

The Project on Allyship to Combat Antisemitism

Navigating Allyship: Insights from Historical Jewish Immigration Advocacy

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Summary:

This paper draws from historical Jewish immigration advocacy to provide insights on navigating allyship amid contemporary challenges such as antisemitism. It discusses the evolution of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) and its response to the 2018 antisemitic attack at the Tree of Life Synagogue. Emphasizing the critical role of allyship in combating hate, the paper underscores the importance of partnerships between Jewish and other identity groups. However, it also acknowledges the lack of support faced by Jewish communities and the challenges in achieving successful allyship and coalitions for all groups. The paper explores insights for contemporary Jewish groups seeking allyship by analyzing the experiences of Jewish advocacy groups with American immigration policy reform from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries. It identifies four key lessons: 1) the importance of Jewish groups collaborating with one another to build alliances with other identity groups; 2.) the wisdom of accepting partial victories; 3.) the strategic importance of emphasizing shared benefits (e.g., economic gains) and values (e.g., family values) sought by all allyship partners; and 4.) remaining mindful of how external factors like war and geopolitics can swiftly impact allyship.

The Tree of Life Synagogue and the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) Response

On October 27, 2018, the white supremacist Robert Gowers, a few hours before carrying out the deadliest attack in America's history on Jewish congregations at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, railed on the alt-tech social networking platform Gab.¹ "HIAS likes to bring invaders in that kill our people," he posted. "I can't sit by and watch my people get slaughtered. Screw your optics, I'm going in." The acronym he referenced is for the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), a Jewish nonprofit organization that caught his ire for helping Muslim refugees relocate to the United States. A couple of weeks earlier, he linked to HIAS's webpage on the resettlement initiative and taunted, "Why hello there HIAS! You like to bring in hostile invaders to dwell among us?" On another occasion, he spewed the following crazy vitriol, likely directed at HIAS: "Open you Eyes! It's the filthy EVIL jews Bringing the Filthy EVIL Muslims into the Country!"² Bowers, who murdered eleven and wounded six people in his rampage, was tried and found guilty of 63 federal charges by a jury in June 2023, and for his crimes he was sentenced to death in August 2023.³

HIAS leaders were troubled by what had happened but resolved in their mission. “There are no words to express how devastated we are by the events in Pittsburgh,” they pronounced in public statements. “This loss is our loss,” they affirm, “and our thoughts are with the Tree of Life Congregation, Congregation Dor Hadash, New Light Congregation, our local partner Jewish Family and Community Services (JFCS) of Pittsburgh, the city of Pittsburgh and all those affected by this senseless act of violence.” While distressed, they responded by making “a commitment that we would not be deterred, and we would continue to stand firmly for the rights of refugees and immigrants around the world, to welcome them with love, and to work for a world that is more just and compassionate.” Speaking of the those murdered, “May their memories be for the brightest blessing,” they avow. “And may we all work for a better future.”⁴

The Evolution of HIAS’s Mission and the Organization as a Model of Allyship

The organization has been doing for nearly 150 years the work that it resolved to continue in the wake of the tragedy. Tracing its roots to 1881, it was founded initially in America to aid Jews escaping pogroms in Russia and Eastern Europe before expanding its services to help Jews throughout the world with a host of immigration and refugee issues. For its first 100 years, HIAS worked assiduously for Jews resettling in America and elsewhere, including by providing them with clothing, food, employment assistance, help locating relatives, shelter, translation services, and support navigating U.S. and international border and legal systems. During WWI and WWII and their aftermaths, HIAS was at the forefront of assisting persecuted Jews find refuge, such as by supporting hundreds of thousands of them fleeing Nazi harm in the 1940s and 1950s with aid and resettlement in over 300 communities throughout America, Australia, Canada, Israel, and South American countries.⁵

About 50 years ago, HIAS further expanded its mission to help all refugees, Jewish and non-Jewish. While continuing to support Jews with services, the organization today assists refugees from diverse cultures, ethnicities, and faiths. “Originally set up by Jews to help fellow Jews for reasons of religious imperative and communal solidarity,” HIAS explains on its website, it is today “a multi-continent, multi-pronged humanitarian aid and advocacy organization with thousands of employees dedicated to helping forcibly displaced people around the world in keeping with the organization’s Jewish ethical roots.”⁶

It first did this in 1975 by assisting Cambodian, Laotian, and Vietnamese refugees uprooted by the Vietnam War. Other examples include: HIAS supported people in the 1990s fleeing danger in East Africa, southeast Asia, the Middle East, and the former Yugoslavia; it established operations in South America at the turn of the century to aid refugees in the hemisphere; and HIAS helped Afghanis and Ukrainians seeking refuge after the 2021 Fall of Kabul and the 2022 Russian Invasion of Ukraine. “Drawing on our Jewish values and history,” HIAS’s mission statement declares, it “provides vital services to refugees and asylum seekers around the world and advocates for their fundamental rights so they can rebuild their lives.”⁷ HIAS President Mark Hetfield puts it this way, “We used to welcome refugees because they were Jewish. Today HIAS welcomes refugees because we are Jewish.”⁸

HIAS and its history are an apt entryway into this paper's topic of allyship and Jewish immigrant groups because in the examples above the nonprofit had to work with groups of varied backgrounds to bring benefits to a multitude of people—Jews and non-Jews—throughout the world. Immigration and refugee issues, by their very nature, involve people belonging to diverse identity groups because they entail individuals moving from one country and society to another country and society. HIAS could not have achieved its remarkable achievements over the last century and a half without being adept at allying with other groups. And the Tree of Life tragedy is a sad and tragic reminder of the importance of HIAS's work, and that of Jews' and their allies' urgency in the worldwide fight against hate and antisemitism.

Antisemitism Today

Anti-Jewish harassment has been on the rise in recent decades and especially since Black Saturday, the October 7, 2023, terrorist attack by Hamas on Israel that killed approximately 1,200 people—the largest murder of Jews since the Holocaust—and started the ongoing Israel-Hamas war. A Pew study found that Jews in 2020, even prior to the current conflict, were harassed (including physical and verbal assault and vandalism) by governments or social groups in 94 countries—a rise in the number of countries with such incidents from the previous year and nearly double the 51 countries with antisemitic events in 2007, the inaugural year of the research.⁹ Since the Israel-Hamas war onset, anti-Jewish harassment has proliferated, with the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) counting 3,291 antisemitic incidents from October 7, 2023, through January 7, 2024—a 361% increase in the number of such occurrences from the prior year period.¹⁰ Regarding the spike in antisemitic incidents with the war, Jonathan Greenblatt, the ADL's CEO, remarks that, “It was like a wildfire that spread much farther than we had anticipated or really seen in the past. We were pretty staggered to see how fast this played out.”¹¹

Jews cannot combat these forces alone; the scale and nature of the problem requires other groups to recognize it and work for it to end. With Jews consisting of about 0.2% and 2.4% of the global and U.S. adult populations, respectively, even if every one of them were to speak out against antisemitism, their numbers and resources would not likely be sufficient to significantly reduce discrimination against them.¹² Further complicating Jews' ability to fight antisemitism sans allies is that hate is an insidious, thorny problem often entrenched within peoples' psyches. Rooting it out necessitates people looking within themselves to evaluate their perspectives and biases. “The hard work” of combatting hate, Rabbi Sandra Lawson explains, “is the internal work that you have to do in yourself to understand racism, antisemitism, homophobia ... And that's the work that people don't want to do.”¹³

This insight identifies that fighting hate on a collective level requires persons on an individual level to look inward to evaluate their prejudices and ways of looking at others to remove the problem. Often, people need someone from their own identity group to help them identify where their beliefs regarding others (in this case, Jews) is harmful. In short, Jews, with global antisemitism resurging, need the support and partnership—the allyship—of other identity groups to stop attacks against them and transcend hate.

Lack of Allyship Amidst Rising Antisemitism

However, despite this pressing need, reports since the October 7 Hamas terrorism attack indicate that Jews are lacking allyship and backing countering anti-Jewish hate when it is most needed. A *NY Times* article aptly summarizes this perspective by showing that even American Jews who are critical of Israel, are shocked by their lack of support. It finds that:

Interviews with dozens of liberal Jewish leaders and voters, and a review of social media posts, private emails and text chains of liberal Jewish groups, reveal a politically engaged swath of American Jewry who are reaching a breaking point. They have long sought an end to the Israeli government's occupation of the West Bank and blockade of Gaza, supported a two-state solution and protested the right-wing government of Benjamin Netanyahu. But in the Hamas attacks, many saw an existential threat, evoking memories of the Holocaust and generations of antisemitism, and provoking anxiety about whether they could face attacks in the United States. And they were taken aback to discover that many of their ideological allies not only failed to perceive the same threats but also saw them as oppressors deserving of blame.¹⁴

Many Jews are disappointed that, considering their long-standing allyship with other groups in fights for justice (as illustrated in HIAS's work for refugees), that those who they thought were allies are not with them in meaningful ways.

