BAPTIZING NAZISM: AN ANALYSIS OF THE RELIGIOUS
ROOTS OF AMERICAN NEO-NAZISM

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ABSTRACT
This project will examine the Christian Identity Minister and racist zealot Wesley Swift and his role in crafting a lasting ideology for American Neo-Nazis and White Supremacists. Although 21st century America has dismissed Christian Identity as a fringe movement in American society, Swift’s teachings and sermons have provided an enduring theological justification for white racial superiority and domination of American society that still exists today. Many known white supremacists and Neo-Nazis like William Potter Gale, Conrad Gaard, Gerald L.K. Smith, Bertrand Comparet, and most notably, Richard Girnt Butler, have mentioned Swift as a positive influence or mentor. For the most part, scholars have failed to engage Swift’s organizations, writings, teachings, sermons, and speeches directly—and if they have, it is primarily to outline the doctrine of Christian Identity. Arguably, the reason for Swift’s success and the continued existence of his teachings was because he removed the movement from the political arena, and never strayed far from the pulpit. For this reason, it seems that historians have rarely addressed Swift as anything beyond being the voice of Christian Identity and have downplayed or ignored the origins, foundations, and broader implications of his movement. There were few – if any – right-wing extremist organizations or individuals that Swift was not connected to or influenced in some way. This systematic study of Swift’s crusade
and methodical emphasis on religious justification will enable a better understanding of why certain pockets of American society – including churches, organizations such as the Aryan Nations, gangs and prison gangs – continue to subscribe to his teachings, and how they continue to change, grow, gain support, and influence mainstream America.
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INTRODUCTION

In 2019, "white supremacy" is a term that is appearing on the news, on social media, in popular culture, and politics more often than in recent years. The proliferation and increased growth of white supremacy groups and the relevance of white supremacists stem from the current President’s tacit refusal to acknowledge the support he receives from these radical racist groups. Equally troubling is the President’s failure to denounce or repudiate these groups when his own domestic intelligence officers inform him of the threat these groups pose to American society and her people. The Anti-Defamation League reported that 2018 was one of the deadliest years for Americans killed by domestic terrorists, specifically far-right white supremacy extremists.\(^1\) Indeed, in April of 2019, FBI director Christopher Wray called white supremacy a "persistent, pervasive threat" in America.\(^2\)

The news media may be content to utilize a catchall phrase like "white supremacy" in the description of these organizations, but it does not help us to understand, recognize, or combat the issue by lumping these disparate groups under one blanket heading. It is necessary

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to parse out the differences and similarities among the groups as well as the motivations, methods, beliefs, and ideologies of those individuals responsible for events such as those occurring in Charleston, Charlottesville, or Christchurch. Sociologist and Professor Dr. John Glass notes that these all-inclusive labels are problematic because these “categorical descriptions imply a rigid uniformity of behavior that does not exist among those who are labeled.” Understanding white supremacy is more complicated than merely lumping all racist white people together under an umbrella category. When analyzed, white supremacy is comprised of at least three primary subcategories: White Separatism, White Nationalism, and Neo-Nazism. Before distinguishing these three subgroups — in the American context — it is necessary to note that because of the fluidity and incomprehensiveness of these groupings, there is often overlap, intersection, and crossover.

White Separatism groups and organizations strive to keep white society separate from "others,” and these can be organizations that operate on both a small and large scale. These groups seek to promote whiteness and western European heritage as the foundation of civilization in general; I would argue they include organizations like the Citizens Council, Massive Resisters, and the legacies of these groups. Often these are groups that seek socio-political legitimacy and generally operate within the confines of the law and society through loopholes and workarounds, and may include organizations such as homeowners’ associations, school districts, and gated communities. These groups are populated by men and women who

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believe their whiteness makes them superior and who have expertly incorporated and have used coded language to mask their true racially motivated intentions.

White Nationalists not only believe white ethno-Europeans are genetically superior; they also emphasize the existence of white national identity and believe any kind of race mixing, or miscegenation, is tantamount to genocide. Such groups include organizations like the Ku Klux Klan. The Klan also provides an excellent example of the overlap among all three categories. While postwar Klan groups through the present day, generally eschew the "mainstream," the second era Klan actively engaged in politics, and historians have identified it as a foundational point of modern American Conservatism. No matter what iteration of the Klan, one characteristic remains consistent: Klansmen consider themselves and their followers as the "true" Americans. I would argue that where the Klan and white separatists would differ from Neo-Nazis is in support for Hitler and the Führer's prophetic position within their belief structures.

Before breaking up the "catchall" that is Neo-Nazism, it is necessary to note that despite the delineations I have provided, and as Dr. Glass stated, the labeling of groups in such a manner is inherently problematic because there is a considerable amount of bleed over among these three subcategories. Thus, it is generally easier to lump them all together as white supremacists—despite the differences in values, tenets, actions, foundations, and beliefs. It is difficult to understand – much less combat – these organizations and ideas if the cause remains undiagnosed. The analogy is similar to a patient going to the doctor, the physician pronouncing the patient "sick," and then sending the patient away without any further treatment or diagnosis.
The third subcategory, Neo-Nazism, is the focus of this dissertation, not the blanket term that is generally employed, but rather the more specific demarcation. This more wide-ranging category separates into two further subgroups: Neo-Nazism and Modern Nazism. Modern Nazis are those like the American Nazi Party and leaders like Richard Spencer. The categorization of these individuals and groups as "modern" is a more apt delineation because these men and women are Nazis; the only differences are that it is 2019, and they are in America. They support and believe in the ideals of National Socialism and Hitler, and arguably, beyond time and place, there is nothing fundamentally "Neo" about them.

Neo-Nazism, as I define it is: one-part American hypernationalism, one-part Nazism, and one-part Christian fundamentalism. Arguably, one of the more prominent doctrines of faith that has influenced Neo-Nazism is Christian Identity – or its contemporary incarnation of Kingdom Identity – whose chief progenitor was Wesley Swift who is the primary subject of this dissertation. Generally, more well-known and public names like Richard Girnt Butler and the Aryan Nations overshadow Swift’s essential contributions to the movement. Through Christian Identity, Swift has provided a Scriptural interpretation that justifies multiple interpretations and understandings of American racism. While it is true that other organizations, like the Klan, also rely somewhat on Scripture, what differentiates Neo-Nazism is that it was – and still is – at its core a religious and faith-based movement. Despite his role in effectively organizing and growing a nationwide white supremacy network that intersected with Separatist, Nationalist, and Neo-Nazi groups alike, Swift maintained his position as a preacher as his primary role. A majority of his more devout followers — from William Potter Gale to Conrad Lynch — were also Identity ministers themselves.
Several books mention Swift regarding his role as the primary voice of Christian Identity, but very few engage him beyond the pulpit, and virtually none employ him as the central topic of their inquiry—something my work seeks to rectify. The centrality of Swift to the codifying of fundamental Identity beliefs, the persistence of a uniquely American strain of Christian anti-Semitism and the creation of a nationwide white supremacy network are evident. Swift was able to deftly incorporate any new socio-political data or scientific discoveries into his core beliefs and convey them unambiguously to his congregation. Moreover, the strength of his convictions was such that he was able to seemingly convince the FBI that he was simply a religious leader and posed no threat to national security. Swift clearly believed that he had achieved this as he would consistently rail against the FBI and Hoover while blissfully unaware that people who were attending his sermons and workshops were clearly, as declassified documents reveal, undercover agents.

This dissertation will explicate the foundations of American Neo-Nazism and the essentiality of Wesley Swift to its emergence in the post-World War II era in the form of the Christian Identity Movement. It fits into the bigger picture of American history as a part of the Fifth Great Awakening and is generally overlooked because it runs counter to the notion of America as cooperative, harmonious, and tri-religious society that was essential to our Post World War II image. This work intersects with conservatism, civil rights, and religious history as well as intelligence and national security history. Through an analysis of Wesley Swift’s sermons, speeches, and the network he helped to create, it becomes clear that his version of Christian Identity was an essential facet of the religious racist right. It becomes clear that there is a historical precedent for Swift to Stand on and visible links between his work and the
creation of a racist, racialist, and anti-Semitic belief system that continues to exist today.

Chapter one focuses on the "building blocks," where I examine the movements, organizations, and individuals who have provided a backdrop for many of the thought processes and ideas that Wesley Swift drew on, emulated, or parroted, including Christian Fundamentalism, hypernationalism, and Nazism. These movements stretch back to the late 19th century, through the Great Depression, and lay a solid foundation for Swift to build his campaign. Chapters two and three focus on Swift's education and training in the "true" Biblical status and history of America by examining Phillip E.J. Monson's Kingdom Bible College that Swift attended in Southern California, and his mentorship under Gerald L.K. Smith. Monson dedicated his school to the teachings on the Gospel of British Israelism and Christian Identity, and Smith was a far-right demagogue who gave Swift more exposure than his meager radio program could ever have accomplished. Chapters four and five deal with Swift himself: his sermons, his beliefs, and the network he helped to create, which was bound together by his teachings.

Swift’s network crisscrossed the country and not only helped Christian Identity to spread, but my analysis has revealed that there was hardly a white supremacy organization of any stripe of which Swift was not either a founder, prominent member, donor or speaker between roughly 1950-1970. He made Christian Identity his own, and his interpretation of Scripture was so far-reaching that there are still churches, organizations, gangs, and prison gangs that parrot and preach the Gospel according to Swift. Thus, it is necessary to understand the movement and the man who is arguably most directly responsible for "Baptizing Nazism" and laying a foundation for Modern American Neo-Nazism to grow and thrive on the fringes of American society.
Scholars of American radicalism have located the rise of American Neo-Nazism in the 1950s, tying it to the outpouring of popular anti-communism during that decade.\(^4\) However, that is only part of the story. While Cold War anti-communism significantly influenced the movement’s post-World War II evolution, its roots are traceable to developments in fundamentalist Christianity. Ultimately, American Neo-Nazism would draw upon Christian theology far more than on Adolf Hitler and National Socialism. Christian Identity would become a primary interpretation of Christian doctrine and arguably essential to the rise and proliferation of Neo-Nazism in America. Scripture allowed for Identists to reconcile previous notions of racism, anti-Semitism, Nazism, and hyper-nationalism. Wesley Swift effectively incorporated Nazism as he successfully converted the Nazi ideology into an essential part of Neo-Nazi theology. True, adherents of Neo-Nazism have revered Hitler, but have conceptualized him as an agent of God as well as a brilliant political leader. This focus on a specific Christian theology as the correct way to live represents an essential distinction between German National Socialism and American Neo-Nazism. Many Christian leaders in Nazi Germany kowtowed – albeit, with an evident lack of cohesion – to the Führer by attempting to “Nazify” Christianity and prove their political usefulness.\(^5\) By contrast, in the United States, Neo-Nazis would not only employ Biblical interpretation to demonstrate the righteousness of their cause, but as time wore on they would do so in clear opposition to a government which they believed

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was infiltrated and inundated by undesirables, traitors, and communistic Jews. This is an essential transition in the emergence of an enduring Neo-Nazi movement. The stories we have been told, the bible we have read, and the American history we have been taught is tainted. The old Testament may have happened, but the fact that it was about Jews is a lie. Our founding father were extraordinary men, but that was because they had learned God’s true word, and were, in fact, Identists. This was essential because it already provided ready-made answers to obvious objections by other denominations of Christianity and religious leaders, as well as, countered whatever the “accepted” accounts of American history were. Over several decades, this merger of Christian theology, anti-Semitism, Nazism, and American racism would prove an opportunistic and infinitely malleable faith-based ideology for God’s “true” chosen that would leave a lasting imprint on American society.

Though few American historians have emphasized the allure of Nazism within the United States, its influence enabled racist ideologies to gain traction even as African-Americans advanced successful efforts and secured their civil rights. Nazism was primarily a European phenomenon, but support for Nazi racial theories regarding people of Jewish and African background stretched across the Atlantic to the United States. Throughout the interwar period, German and American eugenicists shared considerable amounts of information. Indeed, Hitler himself stated that “there is today one state in which at least weak beginnings towards a better conception are noticeable. Of course, it is not our model German Republic, but the American

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Union.” Significantly, however, those who most fervently embraced Nazi racial theories generally did so as practicing Christians who intertwined their faith in God and their beliefs about race. The development of this strain of “Christian racism” in the mid-twentieth century would prove consequential as it fueled a variety of white supremacy organizations, and Swift’s Identity was the connective tissue that bound a network that spread across the United States in subsequent decades.

The immediate post-World War II era was an age of religious enthusiasm. Many historians have gone so far as to identify this period as an era of “Great Awakening,” akin to the remarkable religious outpourings of earlier centuries. Scholars of American religion have noted that one of the distinguishing characteristics of this particular awakening was the cooperative spirit it evinced, a spirit that diminished long-standing theological and racial divides and helped secure an era of social harmony. This cooperative spirit, argues sociologist Robert Wuthnow further heightened the appeal of religion for many Americans who by mid-century sought relief from seemingly endless rounds of social turbulence and wartime violence. According to historian Mark Silk, the revelation of Nazi death camps in 1945 shattered religious antagonisms and prejudices and undergirded a growing popular belief in a common “Judeo-Christian” heritage shared by all Americans.

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7 Adolf Hitler, Mein Kampf Translated by Ralph Manheim (CPA Book Publishing: Boring, 1939, 439.
8 Mark Silk, Spiritual Politics: Religion in America since World War II (New York: Touchstone, 1989), 38.
10 Silk, 44.
At the same time, the onslaught of the Cold War became a powerful impetus behind the renewed popular interest in religion and interreligious cooperation. In the face of a rising communist threat, American religious leaders urged their congregations to see religion as the primary means of defending against the assault of “godless communists” upon American freedoms and, indeed, upon civilization itself.11 As historian Robert Elwood explained, these circumstances ensured that membership in religious congregations “grew at a faster rate than the national population” during this period generally associated with the Baby Boom.12 In the late 1940s, Gallup polls showed that 94% of Americans believed in God which significantly surpassed statistics from the European continent. Americans demonstrated a kind of pervasive religious “optimism,” Wuthnow observed, which became a dominant force in mid-century American life.13 Scholars who have studied the postwar religious awakening have neglected the darker, conflictual, and even violent strain of religious revival which developed alongside the optimistic, cooperative, and harmonious efforts that have taken center stage.

Ultimately, debates over Jewish racial identity, endemic anti-Semitism, and the shifting conception of whiteness in the interwar period would ground the racist right and the radical Christian Identity Movement. Historian Matthew Frye Jacobson contended that “in general, patterns of racially based, Anglo-Saxonist exclusivity dominated the years from 1840 to the

11 Wuthnow, 41.
13 Wuthnow, 19.
1920s, whereas patterns of Caucasian unity gradually took place in the 1920s and after.”

The “Caucasian unity” did not generally include Jews. One of these “patterns of racially based, Anglo-Saxonist exclusivity” that developed in 1920s America was the British Israelism or Anglo-Israelism movement, the precursor to Christian Identity. British Israelism would significantly influence future anti-Semitic and racist discourse and dogma. The inclusion of Christianity and faith-based aspects into Nazi ideological notions of Jewish racial inferiority and prejudice would powerfully influence the evolution of the racist right. This phenomenon reached a new level of organizational strength with the dedication of Wesley Swift’s Los Angeles Church to the tenets of Christian Identity.

