

The “Default Hypothesis” Fails to Explain Jewish Influence



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Abstract

The role of Jewish activism in the transformative changes that have occurred in the West in recent decades continues to be controversial. Here I respond to several issues putatively related to Jewish influence, particularly the “default hypothesis” that Jewish IQ and urban residency explain Jewish influence and the role of the Jewish community in enacting the 1965 immigration law in the United States; other issues include Jewish ethnocentrism and intermarriage and whether diaspora Jews are hypocritical in their attitudes on immigration to Israel versus the United States. The post-World War II era saw the emergence of a new, substantially Jewish elite in America that exerted influence on a wide range of issues that formed a virtual consensus among Jewish activists and the organized Jewish community, including immigration, civil rights, and the secularization of American culture. Jewish activism in the pro-immigration movement involved: intellectual movements denying the importance of race in human affairs; establishing, staffing, and funding anti-restrictionist organizations; recruiting prominent non-Jews to anti-restrictionist organizations; rejecting the ethnic status quo as a goal because of fear of a relatively homogeneous white majority; leadership in Congress and the executive branch.

Keywords Jewish influence · 1965 immigration law · Jewish IQ · Jewish intermarriage · Ethnocentrism · Anti-Semitism

The Rise of a Substantially Jewish Elite in the United States after World War II and its Influence on Immigration Policy

1 Introduction

Nathan Cofnas (2021) provides a critique of what he labels “the anti-Jewish narrative” appearing in several scholarly books and papers, particularly Kevin MacDonald’s (1998/2002) *The Culture of Critique: An Evolutionary Analysis of Jewish*

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Involvement in Twentieth-Century Intellectual and Political Movements (hereafter, *CofC*; page references to *CofC* are to the 1998 edition). In general, this area of scholarship stands or falls depending on whether certain *specific* influential intellectual and political movements of the twentieth century were *originated* and *dominated* by Jews who were attempting to advance Jewish interests. Thus it does not stand or fall on whether Jews in a particular movement constitute more than their percentage of the population as a whole, whether Jews in general are ethnocentric, the rate of Jewish intermarriage, or whether most Jews were even aware of particular movements. The focus is on describing the Jewish identities of the main figures of influential movements and their concern with specific Jewish issues, such as combatting anti-Semitism, as well as the dynamics of these movements—ethnic networking, centering around charismatic figures, connections with prestigious universities and media, involvement of the organized Jewish community, and non-Jews who participated in the movements and their motivations.

The Jewish community is clearly not monolithic, although at particular historical periods there has been substantial consensus on particular issues. Individual influential Jews or a separate influential Jewish intellectual movement may be critical of a specific Jewish intellectual movement. For example, the split beginning in the 1930s between the Stalinist left (*CofC*: Ch. 3) and the Trotskyist left (MacDonald, 2004) comes to mind. It is possible that some components of the opposition to the pro-Israel lobby in the United States, such as *Mondoweiss* or Jewish Voice for Peace, may also be reasonably analyzed as Jewish movements. But in order to establish that organizations critical of Israel constitute a Jewish movement, one would have to discuss whether the originators and dominant figures have a Jewish identity and whether they see their activities as furthering Jewish interests. For example, the Jewish critics of Israel may regard a powerful Jewish influence on U.S. policy toward Israel as feeding into perceptions that Jews are disloyal—a very mainstream view among American Jews until well after the establishment of Israel; or Israeli actions vis-à-vis the Palestinians may be seen as hurting Israel in the long run (e.g., Mearsheimer & Walt, 2008; a 2013 survey found 44% of U.S. Jews believe Israeli settlements hurt Israel [Pew Research, 2013]). On the other hand, they may oppose what they see as Jewish interests in maintaining a Jewish state for moral reasons or because they see U.S. support for Israel as not in the interests of the United States.

Such a project would thus go well beyond what Cofnas (2021) labels the “default hypothesis” of Jewish IQ and urban residency as explaining Jewish involvement in intellectual and political movements. Assuming that such a movement was originated and dominated by individuals with strong Jewish identity pursuing their perception of Jewish interests, it may be analogized to arguments between different Jewish factions in the Knesset—both dominated by Jews but with different perceptions of Jewish interests or even opposition to what they perceive as Jewish interests.

Indeed, the default hypothesis is irrelevant to the movements discussed in *CofC* and to another proposed Jewish movement, neoconservatism (MacDonald, 2004). Even when Jews are overrepresented in a particular movement compared to their percentage of the population as a whole (e.g., in 2005 Jews comprised around 12% of the board of the National Rifle Association (NRA) [Richman, 2005]), it

does not necessarily follow that the movement should be considered a Jewish movement. The movements analyzed in *CofC* were originated and dominated by strongly identified Jews with a strong sense of Jewish interests (see also MacDonald, 2004, on neoconservatism), and there was a great deal of ethnic networking and mutual citation patterns, with non-Jews often relegated to subordinate roles that really amounted to window dressing. These movements have been influential, and the Jews at the center of these movements were critical to their influence. Thus, by focusing solely on percentages of Jewish involvement in various areas and deeming any Jewish representation above 3% (the approximate percentage of Jews in the U.S. population) as confirming the hypothesis, the default hypothesis ignores central aspects of the movements considered in *CofC*.

Rather than attempting to determine percentages of Jews in non-anti-Semitic movements, the methodology of *CofC* analyzed where Jewish power was directed during specific historical eras. The contrast between these two perspectives can be illustrated as follows: Imagine a scenario in which the major Jewish activist organizations, Jewish donors, and Jewish activists are on one side of an issue, but on the other side of the issue are Jews who collectively represent more than 3% of the membership but without any major Jewish financial, organizational, media, and activist networks behind them. This would satisfy Cofnas's default hypothesis, but it would be utterly insufficient as an analysis of Jewish influence on the issue. *CofC* takes the view that establishing where the power of the Jewish community is being directed is critical.

Consider Phyllis Grosskurth's (1991: 137) comment on Ernest Jones's status as a gentile outsider even by the other members of the secret committee of Freud's loyalists and even though he had married a Jewish woman: "In the eyes of all of [the Jewish members of the Committee], Jones was a Gentile. ... [T]he others always seized every opportunity to make him aware that he could never belong. His fantasy of penetrating the inner circle by creating the Committee was an illusion, because he would forever be an unattractive little man with his ferret face pressed imploringly against the glass" (*CofC*: 112–113). Such a statement could never be made about non-Jewish members of the NRA, free speech advocates, the anti-abortion movement, immigration restriction, or historical or contemporary populism in the U.S.

Or consider non-Jews in leftist organizations:

Merely citing percentages of Jewish leaders does not adequately indicate the extent of Jewish influence, however, because it fails to take account of the personal characteristics of Jewish radicals as a talented, educated and ambitious group, but also because efforts were made to recruit gentiles as "window dressing" to conceal the extent of Jewish dominance (Klehr, 1978: 40; Rothman & Lichter, 1982: 99). Lyons (1982: 81) quotes a gentile Communist who said that many working-class gentiles felt that they were recruited in order to "diversify the Party's ethnic composition." The informant recounts his experience as a gentile representative at a communist-sponsored youth conference:

It became increasingly apparent to most participants that virtually all of the speakers were Jewish New Yorkers. Speakers with thick New York accents would identify themselves as “the delegate from the Lower East Side” or “the comrade from Brownsville.” Finally the national leadership called a recess to discuss what was becoming an embarrassment. How could a supposedly national student organization be so totally dominated by New York Jews? Finally, they resolved to intervene and remedy the situation by asking the New York caucus to give “out-of-towners” a chance to speak. The convention was held in Wisconsin. (*CofC*: 73)

This relates to my personal experience:

As a personal note from when I was a graduate student in philosophy at the University of Wisconsin in the 1960s, the overrepresentation of Jews in the New Left, especially during the early stages of protest to the Vietnam War, was rather obvious to everyone, so much so that during a “Teach-in” on the war held during the 1960s, I was recruited to give a talk in which I was to explain how an ex-Catholic from a small town in Wisconsin had come to be converted to the cause. The geographical (East Coast) and family origins (Jewish) of the vast majority of the movement were apparently a source of concern. The practice of having gentile spokespersons for movements dominated by Jews is noted in several sections of this volume and is also a common tactic against anti-Semitism (MacDonald, 1998b/2003: 195–200 [see also below regarding Jewish pro-immigration activism in the 1950s]). Rothman and Lichter (1982: 81) quote another observer of the New Left scene at the University of Wisconsin as follows: “I am struck by the lack of Wisconsin-born people and the massive preponderance of New York Jews. The situation at the University of Minnesota is similar.” His correspondent replied: “As you perceived, the Madison left is built on New York Jews.” (*CofC*: 78, note 13)

All the principal figures associated with the Frankfurt School (*CofC*: Ch. 5) were strongly identified Jews, leading Gershom Scholem, the Israeli theologian and religious historian, to label it a “Jewish sect” (Marcus & Tar, 1986: 344)—again, a description that could not reasonably be made of organizations such as the NRA mentioned above. The main intellectual thrust of the Frankfurt School was to reject traditional Marxist class struggle as a paradigm in favor of seeing white ethnocentrism as the main problem—a position they came to after witnessing the rise of National Socialism and its treatment of Jews.