Rabbi Sharon Brous, a prominent progressive advocate, describes it as “existential loneliness” when the “clear message from many in the world, especially from *our* world – those who claim to care the most about justice and human dignity – is that these Israeli victims [of the October 7th Hamas terrorist attack] somehow deserved this terrible fate.”¹⁵ One Jew who was the subject of an antisemitic attack in New York City feels abandonment and “frustration. A lot of the messaging that Jews have gotten over the last four years,” he explains, “is you’ve got to show up. You have to be an ally. You have to speak up for others. And I think a lot of Jews, myself included, very much took that to heart” by participating in rallies in support of immigrants, women, and Black Lives Matter.¹⁶

Understanding Allyship and Its Challenges

The dearth of reciprocal support from other groups for Jews amidst a surge in antisemitism is disheartening, but it may not come as a surprise to those familiar with writings on allyship and alliances or political coalitions. Regarding allyship, it is defined as “the status or role of a person who advocates and actively works for the inclusion of a marginalized or politicized group in all areas of society, not as a member of that group but in solidarity with its struggle and point of view and under its leadership.”¹⁷ The “allies” who participate in allyship, are defined by one group of academics as “individuals, typically outgroup members, who stand up against discrimination and support marginalized group members in a wide range of contexts.”¹⁸

The term "allyship" first surfaced in the English language around 1850, but its modern usage, indicating a person supporting a marginalized group to which they do not belong, is

believed to have originated in the 1940s. This contextualization of the word grew in the 1990s before sharply increasing in usage in the new millennium, especially since the 2020 murder of George Floyd, an African American man, by white police officers, which sparked worldwide protests for racial justice. It has gained such widespread usage that Dictionary.com selected it as its "word of the year" in 2021, and a simple Google search of "allyship and definition" yields numerous results.¹⁹

The endeavor of advocating for minority groups as an ally, despite not sharing their identity, comes with challenges. This sheds light on why those well-versed in the concept may understand the lack of extensive support for Jews facing antisemitism. In the essay, "Allyship Is Never Easy, and That's the Point," a commentator delves into the complexities and obstacles allies encounter, stressing that they must "question systems, institutions, and cultural norms that perpetuate systemic inequities," that they "will be challenged by folks choosing not to be on the right side of history," and that such an endeavor is not "easy or comfortable."²⁰

In a paper, "Barriers to Allyship," a group of researchers explain that scholarship finds that allyship in the workplace can be a "complex," "risky," and "treacherous process." For starters, someone seeking to counter major injustices might question their own legitimacy. And if they do decide to be an ally, they then need to engage in a "careful cognitive step-by-step process of detecting discrimination, deeming it a critical issue that warrants an intervention, taking responsibility to confront it, deciding how they will confront it, and then taking appropriate action." For an individual, this is an "emotionally fraught" undertaking because "allyship that does not hit the mark may subject the ally to backlash, stigmatization, and retaliation."²¹ In sum, scholarship points to successful allyship as hard, requiring a person to execute a multifaceted journey, characterized by ongoing learning, courageous advocacy, and unwavering dedication.

Understanding Political Coalitions and their Challenges

Echoing the notion that allyship is not easy, work in the social science and political science disciplines on the concept of political coalitions also shed light on why Jews, or any minority group, are challenged to find steadfast allies in quests for justice. The scholar Bruce Bueno de Mesquita describes a political coalition as "a group of individuals (or group of groups) who share at least one goal and who agree to pool at least some of their resources in pursuit of that shared goal."²² Providing a more elaborate explanation, the social scientist E.W. Kelley defines a coalition as "groups of individuals who: 1. agree to pursue a common and articulated goal; 2. pool their relevant resources in pursuit of this goal; 3. Engage in conscious communication concerning the goal and the means of attaining it; 4. Agree on the distribution of the payoff (benefits) received when obtaining the goal."²³

In the context of this article's topic, a coalition entails a Jewish interest group or nonprofit (such as HIAS or the ADL) allying with a non-Jewish interest group or nonprofit (such as the American Immigration Council (AIC), American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), and Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA)) in working toward a goal like helping refugees or combatting

antisemitism. The concepts of allyship and political coalitions are discrete yet share similarities. Allyship focuses on the process of individuals or groups aligning themselves with and providing support to members of marginalized groups facing discrimination. Alternatively, political coalitions involve partnership among two or more groups, not necessarily disadvantaged or oppressed, who collaborate for a shared political objective or goal. What allyship and political coalitions share that is particularly relevant to this paper's topic is that both concepts can entail groups of people forming alliances and working together to reach a shared objective.

Like the bonds formed between parties in allyship, coalitions are challenging to maintain, thus reinforcing why Jews struggle to find resolute allies. As described by the scholar Terrence Cook, groups allying to reach a common objective (e.g., immigration policy reform or fighting hate) must limit "competitions among them to compete better against other coalesced groups." He says that to form a coalition, groups must set aside "lingering enmities among themselves to foreground their shared enmity to some enemy or set of enemies."²⁴ It is difficult for distinct groups to stay united towards a shared objective because they often have diverging goals.

Essentially, if they were completely aligned, they would likely already be part of the same group. To reach a common objective, the leaders of interest groups within a coalition have the complex task of bargaining not only with members within their own groups, but also with each other *and* with members of other groups who may hold starkly opposing views on the issue. Individual leaders can also be capricious in approaching common goals, potentially causing negotiations to fail due to self-interested motives such as holding grudges or pursuing personal advantages. Ultimately, the more people involved in a coalition, the greater the likelihood that issues related to interests, complexity, or human nature may impede its success.

Navigating Allyship: Lessons from Jewish Immigration Advocacy, circa 1882-1965

Given the formidable challenges that groups have with building strong alliances with one another, what can Jews do to enhance the likelihood of other groups allying with them on critical issues like combatting antisemitism? How can Jews effectively garner support for their initiatives from other groups, like how non-Jewish groups have enlisted the assistance of HIAS, a Jewish organization, in addressing immigration and refugee matters for their communities?

Some answers to these questions can be gleaned from Jewish groups' multi-decade efforts from the late nineteenth century through the mid-twentieth century to end restrictive immigration policies in the United States. From 1882-1965, Jewish groups advocating for immigration reform made numerous attempts, some of which worked and some of which did not, to end restrictive American immigration laws on behalf of Jewish and all immigrants. They had to ally with other groups to succeed, and while there were many setbacks and false starts over the nearly eight-five years they worked at this endeavor, their efforts culminated with Congress passing and the president signing into law the

Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, which significantly reopened the borders to Jews and all immigrants.

In the following sections, this paper will first provide contextual info for the period spanning from the late 19th through the mid-20th centuries regarding the history of U.S. immigration and immigration policy, the influx of Jewish immigrants to the country, and Jewish advocacy groups in America. It will then identify four main lessons from Jewish groups and American immigration reform during this period that can be instructive for Jews seeking allyship from other groups today. The insights highlight: 1.) the importance of Jewish groups collaborating with one another to build alliances with other groups; 2.) the wisdom in accepting partial victories, even if they do not achieve the ultimate goal; 3.) emphasizing shared benefits (e.g., economic gains) and values (e.g., “family values”) sought by all allyship partners; and 4.) remaining mindful of how war and geopolitics can swiftly impact alliances on specific issues.