Wuthnow has argued that during World War II and in the immediate postwar era, religious “denominationalism” declined in significance. The religious revival in this period, marked as it was by external threats of totalitarianism, persuaded many American religious leaders to bridge the denominational gap, forge alliances, and encourage peaceful cooperation among the three primary religions in America: Protestantism, Catholicism, and Judaism. Wuthnow emphasized that this development represented a significant transformation from America’s historically powerful and attendant impulse to make substantial distinctions among religious groups. In the face of fascism and communism, spiritual leaders believed that it was

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15 Wuthnow, 315.
16 Ibid., 20.
time to put aside interreligious squabbles and focus on the commonalities that all Americans shared, embracing what religious scholar Will Herberg called, “the American way of life.”\(^{17}\)

Herberg claimed that during this period, America had “become a triple melting pot restructured into three great communities.”\(^{18}\) He declared that these three main religions shared several beliefs and ideas that produced “an overarching sense of unity” that resulted in the shared idea of an “American Way of Life.” Though denominations that had splintered American religious life served as “a means of self-location” and a “harmonious religious method to find one’s personal place,” the times dictated a need for something new.\(^{19}\) Drawing on this point, Mark Silk argued that the notion of the “Judeo-Christian tradition” emerged in this period as a means to unite a religiously divergent America against its totalitarian European foes. The idea, he explained, “was to invoke a common faith for a united democratic front” in order to foster the “spirituality of the American way.” Indeed, in the postwar years, a growing number of American Jews perceived that there were “few distinctive markers” that “set them apart from their Christian neighbors.”\(^{20}\) Silk highlighted how religious leaders in this period stressed that religion was a primary source of Western democratic values, a kind of cement that bonded Americans to one another and to other like-minded nations that supported human freedom.

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\(^{18}\) Ibid., 256.

\(^{19}\) Ibid., 12.

Historians have asserted that the years immediately following the Second World War were an enthusiastic elaboration of Herberg’s vision of the “American Way of Life.” Historian Wendy Wall commented that historians of these years described them “as a time of unusually deep and well-grounded national unity, a time when postwar affluence and the Cold War combined to produce a remarkable level of agreement about the nation’s core values.”

Even the looming shadow of the Cold War and communism did not dampen the American spirit or faith in capitalism and democracy. Politicians, economists, and government policies encouraged Americans to shop and spend because consumerism could help America defeat the Soviets and prevent another Great Depression. From the White House, President Eisenhower argued that if an American working man could “own his own comfortable home and car,” the United States would defeat the Soviet Union because they were not “the downtrodden impoverished vassal” of whom Karl Marx wrote. Instead, “he is a self-sustaining, thriving individual, living in dignity and freedom.” The “American Way of Life” would be a life of bourgeois comfort and individuals and families free from the tensions and conflicts of the past. Significantly, religion sanctified and protected these gains made under the “American Way of Life” after 1945. By the 1950s, the “American Way of Life” and the “Judeo-Christian tradition” became almost synonymous, with their unity affirmed by the recent external threats of fascism and the continual menace of communism, both of which Americans would associate with the rejection of religious faith.

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In 1952 President Eisenhower declared that “our form of government has no sense unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith, and I don't care what it is.”\(^{23}\) The fact that Eisenhower indicated he did not care what religion Americans embraced also suggested a waning sense of denominationalism, and it illustrated the transmutation of America from a “Christian nation” to a “tri-religious nation,” a change that most historians agree took place in this period.\(^{24}\) America in the 1950s saw a marked increase in church membership and emphasis on Christian America. Indeed, Historian Allan Lichtman submits that “polls from the 1950s found that churches had become America’s most trusted institutions, that 99% of Americans professed to believe in God, and 90%” of the population “recognized the divinity of Christ.”\(^{25}\) These were not, however, the only instances where it was clear that faith had become a more central facet of American culture in the postwar era. Eisenhower’s lack of membership to a formal church did not by any means derail public perception of his belief in the necessity of religious faith as a part of American culture. Lichtman asserts that “Eisenhower incorporated into his presidency a form of civil religion that rallied the American people behind nonsectarian spiritual values that he believed promoted such virtues as thrift, courage, hard work, and patriotism.”\(^{26}\) He so fervently believed that prayer was “simply a necessity” that he composed his own prayer after taking the oath of office, began cabinet meetings with silent prayers, promoted a national prayer day, and attended weekly prayer breakfasts.


\(^{24}\) Silk, 44, 40.

\(^{25}\) Lichtman, 192.

\(^{26}\) Ibid., 193.
Certainly, belief in a Judeo-Christian tradition developed strength in postwar America, but anti-Semitism and racism did not disappear. Wuthnow notes that between 1938 and 1946, fourteen distinct opinion polls showed that, on average, 47% of respondents thought “Jews have too much power.” Further, a third of Americans indicated they would not support a Jewish congressional candidate, and 20% also agreed that Jews were a “menace” to the United States. Some 43% of business managers claimed that they likely would reject a Jewish job candidate. Even after revelations about the Nazi death camps, many Protestants and Catholics continued to believe that Jews were responsible for the death of Christ and therefore experienced understandable divine retribution. In post-war America, President Eisenhower became instrumental in inextricably tying religion into the fabric of American culture. Wuthnow cites that “in 1952, 75% of Americans polled said religion was ‘very important’ in their personal lives, an all-time high. In 1957, 81%” of Americans “said religion could answer ‘the problems of the day,’ also an all-time high.” Historian Kevin Schultz asserts that American society became innately connected with Judeo-Christian tradition and it “served as the moral backbone for midcentury America, and it counted among its members Protestants, Catholics, and Jews.”

The widespread persistence of such attitudes in post-1945 America belies the conventional narrative of religious harmony, and the intimate relationship between Neo-Nazism and American Christianity in this period ultimately suggests the need for a more thorough investigation of the synergy between racial ideology and religious belief. Indeed, Neo-Nazi

27 Wuthnow, 78.


29 Schultz, 73.
racial ideology was reliant on fundamentalist Protestantism, and as such, dependent upon the postwar religious revival for its growth and vitality.

Until recently, historians tended to agree that Christian fundamentalists – some within fundamentalism would come to champion the postwar Christian Identity Movement – faded to obscurity after the 1925 Scopes Monkey Trial and barely participated in the momentous mid-century religious revival. Historian Joel Carpenter disagreed. In *Revive Us Again: The Reawakening of American Fundamentalism*, he submitted that fundamentalism did not fade at all, but remained vital and active, albeit, under the radar. He stated that fundamentalism continued to present a “believable faith and a strong religious community for hundreds of thousands in the 1930s-40s.” Indeed, he argued that in the 1930s, when the American economy was at its bleakest, and many people expressed religious doubts, Christian fundamentalism thrived. Carpenter revealed that during the interwar years, fundamentalist leaders sponsored “bible schools, religious papers, radio programs, and evangelistic conferences and crusades to connect people across denominational lines and establish a well-defined subculture.” He concluded that “fundamentalism had offered ordinary people of conservative instincts an alternative to liberal faith in human progress, a way of making sense out of the world, exerting some physical control over their lives and creating a way of life they can believe in.”

realizing one nation in one world.”  However, distrust and disunity in American religious life were continually brewing under the surface and during the period of the fundamentalist post-Scopes “retreat,” future leaders of the Christian racist right would begin to stoke the fires of discontent.

For his part, Carpenter indicated that “Jewish people had a curious place in the fundamentalist ‘world view’” and that many believed Jews had a significant role to play in millennialist prophecy. Further, during this period, many Americans began to suspect “that shadowy forces were working to undermine Christian America.” In certain fundamentalist quarters, speculation arose about how the Jewish people, who were seemingly forsaking their religious heritage for godless communism, were capable of the level of schemes illustrated in prevalent anti-Semitic works. Notably, Carpenter cited historian Timothy Weber who discussed the difficulty in ascertaining whether “fundamentalists were the Jews best friends, or worst enemies.” Weber noted that “Israel played a formative role in shaping fundamentalist attitudes towards the Jews,” and that these attitudes were “complex and ambivalent.” In fact, Zionism was a hotly debated topic in fundamentalist circles, and fundamentalists were especially eager to determine its role in Biblical prophecy. Moreover, Carpenter concluded that “for all the attention they received in print, the Jewish people held a rather low priority in the fundamentalist agenda.”

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32 Carpenter, 100-103.
33 Ibid., 97-99.
Contemporary conservative religious leaders urged their flocks to “love their Jewish neighbors and witness to them, but felt it was only to be expected that hatred and persecution would persist until Jews become Christians or until Biblical prophecies were fulfilled.” Further underscoring the lines of continuity, Wuthnow emphasized that the fundamentalist’s desire for Christ to return to earth mirrored the orthodox Jewish hope for the arrival of the Messiah. Significantly, both believed that the restoration of Israel was essential, and many fundamentalists were avowed activists of Zionism who supported the creation of the Jewish State of Israel in 1948 because it would signify the beginning of the realization of millennial prophecy. Political Scientist Michael Lienesch asserts that “among religious conservatives, millennial prophecy came into its own in 1948, with the establishment of the modern state of Israel.” Indeed, after World War II ended, emphasis on the coming of the millennium ignited a new “eschatological meaning” for the Middle East, and millennialist scholars and theologians believed that—as referenced in the book of Matthew 24:34—the restoration of Israel meant the Second Coming would transpire within a single generation.35

Historians of the mid-century religious revival have overlooked the Christian fundamentalist origins of the radical racist right in this period. Even Carpenter, whose work transformed how historians’ approach mid-century fundamentalism, de-emphasized fundamentalism’s role in inspiring the Neo-Nazi movement. Unfortunately, this means that few understand that some fundamentalist leaders of this period believed the atrocities committed

34 Wuthnow, 76.
by Hitler’s Third Reich represented the persecution of God’s chosen people in order for the fulfillment of millennial prophecy, a period they blithely referred to as the “the Time of Jacob’s Trouble.” Carpenter acknowledged that Hitler attracted the attention of fundamentalists because of “religious and racial outrages and for ways in which he manifested the ‘dictator spirit’ which they believed to be a harbinger of the antichrist.” However, he failed to go on to subject fundamentalist leaders, including key figures in the evolution of Neo-Nazism in America—like Gerald L.K. Smith and Wesley Swift, both of whom had positive views of Hitler and the Reich—to the careful investigation they deserved. What becomes evident is that—perhaps startlingly—in the storied age of postwar religious cooperation and Judeo-Christian values, Bible-Based Christianity would be a crucial breeding ground for Neo-Nazism and its ideology of vehement racial hatred and anti-Semitism.

For a time, the Second World War and the success of the religious revival seemed to quell the view that Jews represented racially separate “well poisoners” and “usurers.” Unfortunately, this view did not disappear completely. Historian Leo Ribuffo’s comments on the 1920s Christian American perception of Jews— that many were “already disposed to believe the worst of Jews”—remained a consistent belief in the late 1940s as well. In particular, the realization of the Zionist dream with the creation of the State of Israel in 1948 would have substantial repercussions for any tentative establishment of Jews as white. As Jacobson put it:

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36 Carpenter, 100-103.

37 Ibid., 93.

“the establishment of a Jewish state ultimately had the opposite effect of whitening the Jews in cultural representations.”39 For many, the creation of Israel meant that Jews were indeed different, inassimilable, and separate from white America. The “incompleteness” of the religious revival – its failure to achieve religious harmony – inadvertently catalyzed the Christian racist right to organize the Neo-Nazi movement.

39 Jacobson, 188.
Chapter 1

SWIFT’S BUILDING BLOCKS:

BRITISH ISRAELISM, THE KLAN, CHRISTIAN FUNDAMENTALISM, AND NAZISM

British Israelism: Howard Rand and William J. Cameron

“It would be impossible to understand” Christian Identity or Wesley Swift’s role in its proliferation “without understanding its theological roots in British Israelism,” noted Historian Leonard Zeskind in an early analysis of the movement. 40 Scholars disagree about the origins of British Israelite theology, the belief that modern-day Anglo-Saxons, not Jews, were the real descendants of the people of ancient Israel. Seventeenth-century British lawyer and academic John Sadler’s 1649 publication “The Rights of the Kingdom” may have been the origin of that belief. Sadler professed the Israelite origins of the British people by claiming that the “etymology for the name of Britain” originated with the Phaeacian or proto-Hebraic term “Berat Anac,” which means “the field of tin and lead.” Despite the certainty of Sadler’s assertion, however, it was not until the 19th century that the notion of a British Israel would gain traction as a doctrine of faith in Great Britain and the United States.41


In 1840, John Wilson, a Scottish Reverend and a key figure for the propagation and popularity of British Israelism, delivered a series of lectures later collectively published as “Our Israelitish Origins.” Wilson asserted that over time, the ten lost tribes of Israel (all but Judah and Benjamin, or, the Northern Kingdom) migrated across continental Europe and settled on the British Isles. The Anglo-Saxon people originated from those same tribes and thus inherited the promise that God gave to Israel. As empirical evidence beyond Scripture, Wilson pointed to the alleged commonality between the English “institutions” of the Israelites and the Anglo-Saxons. He contended that “from a vast number of instances, recorded in Scripture, that the representative system prevailed in Ancient Israel, as in the Anglo-Saxon Constitution.” Furthermore, he contended that “to those who have attentively studied the institutions of Moses and compared them with the Saxons they must appear so striking a similarity.”

British Israelites believed that the British and not the Jews were the direct descendants of ancient Hebrews. This claim effectively implies that contemporary Jewish people were imposters, and the British Israelites were “true Jews” who would inherit the Promised Land because they represented “true Israel.”

British Israelism grew out of fundamentalist Evangelism that was endemic in the 19th-century British middle classes, nationalism, and the growing racial tensions and explanations justifying Anglo-Saxon superiority. “The moralism of British Israelites stems from the fundamentalist evangelical’s tradition” and “their dominant concern” was “the morality of

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others.” Like fundamentalists, British Israelites believed in a “return to the simple virtues of individual initiative and self-reliance, the evocation of, perhaps, small community life against the modern, the sophisticated, the cosmopolitan.”

British Israelism was a “Protestant, Evangelical, fundamentalist, imperialist constellation of values and attitudes which were prevalent in the 19th Century.” Although it was not as anti-Semitic as its successor, Christian Identity, it was a doctrine of faith founded in racism proclaiming the divinity and racial superiority of the white Anglo-Saxon people.