Similarly, regarding the New York Intellectuals:

The New York Intellectuals spent their careers entirely within a Jewish social and intellectual milieu. When Rubinfeld (1997: 97) lists people [Clement] Greenberg invited to social occasions at his apartment in New York, the only gentile mentioned is artist William de Kooning. Revealingly, Michael Wrezin (1994: 33) refers to Dwight Macdonald, another Trotskyist contributor to *PR* [*Partisan Review*], as “a distinguished goy among the Partisanskies.” Another non-Jew was writer James T. Farrell, but his diary

records a virtually all-Jewish social milieu in which a large part of his life was spent in virtual non-stop social interaction with other New York Intellectuals (Cooney, 1986: 248). Indeed, Podhoretz (1967: 246–248) refers to the New York Intellectuals as a “family” who, when they attended a party, arrived at the same time and socialized among their ingroup. (*CofC*: 220)

Regarding Boasian anthropology, as Gelya Frank (1997: 731) pointed out, “The preponderance of Jewish intellectuals in the early years of Boasian anthropology and the Jewish identities of anthropologists in subsequent generations has been downplayed in standard histories of the discipline.” Boas and his predominantly Jewish students originated the antiracial theories of Boasian anthropology and they came to dominate academic anthropology. In 1919 Boas could state that “most of the anthropological work done at the present time in the United States” was done by his students at Columbia (in Stocking, 1968: 296) and by 1926 every major department of anthropology was headed by Boas’s students, the majority of whom were Jewish.

Showing that Jews constitute more than 3% of an organization thus falls far short of an adequate analysis of these movements. Moreover, any assessment of Jewish representation should be adjusted for the very large differences in population between American Jews and non-Jewish white Americans. For example, if one supposes that an IQ of 120 is required for leadership of an organization, around 9.2% of the white population (mean IQ = 100) would be at or above an IQ of 120—implying somewhat less than 20 million, assuming a white population of around 200 million. For a Jewish population of around 6,000,000 with a mean IQ of 111 (Lynn, 2011), 29.4% would be at 120 or above—around 1.8 million, and implying a ratio of over 10 to 1 non-Jews to Jews. For higher cutoffs, the ratios are less but remain substantial. (In all examples I am assuming a standard deviation of 15 for both samples). For $IQ > 130$, the ratio would be over 7 to 1; for $IQ > 140$, it would be around 5 to 1. This means that for any level of above-average IQ, there will be many more non-Jewish white Americans than Jews. In the case of *CofC*, which examines several influential intellectual and political movements, a random representation based only on IQ would imply that there would be many more non-Jews than Jews in leadership positions of all of the movements discussed. This is far from the case. These movements were founded and centered around a mutually reinforcing core of strongly identified Jews seeking to advance their perception of Jewish interests, and the same can be said of neoconservatism (MacDonald, 2004). Conversely, even at these ratios, Jews have been underrepresented as leaders of historical populist movements (MacDonald, 1998a: Ch. 5) and immigration restriction movements, at least in the period prior to the 1965 immigration law (see below).

2 Jewish Identity and Pursuit of Jewish Interests

Analysis of Jewish influence necessarily requires establishing the Jewish identity and sense of pursuing Jewish interests among the principals of the movement. Cofnas (2021), commenting on *CofC*, writes that such assertions “boil down to little

more than insinuations based on the fact that they were Jewish and perhaps that they condemned the Holocaust. MacDonald never mentions that many of them opposed Jewish interests (as he conceives them) by advocating open borders for Israel, calling for the dissolution of the Jewish community, and so on.” This is simply false.

Sigmund Freud The following is a sampling of the material on Freud’s Jewish identity and the psychoanalytic movement (*CofC*: 111):

In a 1931 letter he described himself as “a fanatical Jew,” and on another occasion he wrote that he found “the attraction of Judaism and of Jews so irresistible, many dark emotional powers, all the mightier the less they let themselves be grasped in words, as well as the clear consciousness of inner identity, the secrecy of the same mental construction” (in Gay, 1988: 601). On another occasion he wrote of “strange secret longings” related to his Jewish identity (in Gay, 1988: 601). ... Gay (1988: 601) interprets Freud as having the belief that his identity as a Jew was the result of his phylogenetic heritage [shaped in a LaMarckian manner by Jewish history—not simply because others regarded him as a Jew]. ... Freud and his colleagues felt a sense of “racial kinship” with their Jewish colleagues and a “racial strangeness” to others (Klein, 1981: 142; see also Gilman, 1993: 12ff).

It seems to me that this proves his Jewish identity. Regarding his sense of Jewish interests, Freud wrote of his messianic hope to achieve the “integration of Jews and anti-Semites on the soil of [psychoanalysis]” (in Gay, 1988: 231), a quote clearly indicating that psychoanalysis was viewed by its founder as a mechanism for ending anti-Semitism. This type of messianic thought was common in *fin de siècle* Vienna among Jewish intellectuals who were attempting to bring about a “supranational, supraethnic world” (Klein, 1981: 29). These intellectuals “frequently expressed their humanitarianism in terms of their renewed Jewish self-conception. ... [They had] a shared belief that Jews were responsible for the fate of humanity in the twentieth century” (Ibid.: 31).

Cofnas (2021) claims that Freud’s not signing a letter supporting Jewish rioters in Jerusalem in 1929 shows that he was not ethnically motivated. However, this was at a time when Zionism was not a majority view among Diaspora Jews and could be labeled a “risky strategy” in the West because of the loyalty issue (MacDonald, 2002c, 2003, 2018b). Or Freud may have approved of the cause but not the tactics of the rioters. In any case, “At least by 1930 Freud also became strongly sympathetic with Zionism. His son Ernest was also a Zionist, and none of Freud’s children converted to Christianity or married gentiles” (*CofC*: 111). And finally, identification as a Zionist is certainly not a litmus test of Jewish identity, as it applies to increasing numbers of American Jews.

Karl Marx Regarding Marx, Cofnas (2018) asserts that Marx was an anti-Semite (“Marx ... held extremely anti-Jewish views”) and implies that MacDonald was unaware of controversy surrounding Marx’s Jewish identity. Cofnas thus fails to

note the discussion in *CoC* of perceptions of Marx as an anti-Semite, including the following: “Marx himself, though born of two ethnically Jewish parents, has been viewed by many as an anti-Semite. His critique of Judaism (“On the Jewish question” [Marx, 1843/1978]), conceptualized Judaism as fundamentally concerned with egoistic money seeking; it had achieved world domination by making both man and nature into salable objects. Marx viewed Judaism as an abstract principle of human greed that would end in the communist society of the future” (*CoC*: 53–54). A footnote briefly describes scholarly debate on the topic: “The issue of Marx’s Jewishness has been a continuing controversy (see Carlebach, 1978: 310ff). Marx associated with both practicing Jews and individuals of Jewish ancestry throughout his life. Moreover, he was considered by others as Jewish and was continually reminded of his Jewishness by his opponents (see also Meyer 1989: 36). ... Such externally imposed Jewish identity may have been common among Jewish radicals and surely implies that Marx remained conscious of being Jewish. ... Deception may also be involved: Carlebach (1978: 357) suggests that Marx may have viewed his Jewishness as a liability, and Otto Rühle (1929: 377) suggests that Marx ... went to elaborate lengths to deny his Jewishness in order to prevent criticism of his writings.”

More recently, Schlomo Avineri’s (2019: 48) view is consistent with the latter comments and casts further doubt on Cofnas’s claim that Marx was an anti-Semite. Avineri argues that the most likely explanation for Marx’s anti-Jewish remarks is that he strongly backed Jewish emancipation and was opposed to Bruno Bauer’s demand that Jews be forced to convert to Christianity before being granted legal equality. Marx “had to bend over backward and distance himself as much as possible from Jews and Judaism so as not to be accused of supporting Jewish rights because of his own Jewish background.” This at least suggests a Jewish identity and concern for Jewish interests.

However, the entire issue of Marx’s attitude toward Judaism is unimportant for evaluating the role of Jews in leftist political movements in the twentieth century up to ~1970, the topic of *CoC* (Ch. 3) which Cofnas is attempting to criticize, since Marx died in 1883.

Further discussion of Cofnas’s objections regarding the Jewish identity and sense of pursuing Jewish interests of other figures in *CoC* can be found in MacDonald (2018a, 2018b).

3 Core Issues: 1. Ethnocentrism and Inter marriage

Cofnas (2021) has three central claims. First, he repeats his erroneous assumption that the “anti-Jewish narrative” depends on showing that Jews in general are ethnocentric, his argument in opposition being contemporary rates of intermarriage in Western societies. But contemporary rates of intermarriage are completely irrelevant to whether Jewish activists who have been described as participating in influential intellectual and political movements in earlier decades—the subject of *CoC*—had strong Jewish identifications and saw their work as advancing Jewish group interests such as combatting anti-Semitism. For example, a major theme in all the movements discussed in *CoC* is that Jewish ethnic networking, an aspect of ethnocentrism, has

been important for the success of the movements. This is not at all a claim that Jews in general are ethnocentric, only that the Jews under discussion were ethnocentric as indicated by ethnic networking. Similarly, if one is attempting to discern the contemporary influence of important Jewish organizations like the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) or the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), one would document the Jewish identifications and sense of pursuing Jewish interests of the principal figures; intermarriage of these people or even whether they had non-Jews among their ancestors would be interesting but not critical to the analysis. Similarly, one could also look at Jewish organizations that oppose goals of the ADL or AIPAC and examine where the preponderance of influence lies.