Before proceeding, a few notes on immigration terms discussed in this paper may help the reader. Human migration, an ancient occurrence documented since the earliest historical records, entails the movement of people from one geographic locale to another. It can be categorized as internal migration, which happens within country’s boundaries, or international migration, which occurs across national borders. Migration of the latter kind started with the modern nation-state system, commonly attributed to beginning with the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648. This in turn led nation-states (e.g., China, Great Britain, France, the U.S., etc.) to form immigration policies aimed toward managing the influx and settlement of foreigners.²⁵ A popular definition of migration policy is that it is a “government’s statements of what it intends to do or not do (including laws, regulations, decisions or orders) in regards to the selection, admission, settlement and deportation of foreign citizens residing in the country.”²⁶

In conducting the research for this paper, a diverse range of academic and popular sources have been consulted, as indicated in the footnotes. These sources cover a variety of themes such as allyship, antisemitism, coalitions, U.S. immigration policy, and Jewish immigration to America. Specifically, for insights into contemporary allyship drawn from the experiences of Jewish immigrant advocacy groups, the essay relies heavily on Maddalena Marinari’s meticulously researched book, *Unwanted: Italian and Jewish Mobilization against Restrictive Immigration Laws, 1882-1965*. This work extensively explores archival materials, providing a comprehensive account of the significant contributions of historical Jewish groups in U.S. immigration reform. While this paper provides overarching insights drawn in large part from Marinari’s research, readers interested in a comprehensive examination of Jewish groups’ role in shaping in late nineteenth through mid-twentieth century U.S. immigration policy are encouraged to consult *Unwanted*.²⁷

Immigration to America and U.S. Immigration Policy from the Late 19th to the Mid-20th Centuries

The era covered in this paper, circa 1882 to 1965, stands out for featuring the most restrictive immigration policies in U.S. history.²⁸ This starkly contrasts with the earlier years of America, from its seventeenth- and eighteenth-century origins as a British colony through its founding in 1776 as an independent country and well into the nineteenth century. During this era, Britain's and later the U.S. federal government's approach to immigration, marked by a combo of actions and inactions, played a significant role in enabling considerable population movement to its lands.²⁹ Consequently, between 1820 and 1920, the U.S. saw an influx of over 30 million legal immigrants, and from 1860 through 1920, immigrants constituted 13-15% of the population. In fact, immigrants reached 14.7% of the total American population in 1910—a statistic that to date has not been surpassed since its recording.³⁰

As a result of mass migration to the U.S. in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a xenophobic and anti-immigration sentiment, always present in America from its origins, intensified in the country. The federal government began to seek to retard immigration to the U.S. by enacting restrictive measures, such as the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act and banning entrance to foreigners perceived as diseased, polygamists, or insolvent. The push to restrict migrants to America grew in the 1890s and first two decades of the twentieth century, and it culminated in the 1920s with the nation's most restrictive immigration policies to date.

The 1921 Emergency Quota Act and the 1924 National Origins Act, known as the Quota Acts, placed stringent restrictions on immigration to the U.S. from the eastern hemisphere until their repeal in 1965.³¹ The laws led to a sharp decline in immigration to America from their enactment until they ended four decades later. This is illustrated by a few statistics: from 1900 to 1909, 8.2 million immigrants came to the U.S., proceeded by 6.3 million immigrants from 1910 to 1919. However, with the implementation of the quota laws in the 1920s, immigration started to decline and only 4.3 million immigrants came to America from 1920-1929. Once the laws were fully applied, immigration steeply decreased, with only 699,000 immigrants arriving in the U.S. from 1930-1939 and 857,000 immigrants from 1940-1949.³²

The era of severe immigration restrictions in America, which spanned over four decades starting in the 1920s, ended with the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. This decisive legislation, still influential today, marked a significant shift in immigration policy. By allowing for a more inclusive approach to immigration, the 1965 law greatly changed the demographic composition and the quantity of immigrants entering the country. In the two decades following its passage, the numbers of immigrants nearly doubled, surging from 4.8 million in the period from 1946-1965 to 9.1 million from 1966-1985.³³ In addition, the sending countries of immigrants underwent a notable transformation, with a shift from European nation-states to those in Asia and Latin America, thereby reshaping the ethnic landscape of America.

Jewish Immigration to America, circa 19th through mid-20th Centuries

From the nineteenth century through the enactment of the 1920s Quota laws, large numbers of Jews came to America. Approximately 150,000 Jews settled in the U.S. between 1820 and 1860. The authors of an article titled, “Jewish Immigration to America,” explain that the “overwhelming majority” of these emigrants were “young German-speaking Central European Jews from Bavaria, Western Prussia, Posen and Alsace.”³⁴ During this sixty-year timeframe, the Jewish population in the U.S. experienced sizeable growth, with their numbers in the country increasing from a few thousand to a quarter of a million people. This was an expansion rate about fifteen times higher than that of the overall U.S. population during this era.³⁵

In the last twenty-five years of the 19th century and the first twenty-five years of the 20th century, an enormous surge of Jewish emigrants arrived in America. They came from different source countries compared to earlier waves. The influx was initially driven by pogroms that began in 1881 in Eastern Europe and Russia, prompting mass migration by Jews in these parts for survival. Between 1880 and restrictive U.S. immigration policies in the 1920s, more than two million Jews from places such as Austria-Hungary, Romania, and Russia came to America.³⁶ This surge made Jews the second largest immigrant group in the U.S. in 1920, behind only Italians.³⁷

Illustrated by Jews seeking sanctuary in America to flee pogroms, their journey to the U.S. during this era was oft motivated by vital circumstances and urgent need. They were compelled to migrate due to factors including famine, profound economic struggles, political turbulence, religious freedom, and safety and survival.³⁸ It is true that other groups like Catholics and Protestants also emigrated to America for similar reasons, but as immigration historians identify, Jews came to America “at a rate almost four times that of their non-Jewish neighbors, for they additionally faced severe restrictions on where they could live, what kind of work they could pursue, how they practiced Judaism and even, in some cases, whether they could marry.”³⁹

Regrettably, although most Jews who came to the U.S. during this era escaped the severe persecutions in Europe, they encountered hostility in America. “Almost immediately after their arrival,” describes the historian Marinari, Jews and other immigrants who came from southern and eastern Europe “became the target of a vitriolic restrictionism campaign” and were looked upon as “biologically and culturally inferior, and unassimilable” within the country.⁴⁰ This prevalent xenophobia in America played a large role in the establishment of the 1920s quota acts, which imposed staunch restrictions on immigration until 1965.⁴¹ During this era, only a small fraction of Jews were able to come to America, numbering only a few hundred thousand, in glaring contrast to the more than 2 million Jews who came to America between 1890 and 1924.⁴² This closure happened despite Jews dire need for migration in this era, especially during the Holocaust when they faced one of the most appalling genocides in history.

With the 1965 immigration law, restrictions were lifted, allowing since its enactment through today for an increased number Jewish immigrants to come to America. This has included tens of thousands of Persian Jews fleeing Iran after the 1979 Iranian Revolution, more than a half-million Russian Jews following the Soviet Union’s collapse, numerous

Jews from Latin American countries fleeing unrest and hostility, over 10,000 Jews leaving South Africa during Apartheid and its wake, many thousands of Jews experiencing persecution in Arab lands, and more than 100,000 Israeli Jews who migrated to America.⁴³

Jewish Immigrant Advocacy Groups, circa 1882-1965

Throughout the period discussed in this paper, Jewish leaders and advocacy organizations worked to provide aid and assistance to Jews immigrating to America. They also sought to prevent, and later to overturn, restrictive measures that hindered migration to America. Several Jewish immigration orgs sought reform of immigration policies from 1882 to 1965, each exerting varying levels of engagement and impact across different time periods. These included the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), the National Liberal Immigration League (NLIL), and the American Jewish Committee (AJC). Jews also participated within and held leadership roles in pluralistic immigration advocacy groups, such as the Immigration Protection League (IPL) and National Council on Immigration and Citizenship (NCIC).⁴⁴

Nearly all the Jewish leaders of these groups had found success in America and were immigrants or the offspring of immigrants. They were all motivated to support immigration and the Jewish community. The scholar Marinari explains they were “professionals, politicians, business owners, and philanthropists” who “felt they had an ethical obligation to intervene on behalf of their communities” and “took it upon themselves to oppose restrictive immigration laws that targeted immigrants from eastern and southern Europe.”⁴⁵ Oscar Straus, a Jewish immigrant from Germany, exemplifies this demographic. A founder of the IPL, he was involved in business, law, and philanthropy. He also worked as a U.S. diplomat to Turkey and as Secretary of Commerce and Labor under President Theodore Roosevelt, becoming the first Jewish cabinet secretary.⁴⁶

Each immigrant advocacy group had unique characteristics and approaches to immigration reform, and at times competed with one another for influence and members. While uniform in their desire to assist Jewish immigrants, the groups did not all agree on strategy and methods to achieve policy reform. For instance, while orgs like the NLIL favored driving policy change through large-scale public awareness initiatives and rallies, the AJC favored a more subdued strategy, placing reliance on the persuasive endeavors of a handful of influential Jews with substantial political networks.⁴⁷ All the groups, the AJC, NLIL, HIAS, etc., “struggled” at times “to bring their communities together in the fight against immigration restriction,” including because of tensions between long-standing and newly arrived Jewish immigrants. For example, Mariana identifies that, “Eastern European Jews’ relationship with the older and more established German Jews often faltered because of religious and cultural differences.”⁴⁸

Despite their varying methods, Jewish immigrant advocacy groups and their leaders shared a unified objective: challenging and reversing U.S. immigration policies that hindered immigrants, especially Jews, from settling in America. These groups also sought partnerships to challenge immigration restrictions with entities not necessarily aligned with Jewish interests. This included organizations based on religious identities, such as those

associated with Christian denominations, cultural and national identities like German, Irish, and Italian groups, and business organizations reliant on inexpensive immigrant labor. Although they faced numerous challenges and setbacks from 1882 until 1965, Jewish advocates ultimately succeeded in repealing the quota laws and more broadly reopening the U.S. to all immigrants, including Jews, through the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act. Extensive research, such as Marinari's thorough examination, highlights the significant influence of Jewish immigration groups and their leaders on shaping policy during the era.⁴⁹ Given their enduring struggle and eventual victory, this paper will now examine four lessons derived from the advocacy efforts of Jewish immigrant groups from this era to guide allyship initiatives today.