While the modern origins of British Israelism are traceable to Wilson’s publication, it is possible that Wilson’s work was an adaptation rather an original idea. “Other religious and social movements also have identified themselves in various ways with Biblical Israelites.” Essentially, the finding and naming of the ten lost tribes was not something that began with the British Israelites. Indeed, when the Puritans encountered natives in North America, some came to believe that the Algonquin tribe, and thus all native peoples, were the lost tribes of Israel. They “proved” this by claiming there were many “similarities” between the Algonquin language and ancient Hebrew. Moreover, the Puritans’ belief that the “New World” was, in fact, the Promised Land that God intended for the descendants of Israel to inhabit and survive the approaching end of days fortified this particular British Israelite assertion.

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44 J. Wilson “British Israelism: A Revitalization Movement in Contemporary Culture” in *Archives de sociologie des religions*. Dec 198, 75-76.

45 Ibid., 79.

46 Zeskind, 15.

47 *The Jewish Expositor and Friend of Israel* (London: London Society, 1819), 290
The two men most directly responsible for popularization, publishing, and creating organizations centered on British Israelism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries were Howard Rand and William J. Cameron. Both became instrumental in solidifying a place for British Israelism within American society. They succeeded in grafting a distinctly racial nature onto the true origins of God’s Chosen: The British Israelites.” Both Rand and Cameron met, taught, or corresponded with several prominent figures in the evolution of the religious racist right, including Henry Ford, Gerald Winrod, Gerald L.K. Smith, and Wesley Swift.

The primary and secondary sources on the life of Howard Rand do not specify when he first encountered the teachings of British Israelism. However, it was clear that Rand wanted to ensure that British Israelism became a national movement, with influence beyond the pulpit. To that end, he built a national association that would serve to “spread British Israelism” and “provide it with a political agenda.”\(^{48}\) In 1930, Rand established a British Israelite organization in Detroit and named it the Anglo-Saxon Foundation, in accord with his belief that Anglo-Saxons were the descendants of “true Israel” through the Northern Kingdom of Israel. In 1935, Rand detailed a foundational tenet of his more exclusionary version of British Israelism. He wrote that “Anglo-Saxons, or I-sac-sons, or sons of Isaac” are “the literal descendants of their father Isaac through the northern ten tribed Kingdom.”\(^{49}\) Beyond Detroit, Rand traveled extensively and set up foundations in California, Oregon, and Illinois. He claimed that the Federation in California was so large and had so many members that it warranted a state convention. The


Anglo-Saxon Federation expanded to become the national vehicle for British Israelism, and by late 1932, the Federation had factions in Washington, Idaho, Nevada, and Utah and sponsored two more conventions in Chicago and Philadelphia. It is unclear how many people attended these events; however, what is clear is that Rand and his supporters were successful at getting the word out about their program. “In the Federation’s first two years fifteen thousand pieces of literature were distributed; but between May 1930 and September 1931, fully forty thousand more appeared.”

It was no coincidence that Rand founded the Federation during the Great Depression. During times of crisis, “millenarian ideas of every stripe appear both more plausible and more attractive,” and British Israelism was one such idea. British Israelites pointed to the tribulations of the Depression as evidence of the impending “cosmic overturning,” and Rand’s contemporary and fellow British Israelite, William J. Cameron, was arguably responsible for much of the public discourse that related the Depression to Biblical prophecy. Inasmuch as British Israelites believed that America was the true Holy Land, the Great Depression was viewed as a punishment they labelled as “the Time of Jacob’s trouble.” They believed that “our leaders” had “failed to preach the gospel of the kingdom” and “they brought” the country to “condemnation,” in the form of the Great Depression.

Despite Rand’s role in organizing the Federation, Cameron served as its president. “While Rand was a faceless functionary, Cameron was a public figure, indissolubly linked to the

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50 Barkun, 31.

51 Rand, Joel’s Prophetic Message, 4.
career of the man he served from late 1918 until 1946, Henry Ford.” Cameron edited Ford’s *The Dearborn Independent* for the entirety of its publication, as well as the influential *The International Jew*. Cameron’s public persona and financial backing proved important to the British Israelite Movement. Historians remain uncertain as to how Cameron came across British Israelism, but they have established that Cameron and Rand met at the first convention in Detroit and since that time, Cameron was a key member of the Federation Cameron would support it financially and help it expand. He transformed the monthly newsletter, *The Bulletin*, into a “slick paper magazine” called *Destiny*, with Cameron contributing several original articles. With the collapse of Ford’s *The Dearborn Independent* in 1927, Cameron dedicated his publishing attention completely to British Israelism, and as Ford’s second in command, he provided a means for the Federation to thrive during the Great Depression. In a 1966 pamphlet published by *Destiny* titled “The Covenant People,” stated that Cameron and the British Israelites embraced the Depression as a period of “prophetic message and warning.” If God’s chosen kingdom, America, was going to come out of it better on the other side, then, “as a nation we must rediscover the sense of divine guidance that led our fathers to face every hardship with the courage born of the assurance that God would prosper their undertakings.”

Rand focused on reinterpreting Biblical texts and integrating them into the British Israelite philosophy, whereas Cameron endeavored to provide Scriptural evidence that America was truly God’s kingdom, peopled by the descendants of Israel, the “true” Jews. Rand stated

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52 Barkun, 31.
53 Barkun, 32.
that as other false Christians believed the Bible “contains the Word of God,” he and British
Israelites knew that the Bible was, in fact, the literal “word of God.” He emphasized that British
Israelites were true believers who truly understood the importance of the Scripture as it relates
to daily life. Rand asserted that “when Jesus presented Himself at the temple and was rejected
by the Jews who turned against him, He said, ‘The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you and
given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.’” This very fact, according to Rand, was
evidence that Jesus knew that the “Jews” were going to reject Him and murder Him. Despite
this, Rand claimed that Jesus declared “Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man
shall be betrayed unto the chief priest and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn Him to
death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock, and scourge, and to crucify Him: and the
third day He shall rise again.” Rand explained this important because “Jesus declared who
brought about His crucifixion,” and that although he “would be delivered to the Romans” it was
the Jews “who delivered Him,” and were responsible for his torture and execution. 55

Cameron eventually became president and financier of the Anglo-Saxon Federation. This
suggests that his devotion to British Israelism and a tendency toward anti-Semitism were not
recent developments in his life. Cameron’s money allowed both his and Rand’s vision to
expand and secure a lasting place on the fringes of right-wing America. 56 Cameron and British
Israelites firmly believed that they found the lost tribes of Israel in Britain and America and that
“they remained relatively intact.”

56 “The Covenant People,” 35.
When the people of the northern kingdom went into Assyrian captivity, they did not remain there. During the dissolution of the Assyrian power through its involvement in foreign wars, the people of Israel escaped in successive independent waves, leaving the land of their captors when the opportunity came to do so. Under different names (Scutal, Sak-Geloths, Massagetae, Khumri, Cimmerians, Goths, Ostrogoths, Visigoths, etc.), they moved westward into the wilderness, across Asia Minor, then into Europe and eventually into the Scandinavian countries and the British Isles.  

For Cameron, this pseudo-history was an established fact and of monumental importance for the course of American history. Indeed, British Israelites believed that “to recognize the Kingdom and identify modern Israel today provides the key to unlock the secrets of revelation and understand the message of the prophets.” Thus, British Israelites were able to assert that this was not merely a “more accurate” interpretation of the Bible; rather, it was a means to understand the current and future world and what was necessary to help the country achieve “restoration” and heal its mind, body, and more importantly, its spirit. A significant facet of British Israelism that distinguish it from its successor, Christian Identity, was there seemed to be no real socio-political agenda. The goal was seemingly to “educate” and “enlighten” British and American people of their heritage and attempt to open their eyes to the “truth” of the superiority and divinity of White Anglo-Saxon Protestants.

While Rand’s writings focused on Scripture, Cameron and Destiny magazine followed a different path. Cameron put more emphasis on spiritual racism than Biblical exegesis, to illustrate that Americans, as the true chosen people, were the beneficiaries of God’s promise. Even though America was a relatively young independent nation, Cameron believed that “we

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57 Zeskind, 17.
Americans are as old as our roots. We are indeed a very old race; much older than our American nation; older than the settlement in England; older than our first appearance in Europe. And never a barbarous or an Enslaved race!" As the Old Testament is a book primarily concerned with Jews, written in Hebrew about the Israeli people, it illustrates that Americans represent a far more ancient race of people. Rand and Cameron go as far as to suggest that:

Abraham had many sons, but the racial line was to descend through only one of them, named Isaac—‘in Isaac shall thy seed be called. (Gen 21:12) From Isaac it would pass to Jacob and then to Jacob’s sons. These were not Jews but Hebrews, which means an ‘immigrant’ or ‘outlanders,’ for Abraham had been an emigrant from Ur of the Chaldees. Thenceforth they were called Israelites after Jacob, who changed his name to Israel.59

The Bible, Cameron argued, was the oldest “racial document” and that merely referring to it as a religious book showed stark ignorance. “Race,” he believed, “had a great significance for the moral sanity and purpose of the individual.” Furthermore, the concept of race was “not artificial” but a “basic natural fact.” The Anglo-Saxons, for example, formed a “distinct and easily distinguishable race,” and regardless of nationality, they “all belong to one race stream, but divided by national names and language.”60 According to Cameron, Anglo-Saxons were God’s “true Jews,” and they predominantly lived in the United States; thus this young country was paradoxically synonymous with one as old as the Biblical land of Israel.

60 “The Covenant People,” 60.
British Israelism provided a path to “conclusively” proving that white Anglo-Saxon Protestants in America were the “true Jews.” It also claimed that race and religion were inseparable. It demonstrated that regardless of the current issues the country was facing, such as war, immigration, and communism; the blueprint for handling these issues was located in British Israelite philosophy and interpretation of the Scripture.61 Right-wing “trailblazers” led by Rand and Cameron laid the necessary groundwork for Swift and the Identists. British Israelism was certainly anti-Semitic, but their rhetoric was more focused on bolstering the importance of their doctrines, emphasizing its association with the significance of America at a Biblical level, and delineating that those who called themselves “Jews” actually “belonged to the tribe of Benjamin,” and were not the true children of Israel.62 It was not until Swift and his supporters reinterpreted Rand and Cameron’s work that the “the Time of Jacob’s Trouble” equated with getting rid of the Jewish people.

British Israelites of the early 20th century were undoubtedly nationalistic and certainly used Scripture to support this nationalism; however, it is possible that the “most American organization” of the day, the Ku Klux Klan, was a significant influence. Although British Israelism predated the Klan, the second incarnation of the Ku Klux Klan predated the Anglo-Saxon Federation, and there was certainly some overlap. One such intersection came in the form of Anglo-Israel researcher and minister in Portland, Oregon, Ruben Sawyer. Sawyer traversed the Pacific Northwest and spread the gospel of British Israelism. Sawyer was also a leader in the Oregon Klan between the years 1921-1924. Both organizations emphasized the importance of

61 Barkun, 24.

America to the future of humankind, and both also understand the role of Protestant Christianity in the protection of the soul of America. Thus, they likely cross-pollinated more often, and the popularity of the Klan helped to spread British Israelism nationwide. Its emphasis on patriotism arguably intensified the nationalistic elements of British Israelism, particularly when it transitioned into Swift’s version of Christian Identity.

Second Klan: Hiram Evans

British Israelites helped to establish the notion of America as God’s true chosen kingdom, a belief that would undoubtedly appeal to the supporters of the Ku Klux Klan. Imperial Wizard Hiram Evans asserted that “we are the melting pot of the world, a problem and responsibility faced by no other people. Into it has been poured, almost promiscuously, perhaps in recent years designedly, every dross ingredient of citizenship that the earth produces.”

Evans assumed control of the Invisible Empire in 1922 and oversaw the Klan’s meteoric rise from insignificance to more than four million members nationwide. He successfully adapted the Klan from Colonel William Joseph Simmons’ vision and crafted an organization that became a force for “true” or “one hundred percent Americanism,” ultimately provided the blueprints for the modern conservative movement, and marked a golden age for future white nationalist organizations.

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64 Hiram W. Evans, “The Menace of Modern Immigration” (Knights of the Ku Klux Klan Inc., 1924.), 5.

Simmons had “thought for 20 years of creating a fraternal order that would stand for ‘comprehensive Americanism’” and had “dreamed of reviving the hooded order his father served in the Civil War.”66 Thus, on Thanksgiving night in 1915, a few months after the pro-Klan film Birth of a Nation debuted, Simmons and a small group of like-minded followers climbed to the top of Stone Mountain located just outside of Atlanta and borrowed the burning cross imagery from the film literally to ignite the second incarnation of the Ku Klux Klan. This version of the Klan was more steeped in pageantry, showmanship, and mysticism than its Reconstruction predecessor. Simmons’ Klan would separate itself from his father’s night riding vigilantes by seeking and finding legitimacy.

This second incarnation of the Ku Klux Klan remained moribund until the 1920s. Simmons’ “momentous event” in 1915 passed unnoticed even for Atlanta’s citizenry. “Most Atlantans who witnessed the fiery cross from a distance were not especially awed, merely puzzled,” and many seemed to think it was a publicity stunt for the film.67 Simmons was never able to differentiate his Klan from Masonic lodges in post-World War I America. Arguably, Simmons’ contribution to the second Klan ended when he began it, apart from serving as a temporary figurehead.68 Only after Simmons’ successor, Hiram Evans, took the helm did the Klan became a powerful social conservative force.


68 MacLean, Behind the Mask, 7.
The second era Klan rose to prominence in the 1920s primarily because of the perception that Anglo-Saxon identity of America was in dire peril. In 1924, Evans asserted that “viewed strictly in terms of racial and national origins,” the “present population of the United States is much less than half, perhaps little more than a third, of native Anglo-Saxon stock.”

This was unacceptable to Klansman and other Americans, as well. Evans asserted that “unless true Americans “recognized and met the dangers,” the “dangerous foreign races that were seeking to alter the landscape of American society” would succeed. Members of the Ku Klux Klan saw themselves as defenders of the American way of life and internalized this struggle against foreign influences.

The white Anglo-Saxon personification of the Klan was paramount and served as the foundation for the anti-Catholic, anti-Semitic, anti-black, anti-immigration, and anti-communist crusade. In 1926, Evans stated that the Klan was the “ultimate expression in American terms of the biological importance of white control” and the commitment to define whites as Anglo-Saxon, Protestants of Nordic origins was necessary.

Evans professed that this caste of American, the “true American,” were the race that constituted this country, provided it with civilization, and truly transformed it into God’s chosen kingdom. He maintained that the “safeguarding” of America’s “sacred traditions” would represent the “fundamentals of human welfare.”

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70 Evans, 5.