Intermarriage is indeed quite high within the contemporary American Jewish community, but it is certainly far from random given that the small population size of Jews (1.9%) compared to the population as a whole makes meeting co-ethnics relatively unlikely (Dutton, 2020), apart from Jewish communal structure that brings Jews together in nonrandom ways—itsself an ultimate result of Jewish ethnocentrism (e.g., programs like Birthright Israel and J-Date which are committed to promoting endogamous Jewish marriage). In fact, American Jews who are not of mixed parentage “are surprisingly endogamous compared with other groups in America” (Philips, 2013: 103). The odds ratio for Jewish marriage of single-ancestry Jews in the U.S. is 2085 and for mixed-parentage Jews is 50, where an odds ratio of 1 would indicate no ingroup preference; for comparison, the odds ratio for White Hispanics is 596 and Black Americans is 3525. More importantly, intermarriage was negligible during the period covered in *CofC*—roughly 1900 to 1970—a period that fundamentally changed the culture and demography of the United States.

Western cultures are uniquely individualist compared to other cultures of the world (Henrich, 2020; MacDonald, 2019), and in general Western cultures have had strong tendencies toward assimilation of other groups going back to the ancient world (MacDonald, 2019)—tendencies that Jewish groups, with their strongly collectivist social structure, have historically resisted (MacDonald, 1994/2002). While Jewish intermarriage was negligible throughout the great majority of Jewish history, Jews navigating post-Enlightenment individualist Western societies naturally come into contact with many non-Jews (e.g., at universities and in the workplace); they may be pulled in many directions, so that ethnocentrism need not be as important as other tendencies known to be important for choosing marriage partners. Marriage is influenced by a host of variables, including physical attractiveness, social status, personality, and common interests. This is especially the case with secular Jews, who are more likely to meet and have social interactions with non-Jews, and it explains the effects of Orthodox and Hasidic Jews retaining their own educational systems: only 2% of American Orthodox Jews have a non-Jewish spouse (Pew Research, 2016). Similarly, individualist Western societies have seen declining percentages of Jews (as assessed by age cohort) who strongly identify with Israel (Nortley, 2021).

As noted in a previous comment on Cofnas’s critique of work in this area (MacDonald, 2018a), a major goal of Zionism during the early decades of the twentieth century was to stem trends in intermarriage and assimilation occurring in Germany early in the twentieth century (MacDonald, 1998b/2003: Ch. 5), a program which has indeed been successful in Israel (e.g., Pew Research, 2016). Moreover, a 2013

survey of American Jews found that over 60% of intermarried couples were raising their children to identify as Jewish and 94% of American Jews are proud to be Jewish (Pew Research, 2013)—another marker of ethnocentrism. To my knowledge the activist Jewish community in the U.S. remains overwhelmingly ethnically Jewish.

In some cases, intermarriage and conversion may have benefits for the Jewish community—e.g., the advantages of marrying into prominent non-Jewish families while retaining strong ties to the Jewish community, such as the marriage of Jared Kushner, an Orthodox Jew, to Ivanka Trump and Kushner's subsequent influence on the Trump administration's policies toward Israel (e.g., the normalization of relations between Israel and Bahrain) and in other areas (Crowley & Halbfinger, 2020). Another example is the marriage of Sascha Baron-Cohen, a strongly identified Orthodox and pro-Israel Jew, who married an ethnically European woman, Isla Fisher. Fisher, like Ivanka Trump, underwent the full conversion process, and Baron-Cohen continues to maintain an activist role with the ADL (ADL, 2019).

These examples illustrate the idea that intermarriage may not result from lack of ethnocentrism and that intermarriage is compatible with strong Jewish identification and activism. Relatively high rates of intermarriage, low fertility, and various levels of Jewish identification in contemporary Western societies serve Jewish interests because they result in a bridge to the surrounding culture due to family ties with non-Jews, especially prominent non-Jews (e.g., Lieberman & Weinfeld, 1978). This is especially the case since there remains a highly fertile core of Conservative and Orthodox Jews who overwhelmingly reject intermarriage.

Cofnas believes that pointing out possible advantages of Jewish intermarriage somehow contradicts an important aspect of “the anti-Jewish narrative.” But assessing Jewish involvement in influential intellectual and political movements doesn't depend on whether there are advantages or disadvantages to intermarriage. The topic is never discussed in key works asserted to be part of the “anti-Jewish narrative” (e.g., *CofC*). Again, assimilative Western cultures pull people in a variety of directions, and some such marriages are beneficial to the Jewish community. And in any case, there is no indication that the activist Jewish community, whatever their ethnic status and whether they are intermarried, is becoming less influential in the United States. What *is* important is to assess the Jewish identity and pursuit of perceived Jewish interests of the main figures, and to examine the influence of the movement.

Moreover, contemporary rates of Jewish intermarriage do not undo the effects of Jewish activism on the culture and demography of the United States in the critical period up to roughly 1970 which forms the subject matter of the works Cofnas (2018, 2021) is attempting to critique, and during which Jewish intermarriage in the U.S. was far lower than it is now.

4 Core Issues: 2. Jewish Hypocrisy?

Cofnas (2021) claims that *CofC* maintains that “Liberal Jews hypocritically advocate multiculturalism for gentiles/gentile countries but racial purity and separatism for Jews/Israel,” a position that conflicts with the pronouncements of some

contemporary Reform leaders. However one decides this, it is not at all important for evaluating works such as *CofC* which analyses certain influential twentieth-century Jewish intellectual and political movements up to around 1970.

Further, it's natural to adjust one's attitudes depending on context rather than hold to universal principles no matter what the consequences. The ADL recently condemned Tucker Carlson, an American media personality, because he mentioned that American voters were being replaced by immigrants, terming it "a white supremacist tenet that the white race is in danger by a rising tide of non-whites. It is antisemitic, racist and toxic" (see Moore, 2021). In response, Carlson highlighted the different attitudes of the ADL regarding demographic displacement of the native European-derived population of the U.S. with their attitudes on a one-state solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Regarding Israel, the ADL has quite reasonably stated that a one-state solution

is unworkable given current realities and historic animosities. With historically high birth rates among the Palestinians, and a possible influx of Palestinian refugees and their descendants now living around the world, Jews would quickly be a minority within a bi-national state, thus likely ending any semblance of equal representation and protections. In this situation, the Jewish population would be increasingly politically – and potentially physically – vulnerable.

It is unrealistic and unacceptable to expect the State of Israel to voluntarily subvert its own sovereign existence and nationalist identity and become a vulnerable minority within what was once its own territory. (ADL, n.d).

Regarding the ADL statement that concern with demographic changes in the U.S. is "antisemitic, racist and toxic," given the long history of racial conflict in America, the recent upsurge in race-based violence, and the contemporary prominence of movements, such as Critical Race Theory that essentially pathologize white Americans in the media and educational system (DiAngelo, 2018; Kendi, 2019), it is reasonable to suppose that the white population would also be increasingly vulnerable if they become a minority.

Cofnas restricts himself to pronouncements by contemporary American Reform leaders—opinions that may not reflect the views of the wider Reform community, much less represent a consensus among American Jews. Moreover, attitudes of Reform leaders are highly unlikely to affect Israeli policies given that Reform Jews constitute around 3% of the Israeli Jewish population (Lipka, 2016) (compared to 35% of American Jews [Pew Research, 2016]) and only recently managed to elect their first member to the Knesset. *Otzma Yehudit* (Jewish Power), a racist, Kahanist, and explicitly anti-Arab party, also has one seat in the Knesset, while the Israeli left is of vanishing significance (Weiss, 2021). The low percentage of Reform Jews in Israel suggests that Reform is essentially a diaspora movement geared to and perhaps reflecting the assimilative environment in the West.

Survey data for American Jews and Israeli Jews on immigration to the U.S. and Israel respectively indicate that there is a disparity in attitudes. Rajiman et al. (2021), sampling 2011 Israeli Jews, found that only 0.2% were opposed to ethnic Jewish immigrants, while 62% were opposed to "non-ethnic migrants" (i.e., non-Jews), and 41% opposed asylum seekers. "Support [for Jewish migrants] likely derives from

viewing these individuals as ‘returning diaspora’ migrants, who fulfill the Zionistic idea on the one hand, and secure Israel’s Jewish majority on the other. By way of contrast, support for the entry of both groups of non-ethnic migrants was low, probably because they are viewed as challenging the Jewish character of the state.”

I know of no surveys on the attitudes of American Jews toward non-Jewish immigration to Israel or vice-versa, but the concept of Israel as a Jewish state is firmly rooted in American Jewish opinion, and it’s difficult to imagine how Israel could remain a Jewish state if it allowed high levels of immigration of non-Jews. A 2018 survey found that 80% of American Jews wanted immigration to the U.S. to stay the same (34%) or increased (46%) (American Jewish Committee, 2018; hereafter, AJCommittee) (legal immigration to the U.S. runs approximately 1.1 million/year and is decidedly multiethnic). Moreover, while it’s reasonable to assume that American Jews would vigorously reject expulsion of any ethnic group from the United States, roughly half of Israeli Jews say Arabs should be expelled or transferred from Israel (Pew Research, 2016). This at least shows that Jewish attitudes on immigration and multiculturalism vary depending on whether they live in Israel or the United States.