Allyship Insight 1: Collaboration and Solidarity Among Jewish Organizations

An essential takeaway for modern Jewish advocacy groups seeking alliances, gleaned from the historical journey of Jewish immigration reform organizations, highlights the necessity of unified and coordinated efforts towards shared objectives. When multiple Jewish groups, such as various nonprofits combatting antisemitism, seek allyship with external partners, it is crucial that they avoid conflicting strategies that could undermine their collective goal.

This principle is illustrated during the period spanning 1882 to 1965, when Jewish groups shared overarching policy objectives, primarily focused on dismantling immigration restrictions to enable greater immigration, especially for Jews. However, internal disagreements frequently emerged among these groups concerning the most effective tactics and strategies to achieve these common goals. These conflicts likely at times hindered the effectiveness of Jewish advocacy groups in collectively pursuing their objectives.

As mentioned earlier, while organizations during the first decades of the twentieth century like the NLIL favored advocating for immigration policy change through extensive public awareness campaigns and mass gatherings, the AJC pursued a more discreet approach, relying on the persuasive efforts of a select group of influential Jews with extensive political connections. These differing strategies may have diluted the effectiveness of both groups in achieving their shared objective in the first two decades of the twentieth century.⁵⁰ For instance, if the AJC advised its members to advocate quietly, the NLIL's public demonstrations for immigration may not have gained the maximum possible support, reducing their effectiveness. Likewise, if public sentiment turned against Jewish immigration due to the NLIL's actions, the AJC's discreet persuasion tactics might have been undermined.

Divisions on strategy were also evident among Jewish immigration reform groups in America during the 1930s and 1940s, when finding refuge for Europe-based Jews became an urgent necessity due to Nazi Germany, WWII, and the Holocaust. Like the strategic disagreement between the NLIL and AJC in earlier decades, a similar divide emerged along generational lines. Marinari explains that "while the older generation that constituted the leadership of many Jewish organizations was often cautious, preferring to mobilize but

maintain a low profile, many younger activists objected strongly" to what one commentator termed the "sha-sha philosophy of Jewish polemics, which sought to turn away wrath with gentle words, to obscure the Jew from the public gaze." The "older accommodationists" and the "younger protesters" within the Jewish community shared the same objective but differed in approach, and they "never reached an agreement about the best strategy to challenge the draconian immigration system" in the U.S.⁵¹

A schism also emerged within American Jewish groups on the most effective means to aid European Jews amidst the devastation wrought by Hitler and WWII. While some immigration reform organizations advocated for lobbying the U.S. to accept more refugees, others believed efforts should be directed towards persuading Latin American countries to offer sanctuary to Jews. Moreover, following Israel's 1948 establishment, some Jewish groups prioritized assisting Jews relocating to the new state over pushing for U.S. immigration reform. For instance, while the AJC focused on securing more refugees' admission to the U.S., Marinari notes that "secular Zionists, Orthodox Jews, and the Yiddish press opposed" this effort "because they worried that fewer European Jews would move to the newly established state of Israel if offered the opportunity to settle in the United States."⁵² This era posed profound challenges in aiding persecuted Jews, leading well-intentioned groups to reach divergent conclusions on the optimal strategy. Nevertheless, a coordinated approach among the groups to sway U.S. legislators toward supporting their respective agendas may have yielded the most impactful results.

As the above examples illustrate, while debate naturally refines arguments and strategies, it is imperative for Jewish groups to resolve differences and coordinate diverse approaches to achieve their goals effectively. This coordination is particularly crucial in hotly contested policy domains like immigration, where numerous stakeholders, including business and ethnic groups, are involved. Failure to coordinate can weaken Jewish groups' ability to form a robust coalition among themselves and with potential allies, leaving them vulnerable to attacks from opposing coalitions that exploit their differences. In sum, the historical journey of Jewish immigration advocacy groups from the late 19th to the mid-20th century provides a compelling insight for contemporary Jewish leaders aiming to build alliances with non-Jewish communities to combat issues such as antisemitism: achieving allies is more likely when approached with a united front and cohesive, synchronized strategy.

Allyship Insight 2: Recognizing the Value of Incremental Achievements and Partial Victories

A crucial insight gleaned from the experiences of this study's immigration reformers for contemporary Jewish groups seeking allyship on issues vital to Jews is the value of embracing partial victories in pursuit of justice. From 1882-1965, Jewish proponents for change showed the strategic flexibility to navigate a restrictive immigration landscape. While U.S. immigration policy aimed to limit entry during this period, it did not imply absolute closure; instead, there were occasional exemptions or avenues for specific immigrant groups.

Despite aspiring to abolish broad restrictions, Jewish advocates for immigration change seized opportunities to secure entry for some Jewish immigrants through tailored legislative provisions and ad hoc measures. Marinari explains it this way:

Contrary to the traditional narrative of U.S. immigration history, there was not a complete closure in 1924 and reopening of the gates in 1965. In actuality, U.S. immigration law has always been simultaneously open *and* closed since its initial federal articulations in the late nineteenth century.... Jewish activists [from the late nineteenth through the mid-twentieth centuries] ... repeatedly pushed for small changes to the country's immigration policy that successfully brought in immigrants outside of the draconian immigration system in place. During these "restrictive" times then, immigration law remained pliable and porous enough for certain classes of immigrants to gain admission into the country based on economic, familial, and geopolitical considerations.⁵³

The primary focus of this period's U.S. immigration policy, as outlined in the preceding historical overview, leaned towards closure for immigrants originating from the eastern hemisphere, encompassing Jews from these regions. However, this does not imply total exclusion, and Jewish advocates worked tirelessly to find loopholes for some Jews to be admitted.

Let's examine one instance of a strategic "partial victory" attained by Jewish reformers. A 1917 law, the most restrictive legislation up that point in American history, aimed to reduce immigration by introducing a stringent literacy test and barring certain classes of foreigners, such as those considered impoverished or contract laborers.⁵⁴ Jewish leaders, anticipating the inevitable passage of this act despite their efforts to oppose it (for e.g., extensive dissemination of leaflets by HIAS and vocal opposition to it from Jewish leaders), strategically aimed to secure exemptions for certain Jewish individuals who would otherwise be affected by its provisions.⁵⁵

Louis Marshall, a prominent constitutional lawyer and AJC founder, held private talks with Congressman John Burnett, the bill's proposer, aiming to secure an exception beneficial to Jewish immigrants. While no formal agreement was reached, Marshall's and the AJC's efforts likely influenced Burnett and other Congressman to include an exemption for individuals persecuted for religion in the final version of the 1917 law because legislators feared not doing so would prevent getting it passed. The proviso enabled European Jews facing persecution for practicing Judaism to seek admission into the U.S.⁵⁶

Overall, Jewish reformers considered the passing of 1917 a major setback because it did exclude many Jews from immigrating to America, but the AJC and Louis also saw the religious persecution proviso as a small win. Since it was a marginal victory, Jewish immigrant groups continued after 1917 to work toward overturning restrictive immigration laws, until they succeeded in doing so in 1965. But along the way, they also worked to have Congress carve out exceptions to restrictions (e.g., special exemption categories in the 1924 quota law and special, one-time refugee laws in 1948 and 1953 that facilitated at least some Jewish immigration).⁵⁷

In conclusion, while never losing sight of the larger goal of ending the quota system, Jewish reformers also "settled for piecemeal reforms" as a strategy to bring some of their "relatives and compatriots to the United States." While these outcomes "differed dramatically from what immigration reform activists had hoped or supported," many of them recognized these results "represented a step in the right direction even when [their] impact would be uneven," benefiting some albeit not all Jews.⁵⁸ And this serves as a lesson for today's Jews seeking allyship with other groups: sometimes, a temporary, limited alliance with another group, however short-lived and partial in impact or incomplete in reaching the larger objective, should not impede a grander vision of allyship, as it can still provide some benefit for a cause.