72 Evans, “Klan’s Fight for Americanism,” 10.
Evans’ Klan importantly propagated lasting tenets of anti-Semitism, racism, American exceptionalism, Biblical interpretation, and conservatism. Historian Allan Lichtman, after comparing the Klan to later conservatives, labeled it the first modern grassroots conservative movement.\footnote{Lichtman, 42.} The modern movement began with the Klan because of a “widespread concern that the pluralistic cosmopolitan forces threatened America’s national identity,”\footnote{Lichtman, 2.} an identity founded in the principles of proper “true Americanism,” including traditional Protestant customs and values, law and order, and support for local institutions and schools, and a clean and efficient government. Moreover, this “true Americanism” included anti-Semitism, anti-communism, anti-Catholicism, and racism. Combined, these seemingly disparate and incompatible strands of thought fused effectively in the second incarnation of the Ku Klux Klan, providing a blueprint for 20th-century conservatism and a vision of what America was, is, and should be.

Members described “the Invisible Empire of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan” as “the only 100% American organization” in the “whole world.” Klansman believed that because “all the other organizations, political parties, schools and colleges, churches, lodges, states or nations, admit in one way or another, all nationalities, races and religions” they were not genuinely American.\footnote{Pegram, 9.} Evans believed that Protestant Christianity was the “most perfect instrument of human progress,” and that the “unity of Protestantism and Americanism was no accident,”
because the “two sprung from the same qualities.”\textsuperscript{76} Klansmen believed that “American democracy” was “Protestantism translated to government.”\textsuperscript{77} Thus, to be Protestant was to be American, and any other faith was alien, foreign, or subversive. The Imperial Wizard believed that “Americanism provides politically the freedom and independence that Protestantism required in the religious field.” As the Klan was the “most American” institution, Klan ideology, or KlanKraft, served as the prototype for “Americanism,” Protestantism, and conservatism. \textsuperscript{78}

Through a well-oiled marketing machine, Evans’ Klan managed to utilize all available outlets to increase their numbers.\textsuperscript{79} Evans lamented that “the melting pot model of assimilation had failed to produce real Americans” and believed that the very notion of America as a melting pot was “coined by an alien.” He believed that “the test of fitness of an alien for Americanism” was “how much of their old loyalties he could abandon.” Initiation into the Klan and, by extension, America, was only possible if a person could effectively abandon and renounce any prior traditions or customs. However, there were those for whom the barrier was immutable, namely, African Americans, Jews, and Catholics.\textsuperscript{80}

The Klan’s attacks on African Americans, Jews, and Catholics, and especially those among these groups who were immigrants, centered on the common goal of “securing the power of the white petite bourgeoisie in the face of the challenges stemming from modern

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{Evans2} Evans, 3.
\bibitem{Evans1} Evans, 47.
\bibitem{Pegram1} Pegram, 23.
\bibitem{MacLean} MacLean, 8.
\bibitem{Pegram2} Pegram, 48.
\end{thebibliography}
industrial capitalism.” Concerning African Americans, Evans’ attitude was fearful and yet paternalistic. Klan members supported Jim Crow Laws and believed that there should not be any “relaxation of barriers” between the races. Any attempt would inevitably lead to miscegenation, or race-mixing, and encourage inexcusable sexual relations between black men and white women. There was “no room in America” for “any man or woman who believes in or teaches the mixing of our blood.” Not surprisingly, this functioned as a warning for white women about black men. Indeed, they “never mentioned the rape of black women; it focused almost exclusively on black men and their relations with white women.” Any possibility of the reverse situation taking place (black woman, white man) was ignored, or in the case of rape, condoned.

Even though generations of African Americans had been born on American soil since the ratification of the Reconstruction Amendments, Evans believed that the “barrier of race was immutable” for whites, and thus African Americans would always remain a lower caste. This, however, factored into the Klan’s paternalistic racism because there were instances when Klansman landed at Black church ceremonies and made donations, not committing any acts of violence. Though this may indeed seem bizarre, these were by no means acts of benevolence; because often hundreds of knights would remain outside to intimidate the congregation and disrupt the services. Unlike the First Klan, however, African Americans were not the primary target of Evans’ Klan. This was possibly due to the inherent contradiction in the Klan’s portrayal of African Americans.

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81 MacLean, 41.
82 Pegram, 26.
of this group: as incapable and incompetent children and inferiors who were also dangerous and hypersexual and seeking to rape white women and force a mixing of the races.

Furthermore, Jewish people living in America were also not the primary target of the Klan but represented a “complex problem.” Inexplicable as it sounds, Evans claimed to have a sense of “respect” for the Jewish people, stating that:

"Of the good qualities of the Jewish character I am well aware as is any man. Wandering ever since his ejection from Judea, nearly everywhere persecuted, the Jew, I am happy to say, has had a better home in America than in almost any other land in which he has lived. One fifth of his race is here. By deliberate election he is unassimilable. He rejects intermarriage. His religious and social rites and customs are inflexibly segregative. Law-abiding, healthy, moral, mentally alert, energetic, loyal, and reverent in his home life, the Jew is yet by primal instinct a Jew, indelibly marked by persecution, with no deep national attachment a stranger to the emotion of patriotism as the Anglo-Saxon feels it. Klansmen have no quarrel with him, no hatred of him, no thought of persecuting him. As Protestants are unavailable for membership in all-Jewish societies so Jews are unavailable for membership in an all-Protestant society like the Klan. Moreover, their jealously guarded separatism unfit them for co-operation in a movement dedicated to the thorough unification of the dominant strains in American life." 83

When Jews emigrated to America, they often sought out communities with a large Jewish population, and the Imperial Wizard took note of this. He respected the way Jews lived on American soil and took care of their own community, displaying the Klan tenet of “Klannishness” defined as “the obligation of Klansmen to support and protect fellow knights.” 84

Evans claimed that Jews exhibited this principle because of their perceived “solidarity, racial purity, and commitment to communal welfare.” He further expounded that “his abilities are

84Pegram, 24.
great” and “he contributes to any country he lives in.” Despite this, their religion “barred them from true fellowship as Americans,” and the sentiment that “a Jew is a Jew” and therefore never a “white American” was extremely common among Klansmen.

To further bar Jews from Americanization, Evans insisted that the recent rash of eastern European Jews “were not true Jews” but rather “Judaized Mongols,” arguably demonstrating the influence of British Israelism in the Klan and vice versa. British Israelites endorsed this notion, and Evans’ depiction of Jews makes it arguable that British Israelites thought infiltrated or was incorporated in into the Second Klan.

The publication of Henry Ford’s *International Jew* was simultaneous to the Klan’s rise, so it is plausible to assume that a significant number of Klansman had either read it or were aware of its existence. Like Henry Ford, when the Klan went after Jews, they predominantly focused on economic criticism and the supposed greed of the Jews. “They accused Jews, first and foremost, of dominating international capitalism, particularly the world’s finances” and stated that “the Jew has a monopoly on the monetary systems of the commercial world”, and they were “building a giant money monopoly that is without parallel in a thousand years of human history.” Paradoxically, while simultaneously asserting the Jews’ rampant capitalism and resultant stranglehold on the world economy, the Klan also “maintained that the Jews

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86 Pegram, 54.

87 Evans, 28.

88 MacLean, 143.
dominated the paramount force opposed to international capital: communism.” To them, “Communism and global capitalism always functioned in their minds as faces of the same international (and antinational) Jewish evil.” The Jew as both communist and capitalist continues to be a common and recurrent accusation made by radical racist individuals even today.

Attacks on and conspiracies about communism and socialism in America were also common in the Klan vernacular. Communism was “without a possible exception ...the most destructive philosophy preached by thinking men.” Indeed, the presence of the Industrial Workers of the World and a communist party in America cemented the belief for many Klansman that “America needs the Klan.” In the wake of World War I, and more importantly, the Russian Revolution, Klansmen saw Bolshevism as the antithesis to Americanism and noted that, coincidentally, there was an obvious appeal and connection of African Americans, Jews, and Catholics to Marxist philosophies. The Klan targeted workers but not “true American” workers. “Klansmen blamed virtually all labor trouble on immigrants” and “foreign agitators” and depicted these troublemakers as “the riff-raff and outcasts of Europe.”

The primary target of Evans’ Klan, however, were Catholics. Unlike Jews and African Americans, Evans had nothing “positive” to say about the Catholics. He went to great lengths

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89 MacLean, 147.


91 MacLean, 82.
92 MacLean, 84.
and spoke vociferously about forbidding “Catholic teachings and the influence of the Holy See from American politics.” The foremost goal of the Second Klan was to protect America and its people from the “menace of Roman Catholicism.” Like the Jews, the size of the Catholic population in the country was relatively small (albeit more extensive than the Jewish population), but that did not make the threat seem less viable. Indeed, “their very scarcity seemed to emphasize the subterranean nature of the peril.”

Evans’ organization spread its tentacles across the country so effectively and its message reached so many, that not only did it help entice “ordinary Americans” to join his Klan, but it convinced them that “the Catholics were stockpiling weapons to take over the country,” and they “were the primary concern and the lurking enemy that sought to destroy the United States, and constituted the country’s primary threat.”

Coincidentally, though not surprisingly, Catholicism was the primary religion of most immigrants arriving on American shores at that time. This enabled the Klan to infuse anti-Catholicism with protectionism that integrates anti-immigrant policies. Evans perceived the recent rush of Irish immigrants as inundating the country “with alien folkways” in “politics, religion, and culture.”

In an essay written by Evans himself, he observed that the Catholic Church “assumed the right of control over states,” which rendered it utterly contrary to American democratic institutions. In the same essay, he issued a direct warning to American Catholics already residing in the country, asking them to remember that “our government is on

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93 Pegram, 67.
94 MacLean, xi.
95 Pegram, 69.
the banks of the Potomac, and not on the Tiber in Rome.” 96 The most notable accomplishment with regard to immigration and the Klan was the enactment of the 1924 Johnson-Reed anti-immigration act which “drastically limited the number of immigrants allowed to enter the country each year. It cut total immigration by more than 50 percent.” 97 The bill passed with enthusiastic support in Congress and helped ensure America’s increasing isolationism; Evans claimed it to be a great achievement of the American people, and by extension, the Klan.

These “rumored church plots to dominate America” had to begin somewhere, and Evans knew precisely where the Catholic problem began. 98 The Klan’s newspaper and press division routinely attacked Catholic schools for disseminating their “Romish” and anti-American tenets. He asserted that “Romanism denied everyone,” including children, “the freedoms essential to civilization and cherished as birthright by Americans.” 99 Evans went as far as to say that Americanism was incompatible with “the Catholic Church in America,” because “Catholic schools undermined Americanization” and posed a threat to the American public education system. He claimed that “in many of our largest cities in this country, parochial schools outnumber our own American public schools.” 100 This, he argued, prevented any possibility of


98 Pegram, 70.

99 Pegram, 69.

100 Moore, Citizen Klansmen, 20.
children assimilating American culture and served as a means for Catholics to assert their “influence on public education.”

Evans’ Klan was inherently contradictory, a problem that would eventually ensure its collapse. Whether by design, accident, or through poor leadership, his organization was simultaneously both inclusive and exclusive, public and private, mystical, and ordinary. Despite the seemingly cohesive agenda regarding enemies of America, the Second Klan was anything but unified. By 1925, Klan membership exceeded four million; by the end of the decade, the Klan’s numbers dwindled to mere thousands. While the Klan did enjoy a brief tenure of getting its sympathizers or members elected to local, state, and in some cases, national political offices, many of those elected officials became more concerned with their tenure than their allegiance to the Klan. Additionally, members responsible for collecting klecktokens, Klan fees, reportedly, did not “kickback” the correct amount to the Imperial Kingdom. These members were called Kleagles—Klan emissaries—and Wesley Swift served at this rank. It was the perception of Klan uniformity that arguably attracted many “ordinary Americans” to join, but the reality of Klan inconsistencies was a significant cause of its downfall. The failure of the Klan to succeed in reconstructing America does not diminish the importance it played in establishing a base of knowledge and belief for fringe white supremacist organizations. That foundation, even to this day, focuses on nativism, Americanism, Protestant Christianity, protectionism, and anti-immigration. It is possible, therefore, to surmise that the Klan served as more than a potential

101 Ibid., 255.
102 Cutlip, 399.
103 Pegram, 55.
foundation for American conservatism. It is arguable that it served as a starting point, a “golden era” for modern white supremacy movements to build an organization, “borrow” and adopt tenants, and perceive America as it “should be.”

**Fundamentalism: Gerald Winrod**

A foundational tenet of Swift’s theology was a vehement anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism was indeed by no means a new philosophy during Swift’s day, but the speeches, sermons, and writings of Kansas’ “Jayhawk Nazi,” Pastor Gerald B. Winrod, and his emphatic emphasis on Jews as tools or servants of the Devil served to influence Swift’s brand of fundamentalism in the same manner that Evans did for hypernationalism, and Cameron and Rand did for Anglo-Saxonism. Wesley Swift’s theology blended British Israelism, hypernationalism, anti-Semitism, whiteness, Nazi sympathy, and Christian fundamentalism. The Klan successfully fused Protestantism with both whiteness and Americanism, but the development of a specific “mainstream” theological view that would influence Swift’s doctrine was still incomplete. Indeed, British Israelism provided blueprints, but it did not adequately engage mainstream Christianity in a meaningful way. That perversion of Christian doctrine would emerge through the Kansas fundamentalist pastor.\(^{104}\) As a fundamentalist who believed that the literal interpretation of Scripture was God’s true word, Winrod and his supporters were arguably be an inspiration to Swift.

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\(^{104}\) Lichtman, 76.
Christian fundamentalism is defined as a “military, anti-modernist, protestant evangelicalism.”\textsuperscript{105} However, it is also true that “fundamentalism was rooted in more than a generalized anti-modern and anti-liberal mentality,” thus enabling it to adapt to rapid changes in American society and culture and maintain religious fervor in the decades after Scopes. For one thing, fundamentalists had, as a part of their self-conception, “a strong trusteeship for American culture, and firmly believed in the idea of a Christian America,” thus cementing its attraction to the far right.\textsuperscript{106} Winrod asserted that “there is no other hope” for the world or Christianity beyond America. This Nation, he argues, would succeed only with full support behind the “cause of Christ” and “the Gospel faithfully proclaimed” was the only way to “triumph” over the “powers of darkness.”\textsuperscript{107} In brief, Christian fundamentalists, regardless of whether they associated with the radical racism of the Christian Identity Movement, came to see themselves in a similar vein as “true America,” the faithful remnant.

Even though fundamentalism appeared to be “losing a battle of prestige,” this did not “turn fundamentalism into a disappearing aspect of American Protestantism.” However, after 1925, fundamentalist leaders actively embraced their “outsider” status, as did Winrod and Swift, and in so doing, effectively employed it to stimulate a sense of communal identity in fundamentalist churches. This helped to cultivate a sense of persecution for fundamentalists for adhering to the truth and fortified their sense of a shared mission to bring about a national


\textsuperscript{106} Carpenter, 5, 6.