5 Core Issues: 3. The Jewish Role in Shaping U.S. Immigration Policy

The general subject of *CofC* is the rise of a new, left-of-center, substantially Jewish elite in the post-World War II era, an elite centered in the media, the academic world, and political culture—the latter influenced not only by media and academic consensus, but also by political donations enabled by increasing Jewish wealth. The demise of the former white Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASP) elite is the theme of Eric Kaufmann’s (2014) *The Rise and Fall of Anglo-America* (critiqued by MacDonald, 2015–16), and Hollinger (1996: 4) notes “the transformation of the ethnoreligious demography of American academic life by Jews” in the period from the 1930s to the 1960s, as well as the Jewish influence on trends toward the secularization of American society and in advancing an ideal of cosmopolitanism (11); Hollinger (1996: 160) notes that “One force in this [culture war of the 1940s] was a secular, increasingly Jewish, decidedly left-of-center intelligentsia based largely ... in the disciplinary communities of philosophy and the social sciences.” Lipset and Ladd (1971), using survey data of 60,000 academics from 1969, show that the 1960s were a critical period for the rise of Jewish academics in elite universities who were in general well to the left of non-Jewish professors. Jews represented around 12% of faculty in general, but around 25% of the younger faculty (less than age 50) at Ivy League universities—percentages that were much higher than in previous decades. Moreover, a considerably larger percentage of Jewish faculty rated themselves as liberal or left (74.5%), compared to less than 40% of non-Jewish faculty. A substantial majority (59.1%) of Jewish faculty approved of 1960s’ student radical activism, compared to around 40% for non-Jewish faculty. Jewish faculty were also more likely to approve relaxing standards in order to recruit more minority faculty and students.

Jewish faculty were more heavily published than non-Jewish faculty, indicating greater influence. This is important because the academic world is a top-down institution: those at the top train the next generation of scholars and police the

recruitment of new faculty (MacDonald, 2010). For example, Herskovits (1953: 23) noted that “the four decades of the tenure of [Franz Boas’s] professorship at Columbia gave a continuity to his teaching that permitted him to develop students who eventually made up the greater part of the significant professional core of American anthropologists, and who came to man and direct most of the major departments of anthropology in the United States. In their turn, they trained the students who... have continued the tradition in which their teachers were trained.” *CofC* essentially provides detail on several influential components of this new left-of-center academic/intellectual elite.

The rise of this new elite implies that analysis cannot be restricted to only one issue, such as immigration policy without discussing the wider context. Rather, it implies that vital issues of public policy, including immigration, the civil rights of African-Americans, women’s rights, religion in the public square (Hollinger’s “secularization of American society”), the legitimacy of white racial identity and interests, cosmopolitanism, foreign policy in the Middle East, and many others will be affected by the attitudes and interests of this new elite. Thus, the immigration law of 1965 and the civil rights movement cannot be discussed independently of academic and media perspectives on race. *CofC* discusses the role of Jewish intellectuals in the sea change in academic views related to race (Ch. 2) and how Boasian ideology had become dominant in the Congressional debates of 1965 on immigration (Ch. 7); as noted below, this racial ideology became dominant in the media during this period (Joyce, 2019)—at a time when all the television networks and Hollywood studios were owned by Jews, and marking a huge shift from the 1920s when restrictionist arguments based on race appeared in prominent magazines and were published by mainstream book publishers. Further, Jewish influence was a major force in the civil rights movement during the critical years 1954–1968 (see below), and in the secularization of American culture: “Jewish civil rights organizations have had an historic role in the postwar development of American church-state law and policy” (Ivers, 1995: 2).

The only claim that, if true, would seriously endanger an important aspect of what Cofnas labels “the anti-Jewish narrative” is regarding the Jewish role in changing U.S. immigration policy. It’s certainly legitimate for Cofnas to bring up the wider context of Hugh Davis Graham’s (2003) comments on the 1965 immigration law, but, as noted above and elaborated below, the wider context of the law was critically influenced by other aspects of Jewish activism. Moreover, the bottom line is Graham’s (2003: 57) statement, “Most important for the content of immigration reform, the driving force at the core of the movement, reaching back to the 1920s, were Jewish organizations long active in opposing racial and ethnic quotas. ... Jewish political leaders in New York, most prominently Governor Herbert Lehman, had pioneered in the 1940s in passing state antidiscrimination legislation. Importantly [because of the national origins provisions of the 1924 law giving preference to immigration from northwest Europe], these statutes and executive orders added ‘national origin’ to race, color, and religion as impermissible grounds for discrimination.” Similarly, Otis Graham (2004) noted that “The political core of a coalition pressing for a new, more ‘liberalized’ policy regime was composed of ethnic lobbyists ... claiming to speak for nationalities migrating prior to the National Origins

Act of 1924, the most effective being Jews from central and eastern Europe who were deeply concerned with the rise of fascism and anti-semitism on the continent and eternally interested in haven” (see also Graham, 2004: 67).

Thus any critique of MacDonald’s treatment of immigration (*CofC*: Ch. 7) must consider whether Jews had important influence on the wider context discussed by Graham (2003). Cofnas ignores the role of Jewish intellectuals in the sea change in academic views related to race (*CofC*: Ch. 2) and how Boasian ideology had become dominant in the Congressional debates (*CofC*: 253–254). He also ignores the material on Jewish pro-immigration activism from the 1890s to 1965 (*CofC*: 259–293), and he ignores MacDonald’s summary of Jewish involvement in the civil rights movement of the 1950s–1960s (*CofC*: 255–258).

The material in *CofC* on Jewish activism leading up to the 1924 immigration law was recently corroborated by Daniel Okrent (2019). The older German-Jewish community, while expressing distaste for their rather unrefined immigrant co-ethnics, was instrumental in keeping America’s open immigration system long after immigration from eastern and southern Europe had ceased to be popular in the population at large. Thus Sen. Henry Cabot Lodge, leader of the restrictionists, wrote to a friend during the second presidency of Grover Cleveland (1893–1897), “Influences on [Cleveland] were used yesterday which I will explain to you when we meet and which were very hard to overcome”; to another he “said these other forces represented neither corporations or political factions” (in Okrent, 2019: 72). Okrent notes that they “were almost certainly members of America’s moneyed and influential German Jewish community” (73), such as Jacob Schiff “who made a personal plea to Grover Cleveland to veto the literacy test” (Ibid.). (Prior to focusing on national origins, immigration restrictionists promoted a literacy test as a means of restricting immigration.)

For a quarter of a century ... Lodge, the IRL [Immigration Restriction League], and their allies would have to contend with an array of influential organizations dominated by wealthy German Jews. ... Collectively, they composed a formidable and enduring opposition. ... The emergence in the 1890s of organized, wealthy, and well-connected Jews working on behalf of the immigrants presented Lodge and his colleagues with an opposition that few Boston Brahmins had encountered. (Okrent, 2019: 72, 73)

Likely because of this influence, immigration was not restricted until the 1920s, even though public opinion had turned against it at least by 1905 (Neuringer, 1971: 83). As recounted by Cohen (1972: 40ff), the AJCommittee’s efforts in opposition to immigration restriction in the early twentieth century constitute a remarkable example of the ability of Jewish organizations to influence public policy—despite being composed of only a thin upper crust of the American Jewish community of the period. Of all the groups affected by the immigration legislation of 1907, Jews had the least to gain in terms of numbers of possible immigrants, but they played by far the largest role in shaping the legislation (Cohen, 1972: 41); non-Jewish immigrant groups were not important advocates because they were ambivalent and poorly organized (Neuringer, 1971: 83). In the subsequent period leading up to the relatively ineffective restrictionist legislation of

1917, when restrictionists again mounted an effort in Congress, “only the Jewish segment was aroused” (Cohen, 1972: 49). It’s important to note that this influence occurred despite Jewish influence being far less than after World War II and dramatically less than during the 1960s’ debates on immigration, by which time the older WASP elite had been replaced by a substantially Jewish elite.

Regarding the civil rights movement, mentioned by Graham (2003) as part of the context of the passage of the 1965 immigration law, Jewish activism was critical. In the post–World War II period the entire gamut of Jewish civil service organizations was involved in African-American issues, including the AJCommittee, the American Jewish Congress (hereafter, AJCongress), and the ADL. “With professionally trained personnel, fully equipped offices, and public relations know-how, they had the resources to make a difference” (Friedman, 1995: 135). Jews contributed from two thirds to three quarters of the money for civil rights groups during the 1960s (Kaufman, 1997: 110). “Jewish support, legal and monetary, afforded the civil rights movement a string of legal victories. ... There is little exaggeration in an AJCongress lawyer’s claim that ‘many of these laws were actually written in the offices of Jewish agencies by Jewish staff people, introduced by Jewish legislators and pressured into being by Jewish voters’ (Levering-Lewis, 1984: 94)” (*CofC*: 256).

This was a multi-faceted effort, ranging from legal challenges to bias in housing, education, and public employment; legislative proposals and efforts to secure their passage into law in state and national legislative bodies; efforts to shape messages emanating from the media [see also Joyce, 2019]; educational programs for students and teachers; and intellectual efforts to reshape the intellectual discourse of academia. As with Jewish involvement in immigration policy and a great many other instances of Jewish political and intellectual activity in both modern and premodern times [*CofC*: Ch. 6], the intergroup relations movement often worked to minimize overt Jewish involvement (e.g., Svonkin, 1997: 45, 51, 65, 71–72). (*CofC*: 257)

Particularly relevant for the eventual triumph of anti-restrictionism is the material in *CofC* on Jewish activism in creating the context of the 1965 law in the sections on Jewish activism from 1945 to 1965 in opposition to the national-origins provisions of the 1924 and 1952 laws (*CofC*: 273–292). This material shows quite clearly that the wider context of the 1965 law was fundamentally shaped by Jewish activism. Here I briefly summarize this material, arranged topically and elaborated by more recent research.