Allyship Insight 3: Highlighting Mutual Benefits and Common Principles

A vital insight derived from the endeavors of Jewish immigration reformers between 1882 and 1965, for present-day Jewish groups aiming to foster alliances with non-Jewish counterparts on humanitarian and social causes, underscores the importance of highlighting widely shared benefits and values. The historical journey of Jewish groups advocating for immigration policy change suggests to contemporary Jewish advocacy organizations that they are more likely to rally support from non-Jewish individuals by aligning their objectives with goals or principles widely shared among Americans.

One of the most effective strategies employed by Jewish interest groups in their campaign against U.S. immigration restrictions was to appeal to America's economic interests, and the country's traditional principles related to civil liberties, democracy, freedom and especially family values. In terms of economic benefits, policymakers and Americans, in general, were receptive to admitting immigrants with special skills because they were perceived to offer the nation advantages. As one economist highlights, these benefits for the U.S. include "boosting research and development and economic activity, promoting knowledge sharing and collaboration," and enabling the U.S. to access "rare and specialized skill sets necessary to address production or research obstacles" without having to invest in training domestic workers for these skills. Furthermore, during times of significant conflict, immigrants possessing specialized skills can be seen as enhancing American competitiveness in sectors vital for national security or meeting labor demands in industries strained by the needs resulting from the threat (e.g., agricultural workers on farms when others have been conscripted into the armed forces).⁵⁹

Between 1882 and 1965, economic interests shaped U.S. immigration policy in two key ways, allowing for nuanced approaches to counter restrictions and ensure access to specialized labor. First, despite the strict limitations of the 1924 Quota Act on most eastern hemisphere immigrants, exceptions were made for individuals with special skills, such as artists, intellectuals, professionals, and religious leaders (including rabbis).⁶⁰ Second, while the 1952 Immigration and Nationality Act largely maintained the quota system of the 1920s, it revised visa distribution within quotas. Priority was given to immigrants deemed "urgently needed" and "substantially beneficial to the national economy, cultural interests, or welfare of the United States" due to "their high education, technical training, specialized experience, or exceptional ability."⁶¹

Jewish advocates for immigration reform observed that policymakers showed a preference for immigrants possessing education and specialized skills deemed necessary for the American economy. They acknowledged these preferences, despite many of them viewing them as harsh when applied to refugees and biased against unskilled migrants.⁶² As early as 1910, the AJC submitted to a U.S. immigration commission a report by the economist Isaac A. Hourwich, showing how new immigrants contributed to the flourishing of American society and economy.⁶³ In a parallel effort, the NLIL spearheaded a publicity campaign aimed at persuading both Congress and the public that immigration was essential for America's economic prosperity.⁶⁴ Jewish immigration reformers recognized that American policymakers and citizens favored migration arguments aligned with the nation's economic interests. They strategically utilized this perspective in seeking alliances and lobbying efforts. The AJC indirectly highlighted the effectiveness of this approach by reporting in the 1930s that despite the quota restrictions, about 100,000 immigrants entered the U.S., in part because of their possession of skills.⁶⁵

In a similar vein, Jewish reformers grasped the importance of highlighting American principles like civil rights, democracy, freedom, and particularly family values as one of the most potent strategies for building coalitions for immigration reform. This section will focus on the success they achieved in underscoring traditional family attitudes for immigration policy change. Marinari documents that appeals to this ideal emerged as the primary mechanism to challenge immigration restriction throughout the twentieth century. Jewish reformers learned that emphasizing family ties could serve as a loophole in U.S. policy makers restrictionist agenda and facilitate the arrival of more immigrants to the United States.⁶⁶

They consistently and resolutely leveraged family values as a tactic to forge alliances and dismantle restrictive immigration laws. For example, leaders of the AJC, B'nai B'rith, and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations spoke at a federal immigration hearing in 1910, arguing that such policies were "un-American" as they tore families apart.⁶⁷ In 1924, the AJC engaged Max J. Kohler, a prominent legal advocate for immigrant rights and one of their members, to write *New York Times* articles. His goal was to counter anti-immigration narratives including by highlighting how restrictive laws divide families.⁶⁸ Other instances involve Jewish immigration reform groups in the late 1920s partnering with civic and religious orgs to advocate for the entry of immigrants with family members already residing in the nation.⁶⁹ Additionally, in 1931, the AJC collaborated with other such organizations to submit a letter to the Secretary of State urging against supporting laws that impeded family reunification.⁷⁰

The effectiveness of this approach is evident in the immigration legislation of the era. Despite the restrictive nature of the laws during this period, legislators incorporated preferences and loopholes to facilitate family reunification. For instance, the 1924 Quota Act, despite being one of the most restrictive immigration laws in American history, exempted immediate family members of Americans from its quota limitations. Similarly, the 1952 Immigration and Nationality Act, and the 1953 Refugee Relief Act all prioritized slots for immigration for individuals with relatives in the U.S. Likewise, the 1965

Immigration and Nationality Act, which dismantled the quota laws of the 1920s and marked the end of extreme immigration restriction, incorporated family reunification as a core principle in its framework.⁷¹

In summary, Marinari's research highlights that Jewish immigration groups recognized that "[a]ppeals to American family values" were the "the main tool to challenge immigration restriction over the course of the twentieth century." They grasped that Americans across the political spectrum viewed family reunification as a crucial principle, requiring at least some immigration to the U.S., and they capitalized on this by "skillfully put[ting] family ties at the forefront of their effort," resulting in significant legislative successes.⁷² This offers a crucial lesson for present-day Jewish reformers engaged in social justice or policy initiatives: just as their predecessors found common ground in shared values, such as economic prosperity, civil liberties, or family reunification, they too should identify and leverage mutual ideals to champion their objectives and forge allyship with other groups to advance their cause.

Allyship Insight 4: Being Mindful of How Geopolitics and War Impacts Partnerships

An essential lesson drawn from the efforts of Jewish immigration reformers in the early twentieth century, relevant to present-day Jewish advocacy groups promoting humanitarian and social causes, is that geopolitical changes and war can rapidly alter the policy environment, creating both obstacles and openings for desired reforms. The pressing demands and existential threats posed by war or significant national security and geopolitical challenges can rapidly reshape the perspectives of interest groups and policymakers on a given policy issue. What was once deemed unchangeable may suddenly evolve as new circumstances emerge, leading leaders to adopt entirely different stances.⁷³

Throughout the period from 1882 to 1965, two significant geopolitical events profoundly influenced the landscape in which Jewish immigration groups operated. The first of these, WWI, presented considerable challenges to their goal of providing Jews worldwide with opportunities to seek refuge in America. Advocates for immigration restrictions in the U.S. used WWI as powerful rationale to tighten borders, citing perceived national security threats. As Marinari explains, those seeking to curb immigration argued forcefully that it "would resume at the end of the war and bring hordes of destitute, inferior, and radicalized Europeans to the United States, who would then join the existing immigrant communities who already caused plenty of social, economic, and political problems for the country."⁷⁴ World War I also led to U.S. statesmen to call for a "Return to Normalcy" and an "isolationist" foreign policy approach. They argued that "noninvolvement in Old World affairs is not aloofness, it is security," asserting that U.S. safety lay in avoiding entanglements abroad. This stance aligned with policies restricting immigration, consistent with their vision of keeping America out of external affairs.⁷⁵

The aftermath of WWI presented considerable advantages for those advocating immigration restrictions and nearly insurmountable obstacles for those opposing closures. As mentioned earlier, restrictionists succeeded in passing the 1917 Immigration Act, which imposed a literacy test for entry to the U.S., followed by the 1921 and 1924 quota acts, the

most extensive exclusionary policies in American history. Jewish reformers had to acknowledge that the war had drastically shifted the policy landscape against them, making it extremely difficult to reverse the trend. Faced with significant opposition amid changing geopolitical conditions, Jewish immigration advocates had to reconsider their strategy. Instead of pursuing the now unrealistic goal of large-scale Jewish immigration to the U.S., they focused on more limited yet achievable objectives, such as finding loopholes for entry (like the non-quota provision for immediate family members and skilled individuals) and stopping deportations of Jews already in America.⁷⁶

The second major geopolitical event that influenced the policy landscape for Jewish reformers was WWII and the Cold War, which had the opposite effect compared to WWI. World War II reshaped the global landscape, making the U.S. a dominant global power alongside other Western nations in the Cold War struggles. Immigration became a significant component of this conflict. The quota system posed a barrier to postwar U.S. diplomatic objectives, including forming strong alliances to counter the Soviet Union and providing sanctuary to those fleeing Communist regimes. This caused tension with countries the U.S. sought alliances with, as it requested their support against the Soviet Union while simultaneously barring their people from immigrating to the U.S. Additionally, America struggled to maintain the moral high ground over the Soviet Union concerning values pertaining to liberty, freedom, and democracy, as its immigration policies effectively barred many individuals from entering the country.⁷⁷