\textsuperscript{107} Gerald B. Winrod, \textit{Communism in Prophecy History America} (Wichita: Defender Publishers, 1946), 86.
spiritual regeneration.  

Even as fundamentalists embraced this “outsider” status, their assumed role as “trustees of Christian America,” enabled them to claim a more decidedly “insider” relationship with American culture, a relationship that underwrote fundamentalist attempts to influence American society, culture, and politics post-1945.  

In this regard, they are consistent with both Winrod’s and Swift’s movement, as the fundamentalists’ dichotomy of wanting to be both “insiders” and “outsiders” came about because they desired two things at once: “purity and influence, separation and engagement.”  

Contrary to popular belief, fundamentalism was not a “Bible belt” or a purely Southern and Midwestern phenomenon. By mid-century, fundamentalist churches flourished throughout the country, from Boston to Los Angeles, the latter being Swift’s operation base. With numerous influential organizations emerging in urban centers between 1930 and 1950, fundamentalism became sensitive to the increasing complexity of American life, which was continually evolving in response to new developments. This resulted in an enduring and consistent theme within the radical racist right, the Christian Identity Movement, as well as white supremacy movements in general.  

The general perception of members of white supremacy groups and organizations is that historically, they have tended to be uneducated, poor, or rural. However, there is a significant disconnect between the leaders of these groups and the rank and file. The leadership

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109 Carpenter, 5.  

always had their fingers on the pulse of the nation, and the successful groups had leaders like Winrod, who could quickly adapt and incorporate new events and data into their preexisting dogma. While it is true that fundamentalists were keen to “recreate the religious culture of earlier small-town America,” Carpenter asserted that fundamentalism’s “attraction was not entirely nostalgic” and that “fundamentalists were remarkably adept at styling themselves as modern, up-to-date, and conversant with trends in popular culture.”¹¹¹ This would be crucial to the fundamentalist goal of gaining increased influence in society, culture, and politics across the nation.

Gerald Winrod was most active during the Depression years and targeted a favorite of the old Christian right: President Franklin Delano Roosevelt.¹¹² A fundamentalist preacher from Wichita, Kansas, who embraced Nazism and Hitler, Winrod was an early voice in supporting and championing Swift’s Identity movement. In 1925, Winrod created an organization that he led until his death in 1957, The Defenders of the Christian Faith. Through activism and the organization’s publication, “The Defender,” Winrod spread his hyper-American, anti-Semitic, and fundamentalist vitriol to a nationwide circulation of over 100,000 readers.¹¹³ Winrod helped provide a belief system that could reconcile the clear anti-democracy agenda and paganism of the Nazi regime with a hyper-Americanist and devout Protestant faith. The critical component of this contradictory belief system was the Jew. Winrod, like his contemporaries

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¹¹¹ Carpenter, 10.


¹¹³ Lichtman, 76.
Ford and Cameron, embraced *The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion* and routinely provided Biblical “evidence” of Jewish treachery and their service to Satan.\(^\text{114}\)

Fundamentalism was a part of Winrod’s life from his childhood. His father believed that God cured young Gerald’s mother of all her ailments and afflictions, and beginning at that time, the family adopted a pious lifestyle and developed a devout faith in God.\(^\text{115}\) *Winrod’s Defender* achieved local popularity in Kansas after the Scopes Monkey Trial and his ardent defense of the Biblical interpretation of the origin of man.\(^\text{116}\) He decried and condemned theological liberals who accepted Darwinian evolution. Winrod raged against Darwinism and the notion that men evolved from apes, because that gave Jesus an “animal ancestry,” and that was intolerable.\(^\text{117}\) Winrod quickly established a name for himself within Fundamentalist circles. In 1926 he addressed the World Christian Fundamentals Association, and they subsequently offered him the position of Secretary. In 1927, membership amounted to a mere 1300; seven years later, it increased to more than 60,000. “Winrod was more successful than most in creating his own religious enclave, but this tactic also appealed to many other fundamentalists who agreed that the major denominations had lost their ‘doctrinal purity.’” Moreover, President of the World Christian Fundamentals Association (WCFA), William Bell Riley, served on the editorial board of Winrod’s *Defender*. “Prominent fundamentalists invited Winrod to deliver sermons at the Churches, and in 1935 the Bible Institute of Los Angeles awarded him an honorary doctorate of

\(^{114}\) Ribuffo, 80.

\(^{115}\) Ibid., 81.

\(^{116}\) Ibid., 86.

\(^{117}\) Ibid., 90
divinity for outstanding contributions to preaching, ‘Biblical Scholarship,’ and ‘Christian Journalism.’”¹¹⁸ He believed that modernization within the church was unacceptable and those who embraced it were heretics.

Despite the fundamentalist “loss” at Scopes, Winrod continued to perceive Darwinism as a part of modernism and thus something that the Christian faith needed to defend itself against. He believed that any attention given to Darwinism was evidence of a “moral slag” that would affect every American family because the “great American home” was “built around marriage sacrament, “ and “was the bulwark of civilization.”¹¹⁹ He warned his congregations of the dangers the American family was facing with the following exclamation:

Don’t you dare teach your young people that in every cell of their bodies, in every organ and function of their anatomies; in every department of their minds and emotions; that they are stamped with the image, with the mark of the beast, and expect them to live clean, pure, noble lives and build good, sturdy dependable homes, with which to preserve the liberties and virtues of true American civilization.

According to Winrod’s belief system, free-spiritedness and evolving ideas regarding gender, ideology, and faith were evidence of the evils of modernity that would lead to the degeneration of the American family, thus requiring a return to conservative faith.¹²⁰ He argued that evolution was not science, and it was “only a hypothesis and has neither proved science nor

¹¹⁸ Ribuffo, 87.
¹¹⁹ Ibid., 90–1.
¹²⁰ Ibid., 92.
Scripture to sustain it.” Winrod concluded that “there is not a single proved fact in science, rightly understood, to support the idea of man’s animal origins.”\textsuperscript{121}

The primary facet of Winrod’s rhetoric distinguishing him from other fundamentalists and providing evidence of his influence on Swift was his fervent anti-Semitism. The synonymy of Judaism and Communism was becoming better established when Winrod’s stock was rising, and his popularity within fundamentalist circles and the consistency of his rhetoric and publications made “true” Christians more acutely aware about the dangers Judeo communism posed to the American people. Winrod certainly did not start a political movement, but it is arguable that, at least, within religious circles, he helped to link Judaism, Communism, and the Devil. \textit{The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion} served as both a foundational point for Winrod’s anti-Semitism as well as definitive evidence of Jewish treachery. Winrod believed that, like God, Satan acted through people on earth, and his demon minions would distort and influence the way mortal men and women acted and thought. He believed the Scripture, or rather proper interpretation of the Scripture by capable and true Christians, was the only means to discern the Dark One’s plans and determine his earthly forces.\textsuperscript{122} Winrod claimed that for over 20 years, he knew that the Antichrist and his agents – the Jews—would come to dominate the world. It is unclear whether Ford and Cameron’s \textit{International Jew} had any impact on Winrod’s ideas, but it is plausible that it did. Since \textit{The Protocols} influenced both Ford

\textsuperscript{122} Ribuffo, 89.
and Cameron and were the basis for much of their “evidence,” it stands to reason that if Winrod read *The International Jew*, at the very least, it confirmed what he already knew.\(^{123}\)

The year 1932 proved to be a pivotal year for Winrod because of the election of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Also, in 1932, the *Protocols* showed Winrod that “the “Jewish hidden hand” was “consciously preparing the way” for Satan. He suggested that “a careful reading of the Protocols will show that they base the hope of acquiring world dominion upon the control of gold. This idea is not new. There are repeated instances in history where nations have tried to break the Jewish money power.”\(^ {124}\) Winrod criticized the New Deal not merely because he believed it to be poor policy, but because he considered it a part of a larger plot to rob Americans of their freedom. This conspiracy, however, was merely part of a larger “world conspiracy” of which Roosevelt was simply a pawn: The Zionist World Conspiracy.\(^ {125}\) He reportedly saw the Jewish hidden hand at work in the Roosevelt administration. While Winrod was certainly not pro-Semitic before 1932, it appears that the advent of Roosevelt’s presidency and the subsequent New Deal program moved him irrevocably toward anti-Semitism and belief in a subversive Jewish culture that sought to undermine America and challenge the very heart of Christendom. Thus, armed with *The Protocols* and possibly the *International Jew* as definitive proof, it was now clear to Winrod that the Jews were Satan’s agents. He believed that “from the crucifixion of Christ to the torture of Russian Christians, and the plowing under of Kansas wheat in a hungry nation,” there was evidence of the hidden hand of Zion. He stated that the

\(^{123}\) Ribuffo, 109.

\(^{124}\) Winrod, 27.

\(^{125}\) Ribuffo, 110.
“Jewish elite had played Satanic roles in a divinely directed drama now drawing to a close.” The fact that Roosevelt had a Jewish advisor, Bernard Baruch, was definitive evidence of Jewish control over the American government.  

The New Deal was a point of contention for more than the radical right in the 1930s. The very fact that some Americans viewed it as communistic made it unpalatable. However, to those on the radical right, “unpalatable” barely scratched the surface. Due to his intense study of The Protocols, Winrod believed that the New Deal was evidence of the Protocol’s prophecies. “The New Deal,” Winrod stated “plunged” the country “into a program which is nothing short of a Socialistic experiment.” The Protocols stated that a society infected with the “poison of liberalism” would be destroyed and the only beneficiaries of the resultant devastation would be the Jews. The “very large percent” of Jews Roosevelt had in his inner circle made it clear that he was either being corrupted or manipulated. The evidence of his Jewish treachery was present in the New Deal as the conflation of Judaism and communism was already well-established. Thus, introducing a program like the New Deal into American society was presumably to benefit those who allied with a communist tautology.

Moreover, Winrod claimed that communism was but a modern-day manifestation of an ancient Satanic conspiracy to control the world and enslave its peoples. In a 1946 article, Winrod asserted that “the communist movement of the twentieth century stems from Satanic

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126 Ribuffo, 114.
127 Winrod, 2.
128 Ribuffo, 114.
forces that have operated from the remote past. It existed, back in the Old Testament times, as a conspiracy against the plan and purpose of God."\textsuperscript{129} Within the context of Winrod’s rhetoric and beliefs, this made perfect sense: Jews are communists, communism and Judaism are synonymous, Jews existed during “Old Testament times” thus, communism existed during that period. Winrod cites the \textit{Book of Ezekiel}, stating that “Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog” and later explained that “Gog” was a “prince” of a powerful nation “situated in the north” known as “Magog” and that it “will unite with other peoples and form a gigantic military combination.” He revealed that “the term Gog is associated with the color red. It is significant that communists of our day are called ‘reds.’”\textsuperscript{130} He continues to provide evidence of the Biblical origins of communism by asserting that “Esau’s descendants were called Edomites—or Redites. They were the reds of old testament times.” This interpretation of Biblical communism would become a part of Wesley Swift’s notions of the Biblical origins of communism.\textsuperscript{131} “No informed person” Winrod submits, can doubt the equation of Judaism and communism. “Judaism and the banks will” come to “rule over everything.” Judaism has tried and will continue to try to “tear out Christianity by its roots and destroy Christian culture.”\textsuperscript{132}

The fact that Roosevelt was the one who enacted the New Deal and introduced any amount of communist or communistic practices into American society was tantamount to treason and made it evident that he was acting under the orders of his Judeo-communist

\textsuperscript{129} Winrod, 27.
\textsuperscript{130} Ibid., 18.
\textsuperscript{131} Ibid., 29.
\textsuperscript{132} Ibid., 39.
beneficiaries. Winrod believed that he had uncovered the truth about Roosevelt. Although he was not willing to claim that Roosevelt was of Jewish origin, he was more than willing to assert that the President had a “Semitic mind.” Echoing Evans, Winrod believed that a person’s mindset was not capable of “Christian American viewpoints” unless he was a “true American,” and thus Roosevelt should not be leading the country.\textsuperscript{133}

In 1933, Winrod published “Communism and the Roosevelt Brain Trust” as a newsletter and sold it to his parishioners. Even though he was unwilling to claim that Roosevelt was Jewish, he did not extend that same courtesy to the Kremlin. He believed the “Jewish government of Bolshevik Russia” to be a testimony of the connections he had drawn between Judaism and communism, and for a reason likely associated with treason, after Roosevelt’s inauguration, he officially recognized the Soviet Union’s “Jewish government.” Winrod particularly attacked Roosevelt’s “academic advisors” or Brain Trust. After his inauguration, the President employed several advisers to help implement the New Deal. These were academics or professors—professions Jews or Jewish sympathizers held— and frequently attacked by Winrod and Swift. “Mr. Roosevelt had draped about himself an organization of so-called super intellectuals, knows as the Brain Trust, which is presided over by a few college professors. An examination of this group will confirm the fears of American citizens who have a dread of radicalism in high places.”\textsuperscript{134} Winrod outlined the reasons he believed that several key members of the Brain Trust were dangerous, godless, and “surely attempting to set up what may be called a socialistic dictatorship in Washington.” He feared the President’s program was

\textsuperscript{133} Gerald B. Winrod, “Communism and the Roosevelt Brain Trust” (Gerald Winrod, 1933), 2.
\textsuperscript{134} Winrod, 2–3.
representative of a dictatorial trend materializing across Western and Central Europe due to expanded federal authority. The fact that Roosevelt’s Brain Trust comprised of Judeo communists disloyal to God and America also did not act in his favor. Winrod believed that “the Brain Trust overshadows the president’s cabinet;” it was “the Brain Trust that” knew “what the president” was “thinking;” it was “the Brain Trust that” helped “inspire those thoughts.” Winrod’s fervor over the Jewish Brain Trust being the real power in America was evident as he stated “these scholastic gentlemen” were “controlling and directing the destinies of 122,775,046 American people,” asserting that the Brain Trust had “demonstrated their inability to respect and adjust themselves to the grated standards which were staked out by those rugged Christian builders of the Americanism that has made our democratic system of government a blessing to untold, millions, and a beacon of light to the nations of this world.”

Winrod accused each member of the Brain Trust of many things, from being the true brains behind the communistic New Deal to fostering disdain for the Constitution and American traditions. He railed against Congress for being “deaf, dumb, and blind” and being duped, or worse, complicit in the Judeo academic plot for the undoing of the Christian fabric of America. “The Brain Trust is located at the top of the government, but the cause of the disease is further down. In fact, the cause reaches to the very foundations, the ultimate unit, the individual citizens, of the nation. We are witnessing a dying at the top, but the trouble is at the roots.” Winrod further asserted:

There must come a moral, a spiritual rebuilding from the ground up. Our foundations are not rooted in politics and economics. Beneath every structure of good government there is an iron base of morality. A nation’s cohesive quality is to be found in its

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135 Winrod, 3.
spirituality. The greater values of life and government are spiritual. There is an imperative need of moral regeneration. America’s sickness is first spiritual, then physical.