Shaping Intellectual Views on Race Jews and Jewish organizations led the intellectual effort to deny the importance of racial and ethnic differences in human affairs. The Jewish role in creating the intellectual context of the 1965 immigration law relied on the success of the Boasian movement in anthropology in shaping academic views on race by dominating the American Anthropological Association since the 1920s (*CofC*: Ch. 2; see above). For example, “in message and purpose, [Boas’s anthropology] was an explicitly antiracist science” (Frank, 1997: 741).

As John Higham (1984) noted, the ascendancy of such views was as an important component of the ultimate victory over restrictionism. Commenting on the 1965 debates, a *New York Times* reporter noted that “Congressmen don’t want to look like racists” (in Graham, 2004: 92). Nativism had been “stripped of its intellectual respectability” (Bennett, 1995: 285). So it’s not surprising that Boasian ideas on race were prominent in the immigration debates between 1945 and 1965:

For example, in a 1951 statement to Congress, the AJCongress stated, “The findings of science must force even the most prejudiced among us to accept, as unqualifiedly as we do the law of gravity, that intelligence, morality and character, bear no relationship whatever to geography or place of birth.”¹ The statement went on to cite some of Boas’s popular writings on the subject as well as the writings of Boas’s protégé and Princeton professor Ashley Montagu, perhaps the most visible opponent of the concept of race during this period.² Montagu, whose original name was Israel Ehrenberg, theorized in the period immediately following World War II [in which 70–85 million people were killed] that humans are innately cooperative, but not innately aggressive, and there is a universal brotherhood among humans (see Shipman, 1994, 159ff). In 1952 another Boas protégé, Margaret Mead, testified before the President’s Commission on Immigration and Naturalization (hereafter, PCIN) (1953: 92) that “all human beings from all groups of people have the same potentialities. ... Our best anthropological evidence today suggests that the people of every group have about the same distribution of potentialities.” Another witness stated that the executive board of the American Anthropological Association had unanimously endorsed the proposition that “[a]ll scientific evidence indicates that all peoples are inherently capable of acquiring or adapting to our civilization” (PCIN, 1953: 93).

By 1965 Senator Jacob Javits (*Congressional Record* 111, 1965: 24469) could confidently announce to the Senate during the debate on the immigration bill that “both the dictates of our consciences as well as the precepts of sociologists tell us that immigration, as it exists in the national origins quota system, is wrong and without any basis in reason or fact for we know better than to say that one man is better than another because of the color of his skin.” The intellectual revolution and its translation into public policy had been completed. (*CofC*: 253–254)

Moreover, the anti-restrictionist strategy of Oscar Handlin, the prominent Harvard historian and public intellectual discussed in more detail below, included altering the views of social scientists to the effect “that it was possible and necessary to distinguish among the ‘races’ of immigrants that clamored for admission to the United States” (Handlin, 1952: 4)—using scare quotes for ‘races,’ clearly reflecting Boasian

¹ Statement of the AJCongress, Joint Hearings Before the Subcommittees of the Committees on the Judiciary, 82nd Congress, 1st Sess., on S. 716, H.R. 2379, and H.R. 2816. March 6–April 9, 1951, 391.

² Statement of the AJCongress, Joint Hearings Before the Subcommittees of the Committees on the Judiciary, 82nd Cong., 1st Sess., on S. 716, H.R. 2379, and H.R. 2816. March 6–April 9, 1951, 402–403.

views on race and undermining any intellectual basis for white ethnocentrism (a main focus of the Frankfurt School [*CofC*: Ch. 5]). Writing in *Commentary* (published by the AJCommittee), Petersen (1955) cited a group of predominantly Jewish social scientists whose works, beginning with Horace Kallen's (1915, 1924) plea for a multicultural, pluralistic society, "constitute the beginning of a scholarly legitimization of the different immigration policy that will perhaps one day become law" (86), including Harvard historian Richard Hofstadter who was influential in creating the image of the populists of the West and South (whose support was critical for the restrictionists in 1924 and 1952) as irrational anti-Semites; Hofstadter condemned the populists for their desire "to maintain a homogeneous Yankee civilization" (Hofstadter, 1955: 34) and he developed the "consensus" approach to history, characterized by Nugent (1963: 22) as having "a querulous view of popular movements, which seem to threaten the leadership of an urbanized, often academic, intelligentsia or elite, and the use of concepts that originated in the behavioral sciences."

The New York Intellectuals (*CofC*: Ch. 6) were paradigmatic of this urban elite. For example, the highly influential left-wing journal *Partisan Review* was a principle showcase of "the New York Intellectuals, a group dominated by editors and contributors with a Jewish ethnic identity and a deep alienation from American political and cultural institutions (Cooney, 1986: 225ff; Shapiro, 1989; Wisse, 1987). ... They conceived themselves as alienated, marginalized figures—a modern version of traditional Jewish separateness and alienation from gentile culture. 'They did not feel that they belonged to America or that America belonged to them' (Podhoretz, 1967: 117; emphasis in original). Indeed, Podhoretz (Podhoretz, 1967: 283) was asked by a *New Yorker* editor in the 1950s 'whether there was a special typewriter key at *Partisan Review* with the word 'alienation' on a single key'" (*CofC*: 216–217).

Finally, Joyce (2019) describes a campaign centered around Samuel H. Flowerman, Research Director of the AJCommittee and affiliated with the Frankfurt School's Institute for Social Research (see *CofC*: Ch. 5), to influence public opinion in the American media after World War II. Flowerman co-edited with Max Horkheimer (director of the Institute for Social Research) the highly influential series *Studies in Prejudice*, published by the AJCommittee. Flowerman brought together a network of Jewish intellectuals and social scientists, many with prominent positions in universities and the media (at a time when the Hollywood studios, all the American television networks, and influential newspapers [e.g., the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*] were owned by Jews). This effort was aimed at dominating American mass communications in order to "actively reshape ingroup standards—thus reforming peer group pressures to become antagonistic to ingroup ethnocentrism"; it was "an extensive Jewish joint enterprise in which the unlocking and alteration of White American public opinion was the goal (Joyce, 2019: 6, 11; see, e.g., Flowerman, 1947).

Organizing Anti-Restriction Jews and Jewish organizations organized, led, funded, and performed most of the work of the most important anti-restrictionist organizations active from 1945 to 1965, including the National Liberal Immigration League, the Citizens Committee for Displaced Persons, the National Commission on Immigration and Citizenship, the Joint Conference on Alien Legislation, the American

Immigration Conference, and the PCIN. “All these groups studied immigration laws, disseminated information to the public, presented testimony to Congress, and planned other appropriate activities.... There were no immediate or dramatic results; but [the AJCommittee’s] dogged campaign in conjunction with like-minded organizations ultimately prodded the Kennedy and Johnson administrations to action” (Cohen, 1972: 373). Regarding the PCIN:

The AJCommittee was also heavily involved in the deliberations of the PCIN, established by President Truman, including providing testimony and distributing data and other material to individuals and organizations testifying before the PCIN (Cohen, 1972: 371). All its recommendations were incorporated into the final report (Cohen, 1972: 371), including a deemphasis on economic skills as criteria for immigration, scrapping the national origins legislation, and opening immigration to all the peoples of the world on a “first come, first served basis,” the only exception being that the report recommended a lower total number of immigrants than recommended by the AJCommittee and other Jewish groups. (*CofC*: 281)

The chairman of the PCIN was Philip B. Perlman, and the staff contained a high percentage of Jews, headed by Harry N. Rosenfield (Executive Director) and Elliot Shirk (Assistant to the Executive Director); its report was wholeheartedly endorsed by the AJCongress (see *Congress Weekly* Jan. 12, 1952: 3). The proceedings were printed as the report *Whom We Shall Welcome* (PCIN, 1953) with the cooperation of Rep. Emanuel Celler and with an essay by Oscar Handlin, the Jewish academic activist (see below).

Recruiting Non-Jews in these Efforts Part of this effort was recruiting sympathetic non-Jews, especially prominent non-Jews, to these organizations. Because Jews are a small minority in Western societies, a consistent tactic for the Jewish activist community, beginning at least by the early twentieth century, has been to recruit powerful and influential non-Jews for their efforts (MacDonald, 1998b/2003: Ch. 6). For example, in 1955 the AJCommittee organized a group of influential citizens as the National Commission on Immigration and Citizenship, most of whose members were non-Jews, “in order to give prestige to the campaign” (Cohen, 1972: 373). “To support policy change, American Jewish groups initiated an ambitious campaign to publish and widely distribute books and pamphlets and to recruit prominent politicians favoring robust immigration” (Tichenor, 2002: 205). An important part of this effort was to recruit Senator and future President John F. Kennedy to attach his name to *A Nation of Immigrants* (1958) and to recruit Senator and future Vice-President and Democratic presidential candidate Hubert Humphrey for his *Stranger at Our Gate* (1954) (Tichenor, 2002: 205). Kennedy was recruited by former ADL National Director Ben Epstein (Greenblatt, 2018), the book was published by the ADL which also supplied a historian, Arthur Mann (a doctoral student of Oscar Handlin at Harvard [Ngai, 2013]) for the project (Graham, 2004:82), and was

ghost-written by Myer Feldman who was influential in the Kennedy/Johnson administration (Tichenor, 2002: 205).