Consequently, postwar U.S. presidents and leaders responsible for the country's foreign policy began to take steps and call for abolishing the quota system and establishing a new immigration system providing more equitable opportunities for people from all the countries of the world to come to America. Presidents Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson all made these arguments until it became a reality with the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act.⁷⁸ For example, Truman sought the eradication of the quota system because it was “not adequate for the present world situation,” “unrealistic in the face of world conditions,” “a constant handicap in the conduct of our foreign relations,” “irritating to our allies abroad,” and “hamper[ed] the efforts we are making to rally the men of East and West alike to the cause of freedom.” He called for a new system that would serve as “a fitting instrument for our foreign policy” and assist in “the conduct of our foreign relations...in the struggle for world peace.”⁷⁹

Jewish reformers recognized that the exigencies of the Cold War and postwar U.S. foreign policy needs provided a major opening for effecting meaningful change in the country's migration system and offering more opportunities for Jews to emigrate to America. They leveraged this as both an argument and a strategy for change. For instance, in 1958, United HIAS Service issued a statement calling for U.S. policy reforms to aid refugees in alignment with American foreign policy interests.⁸⁰ Another example is when President Eisenhower sought liberalizing changes to immigration policy in 1953 to advance U.S. geopolitical goals. The AJC promptly mobilized, urging its constituents to encourage Congresspersons to support the president's proposal and vote on related legislation.⁸¹ Based on examples like these and numerous others, Marinari concludes that immigration reform activists,

especially Jewish groups, effectively argued during the Cold War that the U.S.'s "draconian and discriminatory immigration system in place since 1924...represented a serious obstacle to its foreign policy goals."⁸² This contributed to the passage of the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act, which dismantled the quota system and opened the country more widely to all immigrants, including Jews.

In sum, the historical experience of Jewish advocates for immigration reform from 1882 to 1965 highlights the significant impact of the geopolitical environment on the opportunities for change in any given period, even regarding a seemingly domestic issue like immigration. Wars and other global events can swiftly and dramatically alter the potential for reformers engaged in humanitarian and social causes. Capturing this point, the political scientist Martin Shefter explains that "Since the earliest days of America's European settlement, international forces have profoundly influenced the character of the nation's governing institutions, the policies these institutions have pursued, and the conduct of American politics." And warfare, he concludes, "almost surely is the most important of the international forces that historically has shaped government and politics."⁸³ This serves as an important lesson for today's Jewish reformers seeking success in such endeavors: they should carefully analyze the international and geopolitical context to understand how it influences the challenges they face, and how changes in this landscape can create both obstacles and opportunities for their efforts.

Conclusion: Recap and a Final Insight from Historical Jewish Immigration Advocacy Groups—Steadfastness and Perseverance in Allyship and Reform

This paper began with the tragic Tree of Life Synagogue shooting, emphasizing the threat of antisemitism and the necessity of allies for the Jewish community. The shooter cited HIAS, a Jewish organization with a long history of aiding immigrants, and its support of Muslim refugees as a motive for the attack. Despite this, HIAS remains dedicated to its vital work as an ally for all facing refugee and immigration issues. The global increase in antisemitism underscores that Jews likewise need allies and broad-based coalitions to address critical concerns for their communities. Yet, recent reports indicate a disturbing lack of support for Jews, even from traditionally supportive groups.

This paper then demonstrated that this absence of support is perhaps unsurprising for those versed in research on allyship and political coalitions. Scholarship shows that allyship, which involves support from non-marginalized groups for marginalized communities, is difficult to achieve because those seeking it face challenges like questioning norms and backlash. Similarly, political coalitions, where groups work together for shared goals, encounter difficulties due to conflicting interests and complex negotiations.

Considering the significant challenges in forming strong alliances between groups, the paper then asked, how can Jews increase the chances of other groups joining them in critical issues such as combating antisemitism? It then proposed that valuable insights to this question can be drawn from the decades-long efforts of Jewish immigration reform

groups from the late 19th to the mid-20th century to dismantle restrictive migration policies in America.

Historical context for this endeavor was provided by outlining the U.S.'s change from liberal to strict immigration policies from the 19th to mid-20th centuries. Initially, immigration was high, with over 30 million immigrants, including many Jews, arriving from 1820 to 1920. However, increased xenophobia and the 1920s Quota Acts led to a sharp decline until the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act reversed this trend. Despite facing discrimination, Jewish Americans, many of whom were immigrants or children of immigrants, remained committed to aiding those seeking refuge in the country. Organizations like the AJC, HIAS, and NLIL played vital roles in overturning restrictive policies, collaborating with each other and other identity groups, offering valuable lessons for modern allyship efforts.

The paper then outlined four crucial allyship insights for today's Jewish advocacy groups based on the historical experience of Jewish immigration reformers. First, it emphasized the significance of unity and coordination among Jewish advocacy groups. Throughout the late 19th to mid-20th century, these groups shared common goals but often disagreed on strategies, which likely hindered effectiveness. For instance, in the early 20th century, some favored public demonstrations while others preferred discreet persuasion. Similarly, during WWII, older leaders favored caution while younger activists advocated for assertive action. The lesson for today's Jewish reform groups is to pursue unified or at least coordinated efforts towards shared objectives to avoid undermining collective goals.

Another key insight is the value of embracing incremental victories. Despite facing restrictive policies, Jewish advocates strategically secured exemptions for specific groups, demonstrating flexibility and persistence. For example, the 1917 Immigration Act, while restrictive, included exemptions for persecuted individuals, allowing some Jews to enter the U.S. Today's leaders should grasp the significance of embracing partial victories when collaborating with allies, understanding that incremental progress is essential for achieving larger goals.

Moreover, in the early twentieth century, Jewish reformers recognized the importance of emphasizing mutual benefits and shared principles to garner support for immigration policy change. By appealing to America's economic interests and traditional values such as civil liberties and family reunification, Jewish advocates effectively rallied allies and gained support for reform. Today, the lesson remains clear: contemporary leaders must identify commonly shared values with other groups to maximize allyship and support in advancing crucial social and humanitarian objectives.

Finally, understanding how geopolitics and wars impact partnerships is essential. WWI led to a push for tighter immigration restrictions, while WWII and the Cold War created opportunities for reform due to America's geopolitical interests. Leveraging these circumstances, Jewish reformers successfully sought allies and argued for policy changes. Today's leaders must recognize that geopolitical changes and wars can rapidly alter the policy environment, creating both obstacles and openings for allyship and reforms.

Understanding the influence of the international context is crucial for navigating challenges and leveraging opportunities effectively.

In summary, the historical experiences of Jewish immigration reformers underscore the importance of collaboration, strategic flexibility, emphasizing shared values, and adapting to geopolitical changes for effective advocacy. These insights offer valuable lessons for contemporary Jewish advocacy groups seeking to forge allyship and achieve meaningful strides in humanitarian, community safety, and social justice efforts.

A final insight from the efforts of Jewish advocacy immigration groups, circa 1882-1965, is their remarkable persistence and steadfastness in pursuing reform. Their perseverance is particularly noteworthy given that this era in America was marked by intense antisemitism and xenophobia. They faced significant discrimination, challenges in finding allies to support their efforts, and encountered enormous obstacles in effecting policy change. May their determination, grit, resilience, and ultimate success serve as an inspiration for today's reformers fighting for the greater good.

¹ This paper extensively utilized ChatGPT 3.5 as an editor for my writing. I would first write the text, paste it into the AI technology, and then issue the command: "Please say this better." I would continue to refine the text by asking the tech to do so until I was satisfied that the ideas were conveyed optimally. ChatGPT was not used for verbiage from other authors; instead, I either quote their words verbatim in the paper or rephrased their work into my own words before using the AI to enhance my writing. I provide citations for all works consulted in the paper.

² Masha Gessen, "Why the Tree of Life Shooter Was Fixated on the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society," *The New Yorker*, October 27, 2018, available at <https://www.newyorker.com/news/our-columnists/why-the-tree-of-life-shooter-was-fixated-on-the-hebrew-immigrant-aid-society>; Miriam Jordan, "HIAS, the Jewish Agency Criticized by the Shooting Suspect, Has a History of Aiding Refugees," *New York Times*, October 28, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/28/us/hias-pittsburgh-robert-bowers.html?smid=url-share>; Campbell Robertson, Christopher Mele and Sabrina Tavernise, "11 Killed in Synagogue Massacre; Suspect Charged With 29 Counts," *New York Times*, October 27, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/27/us/active-shooter-pittsburgh-synagogue-shooting.html?smid=url-share>; Kevin Roose, "On Gab, an Extremist-Friendly Site, Pittsburgh Shooting Suspect Aired His Hatred in Full," *New York Times*, October 28, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/28/us/gab-robert-bowers-pittsburgh-synagogue-shootings.html?smid=url-share>.