Winrod believed Christian faith was the solution. However, this implied only “true” Christian faith, inferring that only he and his followers were capable of accurately interpreting God’s word, opening the eyes of the country, and helping to “precipitate a great spiritual awakening.” Winrod proclaimed that “Jesus said that the purpose of the Gospel was to be salt to society. Salt keeps substances from becoming putrid. The rottenness which is festering in the flesh of America will be cured, if indeed it is ever cured, only by the faithful application of the salt of the gospel,” as interpreted by Winrod and “true Christians.” 136

Communism as a movement and an ideology stood in contrast to the Gospels and as such, was distinctly anti-American. Winrod asserted that:

The Communist Movement can be traced in a direct line as an organized conspiracy back to the middle of the 18th century. Beyond that date it becomes somewhat nebulous as far as written records are concerned. The history of the movement is geared to the story of Illuminism. Bible believing Christians detect in this weird system of occultism a demonic principle, capable of warping the minds of men, by powers that transcend human levels. It existed in Apostolic times and is described in the New Testament as the ‘mystery of iniquity.’ 137

Winrod continued and stated that the Apostle Paul exposed the Satanic source of Illuminism – and by extension communism – in his letter to the Ephesians where he said “for we wrestle not

136 Winrod, 12.
137 Winrod, 37-38.
against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rules of the
darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” Winrod defined Illuminism
as a term “used by mystic groups to indicate the reception of ‘light’ being ‘directly
communicated to them from a higher source, as due to the clarified and exalted condition of
the human intelligence.” Illuminism, he asserted, promoted spiritism and immoral sexual
practices and taught that reason suppressed faith.”138 The trail of Illuminism from the Biblical
era through the centuries comes to a head in the “present hour” as Judeo-Communism and the
Soviet Union139

In the early 1930s, Winrod’s perception of the Führer was not what it would become in
later years. In the same year that Hitler became Chancellor, Winrod referred to him as “a wild
beast” and a “prophetic misfit.” He believed that Nazism and Hitler were suppressing German
Christianity and replacing it with a demonic mysticism. Despite his condemnation of
dictatorship, fascism, and the attacks on Christianity, and in particular, the fear that Roosevelt
was a part of this anti-American and anti-Christian trend, by 1934, Winrod “grew increasingly
sympathetic to the Nazi regime.” Beginning that year, Winrod “uncritically accepted Nazi
justifications for their anti-Semitic policies.” Arguably, his fear and hatred of Jews trumped his
fear of countries whose leadership was incongruous or antithetical to Americanism. Like many
others, Winrod came to believe that Hitler was only acting as he was out of desperation caused
by Jewish radicalism and began to perceive the Nazis’ actions as necessary. “Winrod went on to
absolve them of bias against the Jewish religion and claimed that they had protected good Jews

138 Ibid., 39.

139 Ibid, 41.
from fanatics.”

Winrod also believed that he had “been deceived by propaganda about Hitler’s religion,” as in the early 1930s, the Führer was still referencing God and Christianity in his speeches. Because of this turn to fervent Führer support, in 1935 the FBI began tracking and monitoring Winrod because of his pro-German and anti-Semitic stance. Indeed, in by the mid-1930s American “Nazi sympathizers were, in turn, Pro-Winrod.”

**Nazism and Christianity**

Despite contemporary evidence to the contrary, most Americans view white supremacy movements as fringe or ineffectual movements in the United States. These movements have been equated with xenophobic, uneducated people on the fringes of society and not with ministers, doctors, and politicians. Thus, historians have generally overlooked the social face of American Neo-Nazism, rarely taking the time to investigate this critical phenomenon. As it turns out, American Neo-Nazism did not have its origins in the post-World War II years. It dates to Hitler’s rise during the interwar years and draws on influences from even earlier, as previously noted in the chapter. American sympathizers followed Hitler’s activities, embracing and echoing the ideology of his National Socialist Party, including how Nazism and the Protestant church reconciled their co-existence, or, in some cases, even developed a mutually beneficial partnership.

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140 Ribuffo, 117.

After the First World War, Hitler embraced what he referred to as the “greatest villainy of the century,” more commonly known as, “the stab in the back.” Author Gerhard Weinberg asserted in his essay “Propaganda for Peace and Preparation for War,” that in Germany, anti-Semitism grew rapidly due to the widespread belief that Jewish conspirators betrayed the Germans and caused the Fatherland to lose the First World War. Throughout the late 19th century and early 20th century, Europe had become increasingly hostile towards Jewish people, and this animosity led Hitler (in the name of Germany) to make Jews scapegoats. Historian Richard Steigman-Gall attempted to show that because of the stab in the back myth, coupled with growing hyper-nationalism, many Germans eventually embraced anti-Semitism as a part of Germany’s cultural heritage. The person who took this sentiment and made it a national priority was Adolf Hitler.

The German surrender during World War I incensed Hitler, and that fanaticism became a crucial factor in his ideological development, at least with regard to the Jewish people. “There is no such thing as coming to an understanding with the Jews,” he stated, “it must be the hard-and-fast ‘Either-Or.’” Hitler came to this realization while recovering from his injuries in the Great War.

When the waves of poison gas enveloped me and began to penetrate my eyes, the thought of becoming permanently blind unnerved me; but the voice of conscience cried out immediately: Poor miserable fellow, will you start howling when there are thousands of others whose lot is a hundred times worse than yours? And so I accepted my misfortune in silence, realizing that this was the only thing to be done and that personal suffering was nothing when compared with the misfortune of one's country.

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143 Hitler, 95.
144 Ibid., 94
While “blinded at Pasewalk (hospital),” he claimed, “he received a type of vision, message, or inspiration to liberate the German people and make Germany great again.”

Hitler viewed the surrender of the German army as nothing short of a betrayal. “From that point onwards, his entire political activity was driven by the trauma of 1918—aimed at expunging defeat and revolution which had betrayed all that he believed in and eliminating those he held responsible.” According to Hitler’s account, it was in the hospital, where he concluded that Jews were the worst enemies of Germany. Historian Ian Kershaw submitted that Hitler’s time in the army—during and post-war—shaped him into the kind of demagogue he would become and helped him find his voice, both in print through Mein Kampf and orally, and this would lead him to international prominence.

The publication of Mein Kampf and Hitler’s time in Landsberg prison would not only be the time during which “Hitler consolidated and rationalized his world view,” but it would eventually become the birth of crucial facets of Swift’s movement decades later. Swift had a favorable view of the Führer, going so far as to say that “the only thing wrong with Adolph Hitler was that he was ahead of” his “time.” As the leader of Nazism, Hitler was undoubtedly an equally important figure in the Neo-Nazi movement. In Mein Kampf, Hitler made it clear

145 Kershaw, 103.
146 Ibid., 104.
147 Kershaw, 104-105.
that Judeo-Bolshevism was the real enemy and that its destruction was necessary. Both Europeans and Americans were already drawing that conclusion, but the popularity of Mein Kampf solidified, to this day for some, the intrinsic connection between Judaism and communism.

Hitler believed that fate had chosen him and his followers to deliver Germany to its rightful place. Additionally, there was a pervasive sentiment that there was no difference between being a loyal supporter of the Führer and being a good Christian. The Nazis, Steigman-Gall argued, were not anti-Christian, and in fact, many identified themselves as “good” or “true” Christians. He stated that “leading Nazis conceived their movement to be in some sense a Christian one,” and many ordinary rank-and-file National Socialists believed “Nazism was infused with key elements of Christian belief.” The religiosity in statements like this would again serve as a point of inspiration for Swift and his movement.

By the late 1920s, the Nazi party was essentially becoming Hitler’s party, and he turned it into a vehicle for his ascendancy; as the number of members continued to rise exponentially. So much so, that by 1933, the Reich President Paul Von Hindenburg would make the “mistake” that former Hitler ally and hero of World War I, General Erich Von Ludendorff declared would “cast” Germany “into the abyss” and asserted that “future generations” would “damn him” for what he had done.149 Hindenburg appointed Hitler to the position of Chancellor and assured his rise to Führer-dom. This was such a monumental moment for Hitler that he even considered

149 Kershaw, 424.
changing the calendar to “mark the beginning of a new world order.” Historians have noted that his appointment was not inevitable and required a certain amount of luck. However, that “luck” was arguably perceived as Providence by both the German Christians and Swift’s movement, both of whom viewed Hitler as “a hero and a warrior” against the struggle of Jewish contamination.\(^{151}\)

The Nazification of Christianity was undoubtedly something the German population was open to, and it was evident that the Nazis themselves could not reject Christianity outright, “not only because it would offend the moral and social sensibilities of Germans, but because the anti-Semitism of Christianity formed the basis on which the party could appeal to Germans.”\(^{152}\) The relationship between Nazism and Christianity illustrates perhaps why many Germans were “encouraged” beyond the standard track of Christian anti-Semitism, and “inspired” to a more intense hatred of Jews, a group they increasingly regarded as an impediment to German prosperity.

Hitler certainly utilized Christianity as a tool during his rise to power, and some German Protestant sects and supporters followed through with the Führer’s desire to merge Nazism and Christianity.\(^{153}\) Hitler’s view of Jesus remained remarkably consistent throughout his political career and differed significantly from his upbringing as a baptized Catholic. To him, Jesus was not and could never have been a Jew; instead he was Aryan and anti-Jewish. Hitler believed

\(^{150}\) Ibid., 434.


\(^{152}\) Heschel, 8.

\(^{153}\) Bergen, 2.
that Jesus was Germanic with blond hair and blue eyes. “Throughout Hitler’s career – publicly and privately—he honored Jesus for exemplifying what he considered the most important Aryan moral traits: idealism, socialism, and especially anti-Semitism.” On December 13, 1941, in a speech to his henchmen, Hitler stated that “Christ was an Aryan and St. Paul used his doctrine to mobilize the criminal underworld and thus organize a proto-Bolshevism.” The notion that Bolshevism or communism predated the Soviet Union or even Karl Marx and had Biblical origins was an idea, Swift, his predecessors and his followers would embrace, and it is plausible, due to their fascination with Hitler, to conclude that the Führer played a significant role in this.

Paul was another subject that would garner a significant amount of attention from Hitler during his speeches and talks. Theological historians have generally stated that Paul played a significant part in “the formation of the church, the development of Christian doctrine, and the struggle for ecclesiastical power.” Indeed, it has been asserted that “the fact that the Gentile world adopted Christianity is owing solely to one man: Paul of Tarsus. Without Paul, it is highly unlikely that Christianity would ever have broken away from Judaism.” That Paul was a Jew was arguably a point of contention for the Führer and put the Apostle at odds with the Aryan Jesus.

Jesus fought against the materialism of His age, and, therefore, against the Jews. Paul of Tarsus, who was originally one of the most stubborn enemies of the Christians, suddenly realised the immense possibilities of using, intelligently and for other ends, an idea which was exercising such great powers of fascination. He realized that the judicious exploitation of this idea among non-Jews would give him far greater power in the world

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than would the promise of material profit to the Jews themselves. It was then that the future St. Paul distorted with diabolical cunning the Christian idea.  

Hitler would influence the arrival of American Neo-Nazism through Wesley Swift, but that did not mean that there were no differences. The perception of Paul and his role in the arrival of Christianity was a point of difference between the German Nazi movement and the American Neo-Nazi movement. This is likely because the Neo-movement was rooted in Christian fundamentalism; arguably, it was the difference between Nazifying Christianity, and Christianizing (or baptizing) Nazism.

According to authors Doris Bergen and Susannah Heschel, Christian churches and novel theological interpretations did a great deal to bolster both popular anti-Semitism and the Nazi regime. Bergen, for example, explored how Protestant churches provided critical moral support behind anti-Jewish laws and, ultimately, helped to prepare the way for the Holocaust itself. For her part, Heschel chronicled in her book *Aryan Jesus: Christian Theologians and the Bible in Nazi Germany*, how Christian theologians championed a particular method of interpreting the Scriptures which “divorced Jesus from Judaism on the basis of his religious teachings, which were consistently interpreted as a critique of Judaism rather than an expression of it.”  

Hitler explained in October, 1941 that “Jesus was not a Jew” and “the Jews regarded Him as the son of a whore—of a whore and a Roman soldier.”  

The removal of Jesus

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157 Heschel, 33.

and Christianity from any Jewish origins was a theme continued by Swift and his followers. Thus, because American contemporaries believed that Hitler was divinely inspired, Swift would also adopt this belief and parrot the Führer’s words,

The Nazi concept of “positive Christianity” has three significant points: the desire to overcome the confessional divide, a social ethic, and of course, anti-Semitism. Scholars have previously dismissed or diminished the slogan as merely a propaganda attempt by the Nazis to hide, or at least mask their contempt for Christianity. However, it is arguable that this term describes Christianity during the interwar years before Hitler came to power, and that Germans began to see Nazism as an extension of Christianity, a somewhat uniquely nationalistic form of German Christianity. Third Reich Christian theologian and Professor D. Cajus Fabricius contended that “Positive Christianity” was “the foundation of National Socialism” and that in speeches given in January and August, 1934, Hitler both affirmed and confirmed this affiliation.159 Fabricius asserts that “Adolf Hitler declared that by Positive Christianity, he meant the Christianity of the two great Churches the Evangelical and the Roman Catholic, both of which are represented in Germany.”160 The conception of positive Christianity explained the fundamental connection of Nazism and Christianity to the German people. “Positive Christianity is the innermost life, the spirit, the soul of the National Socialist German People, or in other

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159 D. Cajus Fabricius, Positive Christianity in the Third Reich (Hermann Pushcel: Dresden, 1937), 12.

160 Ibid., 6.
words, National Socialism itself has its roots deep in Christian spirit; it is a movement determined by Christianity.”

Richard Steigman-Gall asserted in his book, *The Holy Reich: Nazi Conceptions of Christianity*, that Nazism and Christianity had a close, albeit ambiguous, relationship. He stated that “the insistence that Nazism was an anti-Christian movement has been one of the most enduring truisms of the past fifty years,” and notes that the primary goal of his book was to disprove that perception. Indeed, Steigman-Gall emphasized that members of the Nazi elite had a close connection to Christianity, the Bible, and spirituality. While it is true that Hitler showed disdain for Christianity throughout his time in power, this did not mean that German citizens abandoned Christianity entirely. Hitler’s speeches and rhetoric made it clear he was not above employing Christianity as a tool to further Nazi programs and goals. Indeed, historian Michael Burleigh cited the Führer in a 1936 speech before the Reichstag in which he declared, “I believe today that I am acting in the sense of the Almighty Creator. By warding off the Jews I am fighting for the Lord’s work.” Arguably, Hitler’s usage of Christianity as a tool to consolidate power and support confirmed for Neo-Nazis that the Führer was indeed a God-fearing and practicing Christian. Furthermore, Nazi anti-Semitism and racism influenced and shaped the face of anti-Semitic and racist dogmas thereafter, particularly in America. Future white supremacists, including Identists, saw Nazism as modern and foundational and viewed Nazism as a successful model to follow as it provided “proof” that Hitler was Biblically inspired and a prophet with redemptive theological power.