Nevertheless, despite its clear importance to the activist Jewish community, the most prominent sponsors of the 1965 law “did their best to downplay the law’s importance in public discourse. National policymakers were well aware that the general public was opposed to increases in either the volume or diversity of immigration to the United States. ... [However,] in truth the policy departures of the mid-1960s dramatically recast immigration patterns and concomitantly the nation. Annual admissions increased sharply in the years after the law’s passage” (Tichenor, 2002: 218). Tichenor notes that chain migration (see below) and the ethnic diversity of the immigrants profoundly changed the United States.

Rejecting the Ethnic Status Quo Put in Place by the 1924 and 1952 Immigration Laws

Even going back to the battle over the 1924 immigration law Jewish activists explicitly opposed an ethnic status quo during Congressional hearings. “At a time when the population of the United States was over 100 million, [Louis] Marshall [influential attorney associated with the AJCommittee and leader of the anti-restrictionist lobbying forces] stated, ‘[W]e have room in this country for ten times the population we have’; he advocated admission of all of the peoples of the world without quota limit, excluding only those who “were mentally, morally and physically unfit, who are enemies of organized government, and who are apt to become public charges” (*CofC*: 263). Similarly, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, representing the AJCongress and a variety of other Jewish organizations at the House hearings on the 1924 law, asserted “the right of every man outside of America to be considered fairly and equitably and without discrimination” (*Ibid.*).

Graham (2004: 80) notes that the Jewish lobby on immigration “was aimed not just at open doors for Jews, but also for a diversification of the immigration stream sufficient to eliminate the majority status of western Europeans so that a fascist regime in America would be more unlikely.” The motivating role of fear and insecurity on the part of the activist Jewish community was thus unique and differed from other groups and individuals promoting an end to the national origins’ provisions of the 1924 and 1952 laws; such a view entailed changing the ethnic balance of the U.S. This fear and insecurity of the Jewish activist community can be seen in the following:

Svonkin (1997: 8ff) shows that a sense of “uneasiness” and insecurity pervaded American Jewry in the wake of World War II even in the face of evidence that anti-Semitism had declined to the point that it had become a marginal phenomenon. As a direct result, “The primary objective of the Jewish intergroup relations agencies [i.e., the AJCommittee, the AJCongress, and the ADL] after 1945 was ... to prevent the emergence of an anti-Semitic reactionary mass movement in the United States” (Svonkin, 1997: 8).

Writing in the 1970s, Isaacs (1974: 14ff) describes the pervasive insecurity of American Jews and their hypersensitivity to anything that might be deemed anti-Semitic. Interviewing “noted public men” on the subject of

anti-Semitism in the early 1970s, Isaacs asked, “Do you think it could happen here?” “Never was it necessary to define ‘it.’ In almost every case, the reply was approximately the same: ‘If you know history at all, you have to presume not that it could happen, but that it probably will,’ or ‘It’s not a matter of if; it’s a matter of when.’” (Isaacs, 1974: 15)

Writing long after the passage of the 1965 law, prominent Jewish social scientist and ethnic activist Earl Raab remarked very positively on the success of American immigration policy in altering the ethnic composition of the United States. Writing for a Jewish publication, Raab noted that the Jewish community had taken a leadership role in changing the northwestern European bias of American immigration policy (Raab, 1993: 17); he also maintained that one factor inhibiting anti-Semitism in the contemporary United States is that “an increasing ethnic heterogeneity, as a result of immigration, has made it even more difficult for a political party or mass movement of bigotry to develop” (Raab, 1995: 91). This fear that white Americans might turn against Jews thus persisted long after the 1965 law was passed. Elliott Abrams (1999: 190) noted, “the American Jewish community clings to what is at bottom a dark vision of America, as a land permeated with anti-Semitism and always on the verge of anti-Semitic outbursts.”

In 1952 the PCIN pointedly noted that the 1924 legislation had succeeded in maintaining the racial status quo, and that the main barrier to changing the racial status quo was not the national origins system, because there were already high levels of nonquota immigrants (mainly European refugees from communism) and because the countries of northern and western Europe did not fill their quotas. Rather, the report noted that the main barrier to changing the racial status quo was the total number of immigrants.

The [PCIN] thus viewed changing the racial status quo of the United States as a desirable goal, and to that end made a major point of the desirability of increasing the total number of immigrants (PCIN, 1953: 42). As Bennett (1963: 164) notes, in the eyes of the PCIN, the 1924 legislation reducing the total number of immigrants “was a very bad thing because of [the PCIN’s] finding that one race is just as good as another for American citizenship or any other purpose.” Correspondingly, the defenders of the 1952 legislation conceptualized the issue as fundamentally one of ethnic warfare. Senator Pat McCarran stated that subverting the national origins system “would, in the course of a generation or so, tend to change the ethnic and cultural composition of this nation” (in Bennett, 1963: 185)—a result that has indeed come to pass. (*CofC*: 281)

As noted above, Cong. Emanuel Celler was involved in the publication of the report *Whom We Shall Welcome* (PCIN, 1953) that viewed changing the ethnic balance of the U.S. as a desirable goal. Cofnas (2021) argues against this by noting that “Even the authors of the legislation were surprised by some of its immediate consequences. According to Graham (2003: 94–95): ‘Emanuel Celler himself, disturbed by the steep decline of European immigration, introduced a bill to allow higher immigration from Ireland, Britain, and the Scandinavian countries,

which he said had suffered from ‘unintentional discrimination’ as a result of his own law.”

However, given the substance of the PCIN report and Celler’s involvement in its publication, it’s difficult to believe that Celler did not advocate changing the ethnic balance of the U.S. The fact that Celler wanted to increase immigration from parts of Europe is certainly not incompatible with this. It would be far more convincing if Celler had advocated a law explicitly reaffirming the ethnic status quo, as the 1924 and 1952 laws had done—laws that he was intensely opposed to for over 40 years. Getting rid of the national origins formulas was a necessary condition for changing the ethnic status quo, as Celler was well aware. All that remained was increasing the absolute numbers of immigrants, as the PCIN advocated, and that is what ultimately happened.

Further indicating a Jewish consensus on this issue, the AJCongress, the largest American Jewish organization at the time, testified during the Senate hearings on the 1952 law that the 1924 legislation had succeeded in preserving the ethnic balance of the United States, but it commented that “the objective is valueless. There is nothing sacrosanct about the composition of the population in 1920. It would be foolish to believe that we reached the peak of ethnic perfection in that year.”³ During this period the *Congress Weekly*, the newsletter of the AJCongress, regularly denounced the national origins provisions as based on the “myth of the existence of superior and inferior racial stocks” (Oct. 17, 1955: 3) and advocated immigration on the basis of “need and other criteria unrelated to race or national origin” (May 4, 1953: 3). Dr. Israel Goldstein (1952a: 6), president of the AJCongress, wrote that “The national origins formula is outrageous now ... when our national experience has confirmed beyond a doubt that our very strength lies in the diversity of our peoples” (Goldstein, 1952b: 5), thus presaging the current mantra promulgated by the American academic, media and political establishment: “Diversity is our greatest strength.”

Prominent Jewish intellectuals, such as Harvard historian and public intellectual Oscar Handlin, published pro-immigration books (e.g., *The Uprooted* [1951/1973]) and articles. Handlin’s (1952) article, “The immigration fight has only begun,” appeared in *Commentary* (published by the AJCommittee) shortly after the Democrat-controlled Congress overrode President Truman’s veto of the restrictionist 1952 law. In a telling comment indicating Jewish leadership of the pro-immigration forces and reflecting the disinterest of other immigrant groups from earlier in the century noted above (Neuringer, 1971: 83), Handlin complained about the apathy of other “hyphenated Americans” in joining the immigration battle. He repeatedly used the term ‘we’—as in “if we cannot beat [Sen. Pat] McCarran and his cohorts with their own weapons, we can do much to destroy the efficacy of those weapons” (4)—suggesting Handlin’s belief in a unified Jewish interest in liberal immigration policy and presaging a prolonged “chipping away” of the 1952 legislation in the ensuing years mentioned by Graham (2003) as part of the context of the 1965 law and noted by Cofnas.

³ Joint Hearings Before the Subcommittees of the Committees on the Judiciary, 82nd Cong., 1st Sess., on S. 716, H.R. 2379, and H.R. 2816, March 6–April 9, 1951, 410.

Handlin clearly rejected an ethnic status quo, arguing that it was “illusory [to expect] that the composition of American population will remain as it is” (Handlin, 1947: 6). And he never addressed the stated justification used by restrictionists in the 1924 debates, describing their attitudes as follows: “The hordes of inferior breeds, even then freely pouring into the country in complete disregard for the precepts of the new racial learning [a reference to theories of racial difference common among elites and promulgated in the popular media in the 1920s], would mix promiscuously with the Anglo-Saxon and inevitably produce a deterioration of the species” (1951/1973: 257). Handlin thus ignored the actual argument used by restrictionists during the Congressional debates of 1924—that the national origins formula was fair to all ethnic groups in the country because it created an ethnic status quo (*CofC*: 263) with its implicit and entirely defensible assumption from an evolutionary perspective that different ethnic groups have conflicts of interest regarding immigration (e.g., conflicts between Palestinians and Jews in Israel over a Palestinian right of return).