³ Peter Smith and Michael Rubinkam, "Pittsburgh Synagogue Gunman Has Been Sentence to Die in the Nation's Deadliest Antisemitic Attack," *AP News*, August 3, 2023, https://apnews.com/article/pittsburgh-synagogue-shooting-death-penalty-ccb447356b2cfe855875c329fb00f505?utm_source=copy&utm_medium=share.

⁴ HIAS, "HIAS Statement on Pittsburgh Tragedy," October 27, 2018, <https://hias.org/announcements/hias-statement-pittsburgh-tragedy>; HIAS, "HIAS Statement on Pittsburgh Synagogue Shooting, Five Years Later," October 27, 2023, <https://hias.org/statements/pittsburgh-attack-five-years/>.

⁵ The historical information about HIAS in this section is sourced from the following references. Additional citations will be provided only for quotes. HIAS, "Our History," available at <https://hias.org/who/our-history/>; Jordan, "HIAS, the Jewish Agency Criticized by the Shooting Suspect, Has a History of Aiding Refugees."

⁶ HIAS, "Our History."

⁷ HIAS, "Who We Are," available at <https://hias.org/who/>.

⁸ Jordan, "HIAS, the Jewish Agency Criticized by the Shooting Suspect, Has a History of Aiding Refugees."

⁹ Jeff Diamant, "Anti-Jewish Harassment Occurred in 94 Countries in 2020, Up From Earlier Years," March 17, 2023, *Pew Research Center* at <https://pewrsr.ch/3n53dCQ>.

¹⁰ "U.S. Antisemitic Incidents Skyrocketed 360% in Aftermath of Attack in Israel, According to Latest ADL Data," *Anti-Defamation League*, January 9, 2024, available at <https://www.adl.org/resources/press-release/us-antisemitic-incidents-skyrocketed-360-aftermath-attack-israel-according>.

¹¹ Greenblatt is quoted in Melissa Block and Jerome Socolovsky, "Antisemitism Spikes, And Many Jews Wonder: Where Are Our Allies?" *NPR*, June 7, 2023, <https://www.npr.org/2021/06/07/1003411933/antisemitism-spikes-and-many-jews-wonder-where-are-our-allies>.

¹² Jeffry Herbst, "Research Proposal on Allyship as a Means of Fighting Antisemitism," Working Paper, March 30, 2023, p. 6; Angelina Kazmaier, "Non-Jewish Allies Can Be Key to Combatting Antisemitism," *The Jerusalem Post*, December 25, 2001, <https://www.jpost.com/opinion/article-689483>. For the statistics see Pew Research Center, "The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050—Jews," April 2, 2015, <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2015/04/02/jews/>; and Pew Research Center, "Jewish Americans in 2020," May 11, 2021, <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2021/05/11/the-size-of-the-u-s-jewish-population/>.

¹³ Lawson is quoted in Block and Socolovsky, "Antisemitism Spikes."

¹⁴ Jennifer Medina and Lisa Lerer, "On Israel, Progressive Jews Feel Abandoned by Their Left-Wing Allies," *New York Times*, October 20, 2023, https://www.nytimes.com/2023/10/20/us/politics/progressive-jews-united-states.html?unlocked_article_code=1.nU0.dxlV.ZMZ_qKlVqVje&smid=url-share.

¹⁵ Rabbi Brous is quoted in Medina and Lerer, "On Israel, Progressive Jews Feel Abandoned by Their Left-Wing Allies."

¹⁶ The person who was attacked and is cited is Alex Zeldin, who writes a column for the *Forward*; for his story and quote see Block and Socolovsky, "Antisemitism Spikes, And Many Jews Wonder: Where Are Our Allies?"

¹⁷ Dictionary.com, "Allyship," <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/allyship>.

¹⁸ Meg A. Warren, Michael T. Warren, Haley Bock, and Brooklynn Smith, "Barriers to Allyship: If You Want to Be an Ally, What Is Stopping You?" Mapping the Landscape of Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, and Contextual Barriers to Allyship in the Workplace Using Ecological Systems Theory," Working Paper, July 28, 2022, p. 3, available at <https://osf.io/preprints/psyarxiv/py3m5/download>.

¹⁹ Dictionary.com, "Dictionary.com's Word of the Year Is... Allyship," December 6, 2021, <https://www.dictionary.com/e/word-of-the-year-2021/>.

²⁰ Nancy Lyons, "Allyship Is Never Easy, and That's the Point," *Twin Cities Business*, June 1, 2023, <https://tcbmag.com/allyship-is-never-easy-and-thats-the-point/>.

²¹ Warren, Warren, Bock, and Smith, "Barriers to Allyship," p. 4.

²² Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, *Strategy, Risk and Personality in Coalition Politics: The Case of India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), p. 3, quoted in Terrence E. Cook, *Nested Political Coalitions: Nation, Regime, Program, Cabinet* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002), p. ix.

²³ E.W. Kelley, "Techniques of Studying Coalition Formation," *Midwest Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (February 1968), p. 62-63, quoted in Cook, *Nested Political Coalitions*, p. ix.

²⁴ Cook, *Nested Political Coalitions*, p. ix.

²⁵ Andreas Demuth, "Some Conceptual Thoughts on Migration Research," in *Theoretical and Methodological Issues in Migration Research: Interdisciplinary, Intergeneration and International Perspectives*, ed., Biko Agozino (Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate, 2000), p. 26; Robbie J. Totten, "Security and Immigration Policy: An Analytical Framework for Reform," in *Undecided Nation: Political Gridlock and the Immigration Crisis*, eds., by Tony Payan and Erika de la Garza (Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, 2014), p. 254-255.

²⁶ Liv Bjerre, Marc Helbling, Friederike Römer, and Malisa Zobel, "Conceptualizing and Measuring Immigration Policies: A Comparative Perspective" *International Migration Review*, vol. 49, No. 3 (2015), p. 555-600, quoted in Migration Data Portal, "Migration Policies: Migration Policies and Governance," November 3, 2022, <https://www.migrationdataportal.org/themes/migration-policies-and-governance#:~:text=A%20recent%20definition%20describes%20migration,et%20a%20%2C%202015>.

²⁷ Maddalena Marinari, *Unwanted: Italian and Jewish Mobilization against Restrictive Immigration Laws 1882—1965* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2020). Two additional valuable sources that extensively cover Jewish immigration advocacy groups during various periods covered in this paper, from approximately 1882 to 1965, are as follows: Henry Beardsell Leonard, *The Open Gates: The Protest Against the Movement to Restrict European Immigration, 1896—1924* (New York: Arno Press, 1980); and Kevin MacDonald, "Jewish Involvement in Shaping American Immigration Policy, 1881-1965: A Historical Review," *Population and Environment*, Vol. 19, No. 4 (March 1998): 295-356.

²⁸ The historical immigration information presented in this section is primarily sourced from the three references listed below, which also draw from numerous other references. Additional footnotes are included in this section only to provide clarifying information or specify the sources for statistics. Robbie J. Totten, "1924 National Origins Act," in *Race and Ethnicity in America: From Pre-Contact to the Present*, eds., Russell M. Lawson and Benjamin A. Lawson, 4 vols. (Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2019), 3:805-806; Totten, "Security and Immigration Policy," in *Undecided Nation*, eds., by Payan and Garza, p. 261-265; and Aristide Zolberg, "Rethinking the Last 200 Years of U.S. Immigration Policy," *Migration Policy Institute*, June 1, 2006, <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/rethinking-last-200-years-us-immigration-policy>.

²⁹ The states (Georgia, New York, etc.) during this period attempted to limit entry for immigrants perceived as criminal, infirmed, or insolvent, but the overall loose policies of the American federal and the state governments enabled large-scale immigration to the U.S. for much of its initial century and a half.

³⁰ The term "to date" refers to the time of this paper's writing in April 2024. The statistics are from Scholastic, "Explore Immigration Data," https://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/immigration/immigration_data/index.htm; Migration Policy Institute, "Legal Immigration to the United States," <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/charts/Annual-Number-of-US-Legal-Permanent-Residents>; Migration Policy Institute, "U.S. Immigrant Population and Share over Time, 1850-Present," <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/charts/immigrant-population-over-time?width=1000&height=850&iframe=true>.