161 Ibid., 18
Perhaps the most significant denomination that urged the conflation of Nazism with Christianity and took considerable care to kowtow to the Führer was the German Christians or *Deutsche Christen*. Despite there being no causal link yet discovered, both the German Christians and Christian Identists sought to provide a place of providential importance for Hitler and the Nazis movement. Both saw Hitler as inspired by a divine plan; both saw the Aryan race as God’s true chosen, and both utilized Scripture to “definitively” prove that Jesus was not Jewish but an Aryan warrior who sought to destroy the Jewish influence on the world. Despite their fervent aim to gain and maintain Hitler’s approval, the German Christian movement did not enjoy the continual support of the Nazi upper echelon. In fact, after the purge in 1934, also known as the Night of Long Knives, and then the passage of the Nuremberg Race laws in 1935, the Third Reich had largely withdrawn support for German Christians, but this did not imply that German citizens did the same.\(^162\) Author Doris Bergen asserted that the mere lack of support from the Nazi hierarchy did not mean that the church was not popular with the average German citizen. The church’s efforts to “dejudaize” Christianity certainly did appeal to the German people, as well as to Americans. The German Christians were more than merely opportunistically and parasitically attaching themselves to the Nazi party to gain approval and support, but rather, grew out of an Evangelical Lutheranism, emerging hypernationalism, and an existent and deep-seated anti-Semitism.\(^163\)

\(^{162}\) Bergen, 18.
\(^{163}\) Ibid., 143.
The German Christians believed that Nazism and Christianity were not only reconcilable but that the followers of their dogma were representative of “true Christians.” 164 Reich Bishop Ludwig Muller, a leading Deutsche Christen declared in 1934, “we must emphasize with all decisiveness that Christianity did not grow out of Judaism, but developed in opposition to Judaism. When we speak of Christianity and Judaism today, the two in their most fundamental essence stand in glaring contrast to one another. There is no bond between them, rather the sharpest opposition.” 165 This is, again, a theme that was appropriated and echoed by their American counterparts.

Throughout the mid-1930s, Hitler consolidated absolute power in Germany, and his influence continued to spread outward. Contemporaries viewed him as responsible for bringing Germany out of its economic depression. Since America was in the throes of the Great Depression, supporters of the Führer admired from afar the work Hitler did and paid close attention to his successes. Propaganda excelled under Hitler, who was a master propagandist himself. In Mein Kampf, he asserted that “propaganda is a means and must, therefore, be judged in relation to the end it is intended to serve. It must be organized in such a way as to be capable of attaining its objective. And, as it is quite clear that the importance of the objective may vary from the standpoint of general necessity, the essential internal character of the propaganda must vary accordingly.” Mein Kampf, his speeches, and the film Triumph of the Will became “the stuff of Nazi legend.” His success in convincing Germany, and to some extent, the world, of the purpose and necessity of Nazism, was evident. One of the vehicles the

164 Ibid., 13.
165 Ibid., , 21.
Deutsche Christen utilized to emphasize the heresy that was Christ’s Jewish origins was Walter Grundmann’s Institute for the Study and Eradication of Jewish Influence on German Life (Institut zur Erforschung und Beseitigung des Jüdischen Einflusses im Deutschen Kirchlichen Leben). In 1939, Walter Grundmann organized the institute that served as a tool for the spread of the propaganda for the German Christian movement. The institution aimed to rewrite the genealogy of Jesus Christ and definitively demonstrate that Jesus was not Jewish but an Aryan warrior who fought valiantly against Jewish tyranny and tragically fell victim to their transgressions. For his part, Hitler was aware of the institute’s research and supported its conclusions. Further, he embraced the notion that Jesus stood as the defender against the world’s Jewish enemies and implied that he was joining and continuing Jesus’ effort: “In standing guard against the Jew I am defending the handiwork of the Lord.”

A substantial number of German Christian leaders perceived Nazism as a positive development, and the leadership of the movement went so far as to believe Hitler himself embodied the millennial prophecy that would rid the world of evil and restore paradise on earth, a project that required the elimination of Jews. A growing number of German Christians believed that the approaching battle against the Jews would not be comprised of only a military conflict, but an all-important spiritual battle to salvage their Christian souls.

166 Ibid., 2.
167 Heschel, 3.
168 Hitler, 38.
169 Bergen, 27.
170 Heschel, 4, 90.
Grundmann asserted that “Jewish influence on all areas of German life, including on religious-church life, must be exposed and broken,” because he, like many German Christians, believed Jews to be “violent people who sought the destruction of Jesus.” This idea fueled fears that the Jews would instigate a violent overthrow of the Reich, an essential step in a greater plan of Jewish world domination.171

The Jews’ violent nature alone would not bring about the destruction of Germany; their biology and mere existence would bear responsibility. The Deutsche Christen believed that even a baptism could not change or redeem “the racial essence of the Jews.” Jews were infected with an incurable, heretical, and destructive taint, and unless it was eradicated, that stain would bring about the fall of Germany. The Deutsche Christen were immune to Jewish infection and thus stood as God’s true disciples, individuals essential to humanity’s salvation, a “chosen people” in their own right.172

Heschel and Bergen further agreed that National Socialist ideology and its views of Christianity sparked German Christians’ fervent desire to please and appease the Nazi regime. According to many within the Nazi upper echelon, Christianity’s Jewish roots made it infected with impurities, and thus it was imperative for the Deutsche Christen to De-Judaize Jesus. Heschel, like Bergen and Steigman-Gall, noted that Alfred Rosenberg, who functioned as Hitler’s Commissar for Supervision of Intellectual and Ideological Education, was a vocal enemy of Christianity, and saw it as a phenomenon that was undermining National Socialist global

171 Heschel, 1, 19.

172 Bergen, 26.
ambitions. However, Heschel asserted that because the Deutsche Christen flourished during the Third Reich, they were able to conclude and “prove” specific “facts” about Christianity and Judaism that were in line with Aryanism and Nazism. Both Bergen and Heschel suggested that German Christianity in the Nazi era essentially became an irreligious political and social movement.

Nazism played a significant role in the development of Swift’s ideology and, perhaps unknowingly, he was influenced by the German Christian movement attempt to Nazify Christianity. Many of the tenets, theories, and philosophies that Wesley Swift preached were either manipulated or appropriated from pre-existing ideologies and theologies. Thus, it is plausible that Identists may have known about the Deutsche Christian through previous pro-Nazi American demagogues such as Gerald Winrod who visited Nazi Germany and thereafter was able to blend Nazism into a form of Christian fundamentalism in the 1930s. In the United States, this merger exhibited many of the same characteristics as the German Christian movement; American proponents were considerably more meticulous in ensuring their particular brand of racial ideology was rooted in and supported by the Scripture. The aspect in which American and German support of the Third Reich differed most was their relationship with the government and politics in general; it was Reverend Gerald L.K. Smith, who was arguably most directly responsible for laying the foundation of many political and social tenets for future white supremacist and Neo-Nazi dogma and ideology in the United States. He went on to become a significant influence on American Neo-Nazism’s evolution from the 1930s forward, and his beliefs, assertions, and most notably, his accusations and tirades against his perceived enemies of America, laid the foundation for the ideology that his lieutenant, Wesley
Swift, later raised to a new level of influence. British Israelism, the Second Klan, Nazism, and Winrod’s Christian anti-Semitism provide a formidable backdrop through which a man like Wesley Swift could adapt and craft his Christian Identity theology. Moreover, the men responsible for these movements arguably had direct, indirect, or potential (though not necessarily substantiated) contact with Wesley Swift.

British Israelism served as the forerunner to Christian Identity. Religious tenets and historical anecdotes found in Swift’s Identity depended on British Israelism. Howard Rand himself was the man responsible for beginning the Identity movement that Swift embraced. William J. Cameron was not only a prominent businessman and British Israelite, and as Ford’s second-in-command, it is arguable that he helped craft the most crucial anti-Semitic document of our time, *The International Jew*. Furthermore, Swift’s mentor, Gerald L.K. Smith, considered Ford a “superman” and composed the introduction for one of the last publications of Ford’s work. Additionally, naval intelligence documents suggest that Henry Ford left Wesley Swift a monetary bequest in his will.173

Although it remains unclear whether Hiram Evans and Wesley Swift ever had any direct contact, we do know that Swift served as a Kleagle or Klan emissary, a potentially lucrative position, for several years after the Klan’s heyday. It is thus likely that the hyper-nationalism of the Invisible Empire and the Grand Dragon’s conflation of Americanism and Christianity influenced Swift’s development. Indeed, a fair amount of Swift’s hyperbole and proclamations reek of the Klannishness and hyper-nationalist Americanism that was endemic in Evans’ Klan.

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173 Memo, Army Intelligence, September 8, 1958.
Winrod’s blend of Christian fundamentalism and rampant anti-Semitism was something that Swift embraced wholeheartedly. While it is unclear whether Swift and Winrod ever met, when historians of the radical Christian right discuss these men, they tend to discuss them concomitantly. More significant, however, is the fact that it is evident that Winrod knew of and corresponded with Gerald L.K. Smith, Swift’s mentor. Furthermore, Winrod’s shifting perception of the Führer and belief that Americanism could only be defensible through devout Protestant faith facilitated the provision of a backdrop for a ready-made audience, waiting in the wings for Wesley Swift.

Nazism, Hitler, and the Deutsche Christian provide key figures and tenets of Swift’s Identity Movement. While there may not yet be any evidence of a direct link between the German Christians and Christian Identity, it is something arguably worth investigating. It is plausible that there was such a link, based on the veneration of a divinely inspired Hitler by Swift and his supporters. As religious figures who were in agreement with Hitler, it is not farfetched to surmise that they would also know about Christian support and justification for his actions. What sets Swift’s Identity firmly apart from the Deutsche Christian, or “Neo,” is the American and Postwar context, and that there is no longer a Führer around to appease or Nazify Christianity for.

These four movements and their leaders serve as the backdrop and illustrate that there was a somewhat pervasive sentiment in the America of 1920s—1930s that was ready to listen to the gospel as interpreted and told by Swift. To understand this, it is first necessary to explicate where it is likely that Swift received his Identity education: Phillip E.J. Monson’s Kingdom Bible College in Los Angeles, California.
CHAPTER 2: SWIFT’S EDUCATION:
PHILLIP E.J. MONSON AND KINGDOM BIBLE COLLEGE

Given the prominent role he played in shaping Christian Identity and his foundational influence, there is not much known about Swift’s early life. He was born in New Jersey in 1913, ordained as a minister in 1930, and became a member of the Anglo-Saxon Federation in 1931. Between the founding of the Anglo-Saxon Federation and the year 1939, no information is available. FBI declassified dossiers about Swift reveal that by 1939, he was residing in Lancaster, California, and Southern California became the base for his operations. The little that is known has come from the works of a select few historians who acknowledge Swift’s role in popularizing Identity and making it an enduring American theology. However, they rarely discuss the question of how and when Swift first encountered Identity, the reason behind his move to the west, and where he learned what would become the crucial tenets of his theology.

As a young man, Swift served as a Kleagle, or Klan emissary, in the Ku Klux Klan and attended meetings of Howard Rand and William J. Cameron’s Anglo-Saxon Federation. As Rand was the person most directly responsible for codifying the Christian Identity theology, it is possible that Swift first encountered British Israelism and Christian Identity through Rand. Both


175 SAC (Special Agent in Charge), memo, Concerning Racial Matters, Los Angeles, January 30, 1959.

Rand and Cameron were central to the spread of British Israelism, and Christian Identity and declassified federal documents have revealed that Swift did indeed attend their Federation meetings. Naval intelligence documents claim that Henry Ford took note of the young pastor and possibly left him a monetary bequest.\textsuperscript{177} It is indeed possible that Swift met Ford through Cameron and the Anglo-Saxon Federation, but if his connection to the movement was on the east coast, this again raises the question about why he moved to the west coast.

It is unclear when Swift abandoned Methodism in favor of British Israelism; however, a few plausible answers have emerged thus far. His wife believed it came from listening to sermons and speeches delivered by Gerald Winrod, and as discussed in Chapter One, it is evident that the position of America as God’s chosen land was something that Winrod supported. Additionally, a former pupil, James K. Warner, who was a leading figure in Swift’s Christian Defense League, has suggested that the New Jersey Reverend attended a lecture about the theology and converted thereafter. Another explanation is that he received the knowledge from his affiliation with San Jacinto Capt, a former Baptist minister, and preacher who taught Swift about Identity. A pupil of both Capt and Swift, William Potter Gale, asserted that Swift learned about Identity from Capt. However, it is worth noting that after Swift died, Gale became “bitterly hostile” towards his mentor, and “scholars have considered his version to be rife with contradictions.” Thus, “Gale’s views must be weighed with care.”\textsuperscript{178}

\textsuperscript{177} Army Intelligence, memo, September 8, 1958.

\textsuperscript{178} Barkun, 60–61.
While all these reasonings are indeed plausible, it is far more likely that Swift received much of his theological education by attending Kingdom Bible College in Los Angeles. Historian Michael Barkun observed that “Swift came to California shortly after the college was founded, and his association with it very likely was the principal source of his early Anglo-Israel views.” Swift certainly attended Kingdom Bible college, and this arguably provides an answer to both the question of where he received his education and why he moved out west.179 While the other theories may address how he learned about British Israelism and Christian Identity, they do not provide any plausible explanations as to why Swift moved to Southern California, what he did in those interim years, and why he chose the Los Angeles metroplex as the location for his church.

Kingdom Bible College was an extension of Howard Rand’s Anglo-Saxon Federation, dedicated to teaching British Israelite philosophy and theology, and led by Rand’s “man in the West,” Philip E.J. Monson.180 Although minimal information is available about Monson, the influence he had on the evolution of Swift’s ideas is significant. From an analysis of his sermons, speeches, publications, and teachings, it becomes evident that Swift learned significant facets of Christian Identity theology under Monson at the Kingdom Bible College. It was within the walls of this school that the dual seed-line theory (with regard to Identity) first emerged, the nature of the Jews and their role in Biblical history shifted, and the vehement anti-Semitism in Swift’s ideas becomes evident. Monson and the school appear to be an essential milestone where the transition from the more passive and exclusionary anti-Semitism of British Israelism

179 Ibid., 61.
180 Ibid, 62.
to the aggressive and hostile version of Christian Identity took place. In addition to being a preacher and headmaster of the college, Monson was also the president and founder of the college’s weekly newsletter called “The Herald of Our Race” and a frequent contributor to the same. Thus, the examination of Monson’s teachings becomes a critical facet and provides an additional piece to explicate the foundation of Wesley Swift’s lasting and unique brand of Christian anti-Semitism.