Handlin was a critical figure in the decades leading up to the passage of the 1965 law. Ngai (2013) commented on his importance:

Handlin’s thinking on immigration policy both reflected and shaped the course of reform in the postwar period. He may be credited with popularizing a new interpretation of American history—one that conceptualized immigration at the heart of American economic and democratic development. In creating this framework for immediate political reform, he founded a normative theory of immigration history—one we popularly know as “a nation of immigrants”—that endured for several generations in both scholarly and popular discourse, and arguably endures into our own time. (Ngai, 2013, 62)

His contributions to the long reform effort to repeal the national origin quota system should not be underestimated. His writings, both scholarly and journalistic, provided an episteme for reform, a framework and a logic for critiquing old policy and for defining the contours of a new one. Handlin not only gave Euro-American ethnic groups voice and legitimacy, *as ethnics*. He also gave them a central place in the master narrative of American history and argued that pluralism and group life were pillars of American democracy. The reform agenda was thus not just a matter of immediate political interests; it was also a historical mission in the perceived telos of American democracy and in the construction of post-World War II Americanism. (Ngai, 2013, 65)

Chipping Away the Ethnic Status Quo Embedded in the 1924 and 1952 Immigration Laws Regarding the “chipping away” recommended by Handlin and noted by Graham (2003) as part of the context of the 1965 law, most of the non-quota immigrants prior to 1965 were refugees from communism. These migrants were overwhelmingly non-Jews from Russia, Poland, and Czechoslovakia (Graham, 2003: 54)—ethnically European groups that had taken advantage of “the 1920s law [that] gave an

ethnically tense country a needed breathing space” (Graham, 2003: 48) to assimilate to American culture. By the 1950s these assimilated European groups were not seen as changing the demographic balance of the country, nor were these refugees from communism leftist radicals—a major concern during the 1920s (especially regarding Jewish immigrants [*CofC*: Chs. 3 & 7]). Americans also welcomed them because they were seen as affirming the superiority of American culture to communism during the Cold War; e.g., the torture and persecution of Hungarian Cardinal József Mindszenty (who lived at the American embassy in Budapest for 15 years prior to being exiled) was very salient to Americans, especially Catholics.

Thus the migration that actually occurred during the 1950s was far from the profile of immigration after 1965. Although such immigration certainly did not reflect attitudes that dominated in the 1920s, the rationale was far from that of post-1965 immigration where essentially no rationale was needed—even needed skills that would benefit the country had a low priority. Indeed, a major chipping-away tactic was to allow family members to immigrate outside of quota limits. Family unification had been central to Jewish efforts on immigration going back to the 1924 debates (Neuringer, 1971: 191)—a point emphasized by Rep. Francis Walter, the leader of the restrictionist forces in the House, in the 1952 debates when he noted the special role that Jewish organizations had played in attempting to foster family reunion rather than special skills as the basis of U.S. immigration policy (*Congressional Record* March 13, 1952: 2284).

Commenting on the family unification aspects of the 1961 immigration legislation, Bennett (1963: 244) noted that the “relationship by blood or marriage and the principle of uniting families have become the ‘open Sesame’ to the immigration gates.” Bennett (1963: 256) also noted that the “repeated, persistent extension of nonquota status to immigrants from countries with oversubscribed quotas and flatly discriminated against by [the McCarran-Walter Act of 1952] together with administrative waivers of inadmissibility, adjustment of status and private bills, is helping to speed and make apparently inevitable a change in the ethnic face of the nation” (257). The 1965 law was tailor-made to increase numbers of immigrants because it allowed “chain migration” of family members outside the quota system by allowing family unification outside quota limits. “Family preference was leverage for newcomers and left long-term residents with diminished influence over immigration streams shaping the nation’s future” (Graham, 2004: 91) (i.e., because citizens with family going back more than a generation or two—and certainly founding-stock Americans—likely had few close relatives living abroad). Thus, one immigrant could bring in his immediate family and when they became citizens, they could bring in their brothers and sisters outside the quota limit, who could in turn bring in their spouses and children, etc.

Congressional and Executive Branch Leadership Jewish politicians led anti-restrictionist efforts in Congress and were prominent in the executive branch. In Congress, the most noteworthy figures were Rep. Celler (also a leader in the anti-restrictionist forces in the 1924 Congressional debates) and Sens. Jacob Javits and Herbert Lehman, all prominent members of the ADL. After noting the leadership of Jews in Congress, Graham (2003: 57) notes that “less visible, but equally important,

were the efforts of key advisers on presidential and agency staffs. These included senior policy advisers such as Julius Edelson and Harry Rosenfield in the Truman administration, Maxwell Rabb in the Eisenhower White House, and presidential aide Myer Feldman [who, as noted, was the ghost writer for Kennedy's *A Nation of Immigrants*], assistant secretary of state Abba Schwartz, and deputy attorney general Norbert Schlei in the Kennedy-Johnson administration." Schlei was the head of the Justice Department's Office of General Counsel from 1962 to 1966 and the most important figure in drafting the 1965 immigration bill (New York Times, 2003). Graham (2004: 88) also mentions Feldman, Schlei, and Schwarz, as important figures involved in immigration-related issues during the Kennedy-Johnson administration.

Jewish Consensus on Immigration Policy During this period, anti-restrictionist attitudes were held by the vast majority of the organized Jewish community—"the entire body of religious opinion and lay opinion within the Jewish group, religiously speaking, from the extreme right and extreme left," in the words of Judge Simon Rifkind who testified in Congress representing a long list of national and local Jewish groups in 1948. Cofnas (2018, 2021) advocates the "default hypothesis" that because of their intellectual prowess, Jews have always been highly overrepresented on both sides of various issues. This was certainly not true in the case of immigration during the critical period up to 1965 when the national origins provisions of the 1924 and 1952 laws were overturned—and long thereafter. I have never found any Jewish organization or prominent Jews leading the forces favoring the 1924 and 1952 laws—or those opposed to the 1965 law at the time it was enacted. Joyce (2021) shows the continuing powerful role of Jews in pro-immigration activism in the contemporary U.S., and, as noted above, there is substantial Jewish consensus on immigration into the present.

Conclusion I conclude that Jews and the organized Jewish community were a necessary condition for passing the 1965 immigration law. As has been typical, Jewish activism was aimed at elite institutions and political figures, with change eventually occurring in a top-down manner that did not reflect the attitudes of most Americans. As Graham (2004: 88) notes, "There was emerging on the immigration question a pattern in public debate that could be found on many issues: elite opinion makers selected a problem and a liberal policy solution, while grassroots opinion, unfocused and marginalized, ran strongly the other way."

6 Minor Issues

Jews and the Left Cofnas's treatment of why Jews tend to be on the left lacks any appreciation of Jewish history, simply noting that "In recent history, Jewish involvement in politics has skewed left because a higher proportion of right-wing than left-wing movements were overtly anti-Semitic," thereby confining himself to an unspecified period of recent history and ignoring pre-1960s America where it would

be difficult to impossible to find any important Jewish intellectuals or activists who were not on the left of the political spectrum, as well as ignoring where the power of the Jewish community was directed during that period, ignoring other motivations of the Jewish left (e.g., the belief that multiculturalism would prevent Jewish assimilation), and ignoring the Jewish motivations of neoconservatives in later decades. Neoconservatives have been the most important group of Jewish conservatives; they have been motivated mainly to influence U.S. foreign policy in a pro-Israel direction while pushing the Republican Party to the left on social issues like immigration (MacDonald, 2004). Indeed, it wasn't until the 1970s, during the Carter administration, that neoconservative Jews defected from the Democratic Party because of Carter's advocacy of an evenhanded approach vis-à-vis Israel and the Palestinians and for a return to the 1967 borders (see MacDonald, 2004); until then, American Jews had no high-profile representation on the intellectual or political right in America. Then, with the rise of President Trump, many neoconservatives (e.g., Max Boot, Bill Kristol, Jennifer Rubin) abandoned the Republican Party, likely because of Trump's populist rhetoric and his proposals for a non-interventionist foreign policy.

One should also note that Jewish political attitudes have not been correlated with social class in a manner similar to non-Jews. The gap between economic interests and political ideology dates at least from the 1920s (Liebman, 1979: 290ff). Moreover, Jewish New Left radical students during the 1960s came disproportionately from highly educated and affluent families (Rothman & Lichter, 1982). Wealthy Jews, not Jewish intellectuals, continue to form the donor base of the Democratic Party (e.g., Debenedetti, 2019; OpenSecrets.org, 2021) and Jewish voters have continued to strongly favor the Democrats despite their social class profile and their status as an elite in American society (MacDonald, 2002b).

This indicates that other reasons must be explored for understanding the Jewish attraction to the left, in particular how Jews see themselves and the wider society. Treatments of Jewish identity among leftists (e.g., *CofC*: Ch. 3) indicate complex and even self-deceptive Jewish identities. A common theme, apparent, for example, in Norman Podhoretz's (2010) *Why Are Jews Liberals?* is the "lachrymose" view of Jewish history. This perception of Jewish history is a fixture of Jewish education and self-identity. In this view, Jewish history in the West is a history of pogroms, exclusion, and expulsions, from the Roman destruction of the Second Temple, through the expulsions of the Middle Ages, the Russian pogroms of the late nineteenth century, and culminating in the Holocaust. As noted, fear of an anti-Jewish movement has been the main motive for Jewish involvement in shaping U.S. immigration policy, and concern about anti-Semitism is also well-documented as motivating other influential Jewish intellectual movements (*CofC*: *passim*).