³¹ These laws established a system based on the "percentage quota principle," with the 1924 law limiting the number of immigrants allowed entry from any eastern hemisphere country to two percent of the population of that country residing within the U.S. according to the 1890 census (the country's immigration "quota.") See Totten, "Security and Immigration Policy," in *Undecided Nation*, eds., by Payan and Garza, p. 262, which quotes from Michael C. Lemay, *Guarding the Gates: Immigration and National Security* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2006), p. 118. As

the migration scholar describes it, "After World War I, the United States, in effect, proclaimed to the world that it would cease being a nation of immigrants. In one of the most spectacular displays of legislative power in American history, Congress sought to make European and Asian immigration disappear with legislation passed in 1921...and again in 1924." Zolberg, "'Rethinking the Last 200 Years of U.S. Immigration Policy.'"

³² See footnote 29 for data sources.

³³ Stats from Migration Policy Institute, "Legal Immigration to the United States."

³⁴ Jonathan Sarna and Joellyn Zollman, "Jewish Immigration to America," *My Jewish Learning*, available at, <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/jewish-immigration-to-america-three-waves/>.

³⁵ This paragraph and section heavily rely on Sarna and Zollman's work, "Jewish Immigration to America." It will be cited again only when quoting from it or referencing statistics.

³⁶ Sarna and Zollman, "Jewish Immigration to America."

³⁷ Marinari (at *Unwanted*, p. 7) explains: "By 1920, the three largest groups of immigrants in the United States were Italians (four million), eastern European Jews (two million, mostly from the Russian Empire), and Poles (one million)."

³⁸ Sarna and Zollman, "Jewish Immigration to America"; and Marinari, *Unwanted*, esp., p. 1, 7.

³⁹ Sarna and Zollman, "Jewish Immigration to America."

⁴⁰ Marinari, *Unwanted*, p. 1, 7.

⁴¹ A seminal work detailing how nativism and xenophobia culminated in the restrictionist 1921 and 1924 Quota Acts is John Higham's *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002 [1955]).

⁴² Steven J. Gold, "From 'The Jazz Singer' to 'What a Country!' A Comparison of Jewish Migration to the United States, 1880-1930 and 1965-1998," *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (Spring 1999), p. 115; Sarna and Zollman, "Jewish Immigration to America."

⁴³ Sarna and Zollman, "Jewish Immigration to America."

⁴⁴ Marinari, *Unwanted*, p. 17, 23-25, 38-39, 156.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p. 2, 14.

⁴⁶ Leonard, *Open Gates*, p. 36; Marinari, *Unwanted*, p. 17.

⁴⁷ For this strategic disagreement and others among Jewish immigration advocacy groups see Marinari, *Unwanted*, p. 24-25, 33-34, 38, 100, 108.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p. 21-22, 61, 94-96 (quotes at p. 21).

⁴⁹ As previously mentioned, this research includes Leonard's *Open Gates*, Marinari's *Unwanted*, and MacDonald's "Jewish Involvement in Shaping American Immigration Policy." These sources also outline, as mentioned in this paragraph, Jewish organizations forming coalitions and allying with non-Jewish identity groups to advocate for immigration policy reform.

⁵⁰ See footnote 46 and the associated text.

⁵¹ This paragraph is based on Marinari, *Unwanted*, p. 94-96. Quotes are at *Ibid*, p. 95-96, with Marinari sourcing the words of the commentator that begin with "sha-sha philosophy" from David Brody, "American Jewry, the Refugees and Immigration Restriction (1932-1942)," *American Jewish Historical Society*, vol. 45, No. 4 (June 1956), p. 223.

⁵² This paragraph from its beginning to this note is sourced from Marinari, *Unwanted*, p. 100, 108 (quote at p. 108).

⁵³ Marinari, *Unwanted*, p. 6.

⁵⁴ On the Immigration Act of 1917 see Robbie J. Totten, "Security and United States Immigration Policy," PhD Dissertation (University of California, Los Angeles, 2012), p. 119.

⁵⁵ These efforts of Jewish leaders concerning the 1917 act can be traced in Marinari's *Unwanted*, p. 39-42.

⁵⁶ On Marshall's advocacy with Burnett, a Congressperson representing Alabama, see Marinari, *Unwanted*, p. 40.

⁵⁷ For analysis of Jewish advocacy concerning the 1924 National Origins Act, the 1948 Displaced Persons Act, and the 1953 Refugee Relief Act, see Marinari's *Unwanted*, esp. p. 59-69, 99-110, 138-142.

⁵⁸ Marinari, *Unwanted*, p. 4-5 (quotes also on p. 4-5).

⁵⁹ Mark C. Regets, "Research and Policy Issues in High-Skilled International Migration: A Perspective with Data from the United States," National Science Foundation, Discussion Paper No. 366, September 2001, cited in Totten, "Security and Immigration," p. 123. On how immigration is perceived by Americans and their leaders to boost economic productivity, national security, and the country's strength see generally Vernon M. Briggs, Jr., *Mass Migration and the National Interest: Policy Directions for the New Century*, 3rd edition (London: Routledge, 2015); Robbie J. Totten, "International Relations, Material and Military Power, and United States Immigration Policy: American Strategies to Utilize Foreigners for Geopolitical Strength, 1607 to 2012," *Georgetown Immigration Law Journal*, Vol., 29, No. 2 (Winter 2015): 205-256.

⁶⁰ Marinari, *Unwanted*, p. 68-69.

⁶¹ This quote is from the law; see Immigration and Nationality Act of June 27, 1952, 182 Stat. 66, Section 203(a), cited in Totten, "Security and United States Immigration Policy," p. 130.

⁶² Marinari, *Unwanted*, p. 110.

⁶³ *Ibid*, p. 30.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, p. 31-32.

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, p. 88.

⁶⁶ *Ibid*, esp. p. 6.

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, p. 30 (quote also at p. 30).

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, p. 62.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, p. 75-76.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, p. 81.

⁷¹ *Ibid*, p. 68.

⁷² Ibid, p. 6 (quotes also at p. 6).

⁷³ For a comprehensive account on how geopolitical events and wars outside American borders can significantly influence U.S. domestic conditions and politics, see Ira Katznelson and Martin's edited volume, *Shaped by War and Trade: International Influences on American Political Development* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002).

⁷⁴ Marinari, *Unwanted*, p. 39.

⁷⁵ Lemay, *Guarding the Gates*, p. 107 (quotes also at p. 107); Totten, "Security and United States Immigration Policy," p. 56.

⁷⁶ Marinari, *Unwanted*, p. 41, 54-59.

⁷⁷ For an analysis of how the Cold War impacted U.S. immigration policies, refer to David S. Fitzgerald and David Cook-Martin, "The Geopolitical Origins of the U.S. Immigration Act of 1965," *Migration Policy Institute* (February 5, 2015), at <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/geopolitical-origins-us-immigration-act-1965>; Totten, "Security and United States Immigration Policy," p. 59-64.; and Robbie J. Totten, "Statecraft and Migration: A Research Note on American Strategies to Use Immigration in Foreign Policy from the Founding Era through the Early Twenty-First Century," *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (June 2017), esp. p. 349-351. Marinari (*Unwanted*, p. 4) explains: "After the outbreak of WWII, U.S. presidents began to frame civil rights policies, including immigration laws, within the context of the country's foreign policy and U.S. international interests. John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson, for example, endorsed immigration reform because they understood that restricting European and Asian entry through a racist policy conflicted with Cold War claims of democratic superiority."

⁷⁸ For an overview of these presidents' foreign policy justifications for immigration reform, refer to Totten, "Security and United States Immigration Policy," p. 59-64.

⁷⁹ As an example of how the quota system was failing American's foreign policy, Truman identified that it went against the principles of "the North Atlantic Treaty" that the U.S. had formed "with Italy, Greece, and Turkey against one of the most terrible threats mankind has ever faced [referring to the Soviet Union]," noting that "we say to their people: You are less worthy to come to this country than Englishmen or Irishmen...you Turks, you are brave defenders of the Eastern flank, but you shall have a quota of only 225!" Quoted in Totten, "Security and United States Immigration Policy," p. 60, which cites from "President Truman's Message on Veto of McCarran-Walter Bill," in Milton Konvitz, *Civil Rights in Immigration* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 1953), Appendix 1, p. 159-171.

⁸⁰ Marinari, *Unwanted*, p. 140 and 218 at note 94. In the early 1950s, "HIAS, the United Service for New Americans, and the Joint Distribution Committee merged to become the United HIAS Service to pool their resources and serve Jewish refugees and immigrants more effectively." Marinari, *Unwanted*, p. 139.

⁸¹ Ibid, p. 141.

⁸² Ibid, p. 178.

⁸³ Martin Shefter, "International Influences on American Political Development," in *Shaped by War and Trade*, edited by Katznelson and Shefter, p. 333.