central America
SERPAJ	Service for Peace and Justice (<i>Servicio para la Paz y Justicia</i>)
TECTF	Tucson Ecumenical Council Task Force
Trsg	Tucson refugee support group
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UCA	Central American University (<i>Universidad Centroamericana</i>)
USCC	United States Catholic Conference
UUSC	Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
WOLA	Washington Office of Latin America

Contents

Preface	
Abbreviations	
1 Introduction	1
2 Mission to Latin America	16
2.1 The Historical Context	16
2.1.1 Early Encounters	16
2.1.2 U.S. Christian Missions and Development Programs in the 1960s	27
2.2 Transformations in Latin America's Religious Community	41
2.2.1 The Catholic Church in Latin America	41
2.2.2 Maryknoll and the Missionary Experience	44
2.3 Transformations in the U.S. Religious Community	60
2.4 Conclusion	73
3 Human Rights and Civic Foreign Policy, 1973 – 1980	77
3.1 The Social and Political Context	78
3.1.1 The Theological Context	78
3.1.2 The Latin American Context: The 1973 Coup in Chile	81
3.1.3 The Religious Human Rights Network in the United States	90
3.1.4 The Legislative Context	98
3.1.5 The Carter Administration	102
3.2 Religious Persecution in El Salvador	108
3.2.1 The Social and Political Context	110
3.2.2 The Catholic Church and Civil Society in El Salvador	113
3.2.3 U.S. Missionaries and Religious Groups	119
3.3 The Response of the U.S. Religious Community	134
3.3.1 The Interaction of the Religious and Political Sphere	134
3.3.2 Lobbying for Human Rights	141
3.4 Conclusion	153
4 El Salvador's Civil War and Civic Foreign Policy	157
4.1 The Early Years of the Salvadoran Civil War	159
4.2 U.S. Foreign Policy toward El Salvador	165
4.3 The Response of the U.S. Religious Community	173
4.3.1 The Murder of Archbishop Romero and four U.S. Churchwomen	174
4.3.2 Lobbying Against U.S. Military Aid	184
4.3.3 Church Groups and the Distribution of U.S. Aid	190

4.4	The Broadening of Civic Foreign Policy	198
4.4.1	Grassroots Activism	198
4.4.2	The Civic Culture of Faith-Based Foreign Policy Activism	210
4.5	Political Impact and Conclusion	224
5	Central American Civil War Refugees and Civic Foreign Policy	234
5.1	The Legal Context of U.S. Refugee Policy	235
5.1.1	International Refugee Law	236
5.1.2	Asylum in U.S. Law	239
5.2	The Political Context of U.S. Refugee Policy	245
5.3	The Response of the U.S. Religious Community	255
5.3.1	Grassroots Activism: The Sanctuary Movement	255
5.3.2	Sanctuary Between Illegality and Legitimacy	261
5.3.3	Humanitarian Sanctuary	267
5.3.4	Public Sanctuary	277
5.4	Civic Sanctuary	286
5.5	Conclusion	299
6	Conclusion: The Civic Factor in the Context of U.S. Foreign Policy	303
7	Bibliography	313
7.1	Archives and Libraries	313
7.2	Interviews	314
7.3	Published Primary Literature	315
7.4	Secondary Literature	322