Simply having a relatively high IQ does not imply the sort of adversarial culture noted as an aspect of Jewish activism in the United States. Whereas there has been a strong trend for American Jews to have a very large influence on the media, the creation of culture, information in the social sciences and humanities, and the political process (MacDonald, 2002b), this has not happened with the Overseas Chinese in southeast Asia despite their dominating position in the economies of the region and their high average IQ (MacDonald, 2002a). The Overseas Chinese have not formed a

cultural elite in Southeast Asian countries and have not concentrated their efforts on media ownership or in the construction of an adversarial culture.

Is the Percentage of Jews in a Society Critical for the Success of Jewish Activism? Cofnas (2021) notes that Western societies like Sweden with a very small percentage of Jews have also opened their gates to immigration and embraced multiculturalism. Besides the activists he mentions (David Schwarz was particularly important), the role of the Bonnier family, which has long had a commanding presence in Swedish media (books, magazines, newspapers, television, and film), should also be mentioned (Bonnier Group, 2021).

However, the larger picture is telling. Eckehart (2017) described 17 distinct debates on immigration and minority policy in prominent Swedish newspapers and magazines between 1964 and 1968, consisting altogether of 118 articles. Schwarz personally wrote or co-wrote 37 of these, or 31% of the total. He also initiated no less than twelve of the debates; no one else initiated more than one. Adding in other Jewish contributions, we find that this smallest of established minority groups in Sweden was responsible for 46 articles, or 39% of the total, despite constituting less than 1% of the country's population. *All* Jewish contributors favored the multiculturalist position. Clearly Jews were not in leadership positions on both sides of this issue—the default hypothesis fails once again.

Moreover, minorities have an advantage in ethnic competition in being more mobilized than majorities (Salter, 2006). Mobilization is the willingness to make sacrifices for a cause, for example, by donating money, time, and labor. Even a small group with limited resources can exercise disproportionate influence when its members are highly mobilized and its opponents, though superior in numbers, are indifferent. This is the general finding of the above material on the 1965 immigration law in the United States; in the case of Australia in recent decades, Isi and Mark Leibler, whose efforts have been furthered by wealthy Australian Jews, have had a very large influence on the Australian government on a wide range of issues, ranging from policy toward Israel, to immigration, to restrictions on speech (Cashman, 2020; Gawenda, 2020; Sanderson, 2021); Sanderson (2013) also describes the effective activism of Walter Lippmann in promoting an official policy of multiculturalism in Australia in the 1970s—motivated, at least in part, by concerns that assimilation would decimate the Jewish community.

Also, minority influence is particularly effective in individualist cultures, and Scandinavian societies are the most individualist cultures on Earth as indicated by data on historical family and political structure (MacDonald, 2018c, 2019). Individualists are far more likely to see others as individuals rather than as members of competing groups, and they are relatively non-ethnocentric (Henrich, 2020; MacDonald, 2019, 2020, 2021). Further, the social cohesion of individualist culture is provided by “moral communities” rather than identities based on kinship, race, or ethnicity (MacDonald, 2019, 2021)—moral communities in which dissent, e.g., from multiculturalist ideology in the contemporary West, results in guilt and possible punishments such as ostracism and job loss. In the contemporary culture of the West, these moral communities are created in a top-down manner by elite academic and media culture in which Jews are highly overrepresented (MacDonald, 2002b,

2019). As noted, a major Jewish effort following World War II has been to create a culture that relegates white ethnocentrism and the pursuit of white interests to the political and social fringes (see also *CofC*: Ch.5).

Finally, Sweden, as a relatively small, geopolitically unimportant Western society, is influenced by the wider trends in the West. Since the United States has been the undisputed leader of the West since World War II, it is not at all surprising that trends that began in the U.S. would be seen in a positive light by Swedish intellectuals and politicians. For example, Western academic culture is international and hierarchical, so that, e.g., once the Boasian revolution occurred in elite universities and became standard academic wisdom in the U. S., it was inevitable that it would spread to academic cultures throughout the West, with consequences on immigration policy as noted above regarding the U.S. Thus, Sanderson (2013: 7) shows that Boasian views on race were “a critical weapon in opening Australian immigration up to non-White groups,” and he discusses the critical role of Jewish academics and other activists in promoting opposition to the traditional White Australia policy, e.g., citing an article by Dan Goldberg (2008), the national editor of the *Australian Jewish News*, proudly acknowledging that “Jews were instrumental in leading the crusade against the White Australia policy.” And again contradicting Cofnas’s default hypothesis, Rubenstein (Rubinstein, 1995: 7) notes that “[p]olitically, the Jewish community is strongly united on a limited number of goals on which there is consensus or near consensus, especially support for Israel, fighting anti-Semitism and endorsing multiculturalism, and stemming assimilation through Jewish day-school education.”

MacDonald (*CofC*: 294) notes that “the sea change in immigration policy in the Western world occurred at approximately the same time (1962–1973), and in all countries the changes reflected the attitudes of elites rather than the great mass of citizens. ... A consistent theme has been that immigration policy has been formulated by elites with control of the media and that efforts have been made by political leaders of all major parties to keep fear of immigration off the political agenda.” As noted above, citing Graham (2004: 88), the top-down influence over public policy was central to Jewish activism on immigration during the 1960s and became increasingly apparent on other public policy issues as well. The anti-populism and top-down elite control championed by Jewish intellectuals in earlier decades (*CofC*: Ch. 5) had come to fruition.

Should Jews Be Welcomed in Movements Aimed at White Advocacy? Cofnas (2021) claims that it’s not surprising that Jews do not join pro-White movements when so many of their leaders express hostility toward Jews. My view is that Jews should be allowed to join such movements if they acknowledge the role and the power of the Jewish community in transforming America contrary to white interests and direct their efforts at converting the Jewish community to pro-white advocacy (MacDonald, 2016); moreover, non-Jews must be aware that there is a history of Jews attempting to influence white advocacy movements in a manner compatible with Jewish interests at the expense of developing a reasonable sense of white ethnic interests (Joyce 2016, Joyce, 2021).

Blaming an anti-Jewish narrative for lack of Jewish sympathy to White advocacy is deeply problematic. Should white advocates ignore the historical and contemporary Jewish role in their dispossession? Many Jews will inevitably find an honest discussion of the history of white dispossession threatening because of the prominent role of Jews revealed by any objective account of that history. However, silence on the role of Jews forces these groups to live in a sort of ahistorical present—avoiding a realistic discussion of the past and preventing any attempt to understand this past in an objective manner. This forces these pro-European movements into a major departure from all other ethnic activist movements I am aware of, including Jewish movements: Ethnic identity and commitment are deeply interwoven with perceptions of history—e.g., the lachrymose view of Jewish history noted above. “Politics [is] not merely a fierce physical struggle to control the present, and so the future, but an intellectual battle to control the record of the past” (Johnson [Johnson, 1988: 481], describing the philosophy of history of Frankfurt School intellectual Walter Benjamin [b. 1892– d. 1940]).

7 Conclusion

I conclude that Cofnas’s critique of “the anti-Jewish narrative” is without factual basis and contains a number of theoretical misunderstandings related to what would count as evidence against the importance of Jewish identities and interests in accounting for the transformative Jewish influence on the United States. Moreover, there is no indication that Cofnas appreciates the historical changes in the attitudes and behavior of the Jewish community, particularly in the critical decades after World War II. Nor is there any evidence that Cofnas appreciates the degree to which particular attitudes have formed a virtual Jewish consensus during particular times and places, especially among the activist Jewish community. Nor does Cofnas appreciate how the virtual consensus within the activist Jewish community in the postwar period—at a time when Jews emerged as an integral component of a new elite in American culture—influenced and essentially created the wider context in which issues related to white ethnocentrism, immigration, civil rights, cosmopolitanism, and the secularization of society were considered. Moreover, in studying Jewish influence—particularly when different factions of Jews are attempting to influence public policy in different directions, one must attempt to discern which faction is more powerful in particular historical periods and which faction is more representative of the wider Jewish community—considerations entirely missing from Cofnas’s analysis.

In particular, the default hypothesis fails for the following reasons:

- There were no Jews or Jewish organizations in pro-immigration restriction or in populist movements during the period covered in *CofC*—a period that has been transformative for the West. During this period, Jewish organizations and activists were uniformly pro-immigration and Jewish intellectual movements were intensely critical of populism.

- As noted above, “in pre-1960s America ... it would be difficult to impossible to find any important Jewish intellectuals or activists who were not on the left of the political spectrum,” and I note that Cofnas ignores where the power of the Jewish community was directed during that period. He also ignores the fact that Jewish neoconservatives, by far the most important group of Jewish-American conservatives, have been pro-immigration and have acted to move the Republican Party to the left on social issues in line with the attitudes of strong majorities of American Jews.
- In debates over immigration in Sweden in the pivotal 1960s, all Jewish contributors favored the multiculturalist position. Similarly, regarding Australia, there has been a Jewish consensus on multiculturalism and other issues: “especially support for Israel, fighting anti-Semitism and endorsing multiculturalism, and stemming assimilation through Jewish day-school education” (Rubenstein, 1995: 7).
- The default hypothesis avoids a description of the inner dynamics and motivations of influential movements originated and dominated by Jews in favor of a purely statistical analysis. But understanding the motivations and inner dynamics of these movements is surely a question that is worth asking.

Cofnas’s account is deficient in all of these areas. He has created a very inadequate view of Jewish history and activism.

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