Monson believed that false teachings and interpretations had poisoned Christendom. People who called themselves “Christians” were not “true Christians” and did not represent “true Israel.” His followers and pupils were the ones who knew the “true path” that God intended for them, the chosen people. “All Christian Bible schools, writers, and teachers have propounded this false anti-Christian teaching,” and “it is the Anglo Israel movement” that “began to expose it and enlighten the people.” The purpose of Monson’s school was to expose that “truth” and ensure his students and the wider American population recognized it. Monson believed it was necessary to educate his readers and students about whom those people claiming to be “Jews” were. Monson lamented that previous scholars accepted studies concerning the Jews and their relationship to Christian history “without question or examination.” He asserted that “very few Christian writers, theologians, or layman or Biblical teachers have personally investigated, in the Bible or history, the beginnings of the Jewish people” as he had. He contended that “many have blatantly asserted that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” were Jews, “yet the fact remains that the first time Jews were mentioned in the Bible”
was not until “II Kings 16:6.”181 He differentiates between the House of Judah and the House of Israel, stating that “Judah” was the “fifth son” born to Jacob by Leah, whom he was forced to marry, and because he hated Leah, that “hatred carried into the blood of his offspring.” Thus, the Jews, as descendants of the House of Judah, were beings inherently filled with hatred. He further asserted that the Bible always differentiates between those two houses and notes that “all Israel” does not include Judah and that any preacher who claims the contrary was wrong or ignorant about their errors.182

It is not clear when the transition from the anti-Semitism of British Israelism to the anti-Semitic vitriol of Swift’s Christian Identity Movement occurred. However, Monson and the Kingdom Bible college were arguably essential to the transition to the latter. Earlier British Israelite theologians did not completely renounce Judah as a part of “all Israel,” but they did draw sharp distinctions between the northern tribes of Israel and the southern tribes of Judah.183 Initially, they were content to concede that because Judah was, at one point, part of Israel, that they had received some of God’s blessings. The transition is evident because Monson asserted that the “Jews” abandoned, betrayed, and forfeited these blessings by not accepting Christ.184 Monson’s writing makes it clear that he does not agree with this resolution, and a first step in facilitating the transition was providing a reason behind the “disowning of Judah: “the “sale of Christ for thirty pieces of silver.” Monson stated that “there is only the one

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183 Monson, 3.

184 Monson, 26.
version for this breaking of the racial brotherhood between Judah and Israel and that is that the Judahites, as represented by the Jewish remnant, rejected the Messiah.”

Establishing the identity of the “apostate” Jews was only a part of the solution. Monson explicated who truly received God’s blessing and who the current inheritors were. He asserted that “under the influence of the Holy Spirit,” Jacob, or Israel, passed the birthright he received from his father Isaac to “Ephraim,” the youngest son of Joseph, and then continued the blessing to Joseph’s other son, Manasseh as well. According to British Israelites, Ephraim represented, genealogically, Great Britain or “a nation and a company of nations,” and Manasseh, similarly, would represent “a great people,” or the United States of America. As both sons received Israel’s blessing, it is important to note that each represents two countries essential to British Israelism in America. Even though, as Monson observed, “Ephraim was placed before his older brother,” which is contrary to tradition, the Holy Spirit inspired Israel to bless Ephraim, first saying that he will “become a multitude of nations.” This “fact” was an essential point in emphasizing the divinity of Great Britain, and by extension, the United States of America, as a foundational point for both British Israelism and Christian Identity. Significantly, Monson did not mention that America was the only receiver of the birthright, and perhaps, not coincidentally, observed that Britain received the blessing first through Ephraim. Since America was founded, settled, and “civilized” by the British, who through the creation of the British Empire came to represent “a multitude of nations,” the growth of the American people to

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greatness was because both the nation’s forefathers received God’s blessing through the birthright of Israel. Monson suggested that “our greatest Bible scholars have missed these Birthright promises to come from Abraham through Isaac — Jacob — Joseph — Ephraim to present day. They cannot be found in the Jews because Jews are not even a nation today and never will be again.”

These so-called “Jews” did not have a homeland, let alone a “promised land,” at least in accordance to Monson’s works, published in the late 1920s into the 1940s, thus they could not be considered God’s chosen people, nor should they ever be.

The Kingdom Bible College consistently detailed that the “apostate Jews” were not representative of the nation of Israel, nor had they received God’s promise, and were not the chosen people. The origin of these people who called themselves “Jews” and their designs for Christendom was of monumental importance to Monson and his supporters. They believed “that the people known as the Jews” were not “God’s chosen people” and the notion that “all of God’s plans for this world center in and around them” was ridiculous. “There never was such an ecclesiastical blunder or crime committed throughout the ages as this very belief,” as it was “just so contrary to the teachings of the Scriptures.” It is for this reason, Monson contended, that Jews had “hindered the apostles” from spreading the gospel, and their denial of Jesus’ divinity and refusal to accept the true word of God made it evident that “Jews are contrary to all men.”

188 Monson, 5.
189 Monson, 2.
“The Jews were not his sheep,” Monson stated, “or else they would hear his voice.”

He further asserted that those who immediately converted and followed Jesus were not Jews but Galileans. He claimed that in fact, it was Jesus himself who informed the Jews that they were the children of their father, the Devil. The familial connection between Jews and Satan represented a departure from British Israelism and became a fundamental tenet of Swift’s later teachings. The association of Jews with the Devil or serpents is undoubtedly significant for the future of the movement, and, arguably, Monson made a significant contribution in that essential element of Christian Identity theology. It also serves the purpose of clearly denoting Jewish people as the enemy of “true” or “Christian” Israel. Monson believed that all the “persecution and punishment which is fallen upon them has been allowed by God” and was righteous and justified because of Jewish obstinacy. Jews refused to abandon and disavow their “anti-Christian Talmudic teachings” and accept the doctrines of the Holy Spirit. Monson asserted that by doing so, Jews disobeyed the word of God and cited Matthew 15:3-9, “but in vain they do not worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men,” for justification as to why Jesus “condemned the Jewish leaders.”

British Israelites succeeded in divesting Jesus from his “Jewish origins” by demonstrating who the Jews were. Jews did not receive God’s blessing, and the Son of God disavowed the “apostate Jews” for their role in his crucifixion, sale, and refusal to accept Him. Monson and

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190 Monson, 5.
191 Monson, 5–6.
192 Monson, 2–3.
his school were vital to the movement and the relegation of Jews to the literal incarnation of evil and cast out of God’s light in the same way that Satan was. This followed logically as Jews were the descendants and children of the Devil through Cain. This seed line or dual seedline theory became a dominant belief of the members of Wesley Swift’s Christian Identity Church.\textsuperscript{194}

It was essential to evidence that Jews were inherently evil, and it was necessary for Monson to illustrate what the Jews did and why they represented a grave threat to America. The emphasis that Monson and his school placed on this particular theme and their “objectivity” illustrate a caveat that is prevalent among prejudicial dogmas and their leaders. They routinely and repeatedly claim that they are not being racist or fueled by hatred; they are merely telling the truth and motivated by the desire to help and inform. He claimed that his teachings are “not race hatred but a simple statement of fact regarding” Jewish “plans for world dominion through world super government, with the antichrist Messiah as ruler,” and are just as true as the fact that the “Jews are anti-Christ” and they “tried to kill Jesus several times.”\textsuperscript{195}

The rejection or refusal of Jews to accept Jesus was a key aspect, and it revealed, Monson observed, how he felt about those who called themselves Jews. Despite the location of Jesus’s birthplace deep in the southern Kingdom of Judah, the Jews “revoked all claims of


\textsuperscript{195} Monson, 23.
kinship to Jesus” when they referred to him as “of Nazareth” and thus a son of man. Monson stated that Jesus strongly denounced Jews and passed judgment upon them saying:

Ye serpents ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape damnation of hell. Wherefore, behold, I sent unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city, that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of the righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation (Matt 23:35) With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you (Mark 4:24.)

He went on to claim that these lines from the books of Matthew and Mark illustrate that due to the Jews’ treatment of Jesus, they were and would always be on the receiving end of God’s wrath and were “receiving just what they measured out to Christians.”

The Bible was indeed a useful tool at Monson’s disposal. His knowledge of Scripture was evident by his ability to quote verses that he believed fit with his assertions accurately; However, it was not the only instrument he employed. Throughout Monson’s teaching, he would routinely connect essential figures and events in American history with theology, a tactic that his pupil Swift would also employ. Intense or hyper-nationalism was an essential facet of Christian Identity’s endurance and Swift embraced this, and it is probable that Monson helped bolster his belief that America was God’s chosen land.

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196 Monson, 5.
197 Monson, 5–6.
198 Monson, 6.
As discussed earlier, the Biblical evidence appears “palpable” through the analysis of Manasseh and Ephraim, but Monson goes beyond that and connects historical events and figures fundamental to America’s past with Biblical prophecy, people, and God’s plan for “true Israel.” American colonial revolutionary James Otis said that “taxation without representation is tyranny.”\(^{199}\) This founding principle helped the Sons of Liberty form and led to the formation of an American ethos. According to Monson, many of these events, such as the Boston Tea Party, had a Biblical precedent and illustrated the righteousness of America as “true Israel.” The “First Boston tea party,” he asserted, took place during the rebellion “over unjust taxation” and resulted in the “formation of two separate kingdoms” of Judah in the south and Israel in the north.\(^{200}\) As Israel constitutes the inhabitants of God’s promise and the people of Israel separated from Judah because of this “tea party,” Monson is suggesting that these parallels are representative of the conflict between America and Great Britain. “Those men of 1776, Jefferson, Franklin, Hancock, Samuel Adams, and the others were all Bible scholars and well-grounded in the faith of Israel,” and those who “made our Constitution, Washington, Madison, Franklin, Sherman, Dayton, and the others too” were “well grounded in Old Testament lore,”\(^{201}\) suggesting that because our founding fathers were Christians, it signified that they agreed with British Israelism. This might seem like a ludicrous assertion, however, Monson argued that to those with the correct understanding of what America represented, the “truth” was not hard to


\(^{200}\) Monson, 2–3.

discern. If America descended from the tribe of Manasseh, and both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were Biblically inspired documents, then, it followed logically that the founding fathers were aware of America’s true Identity and framed these documents based on “true history” and the “true interpretation” of the Scripture. “Jehovah gave the Constitution of Israel to our forefathers through Moses at Mount Sinai” and “it served as the inspiration” for “the Constitution of the United States.”

Monson employed the Constitution to provide evidence of the Divine inspiration used by our forefathers and illustrate their connection to true Israel. He believed that Jews were delusional and were attempting to “Judaize the United States.” According to him, they “have evidently convinced themselves that the Constitution of the United States entitles them to change the character of many of the time-honored practices” of this country. He proceeded to outline what he considered the essential facets of the Jewish design for America: unrestricted Jewish immigration to America, federal recognition of Jewish religion, and the removal of Christ from all Biblical documents, recognition of the Jewish Sabbath while ignoring the Christian one, end of public Christmas celebrations, the removal or firing of anyone who made any anti-Semitic statements, and complete control over the newspapers. These were the goals of the Jews and the reasons due to which they were a threat to the very fabric of American life.


203 Monson, 16.

This Scripturally-based argument emphasized the interconnectivity among seemingly disparate racist groups. Monson’s interpretation lends “credibility” to the tenets of Evans’ Klan that suggest that because a Jew was a Jew, they could never be a citizen of America, and Monson succinctly illustrated why Evans’ perspective regarding Jews was appropriate, despite it being unclear whether he and Monson ever met.

Unsurprisingly, Monson held a very high opinion of Henry Ford and the International Jew. He stated that Ford “has so vividly shown us” the plans for Jewish “world dominion” that were “outlined in the Protocols” and “have come to pass in the United States,” despite Jewish claims that The Protocols were false.205 He further claimed that Jews have been incapable of discrediting either Ford or The Protocols and observed that Ford has accurately illustrated the “activities of the American Jew and Jewish international businesses,” the Jewish control of the banks and that their “activities” represented the “greatest crime in history.” Furthermore, he contended that the Jewish cabal called the “Kehilla” was a “secret society” of “300 Elders” who met and outlined how they plan to control the countries of the world, controlling banks, the press, education, and the law.206

The “hidden hand” of International Jewry, as outlined by Ford, would routinely appear in Monson’s main newsletter, “The Herald of our Race.” In an article entitled “The Hidden Hand” by frequent contributor and British Israelite, Basil Stewart, claimed that The Protocols do not merely represent propaganda as some believe. Rather, they comprised a cold and analytical


206 Monson, 9.
discussion of what happened in the past, what was going on at that time, what would happen in the future, and “what the insidious power” or “hidden hand” of International Jewry had in store for God’s chosen people on earth. He asserted that “the Protocols genuinely divulge the Devilish plot of an existing society is beyond doubt or question.” Any argument to the contrary was either fabricated by Jewish sympathizers or by those whom the Jews were manipulating and should consider them false and dangerous. Stewart asserted that the Protocols were a Russian document and that the only known copy was in a British museum and the Kerensky regime destroyed the rest. Stewart further claimed that the Soviet Union and its goals of expansion and domination were evidence of the “protocols genuineness” and an “example of an almost complete fulfillment of the Protocols.”207 The tie between communism and Judaism was already well established, and the creation of the Soviet Union as a communist and expansionist state revealed that The Protocols’ prophecies were coming true. As the Jewish people represented the Antichrist, and Russia had now become the communist Soviet Union controlled by Jews, it was evident who America or the true Israel would be facing in the next conflict.208

In the April 1938 edition of “Herald of Our Race,” in an article entitled “Do the Americans Want the Jews?” Monson asserted that “Anglo-Saxon America is already under the domination of these atheistic communist Jews who are the antichrist,” claiming that “these Jews are not God’s chosen people, the Americans are God’s chosen people,” and they “do not


208 Stewart, 9.
desire to be held in bondage to the Jews and their Babylonian system of commerce.” The Jews “control the government, finance, radio, press, education, industry,” and have become “so crooked in business deals” that “they oppress the American people, and if Hitler rises in America to drive them out they will receive their just reward.” In 1935, Hitler stated that the following was of primary importance: “the rights of Germans are thereby to be protected against destructive Jewish influences.” Monson echoed that sentiment stating that America’s “political life would never be cleansed until it is purged of Jewish influence.” Hitler had “successfully” tied Bolshevism to Judaism, and Monson and his readers attached to this notion with fervor. Monson stated that “it is their abominable Babylonish commercial practices and their communistic, Anti-Christian activities that we are so opposed to.” Essentially, Monson is reaffirming that he is not “against” Jews or Judaism as a faith and asserted that he and his followers have “no personal enmity towards the Jews.” However, he states frequently that he opposes their “aim at having world dominion,” and he will do whatever is necessary to ensure that “will never come to pass.” Jews, he concluded, “are the real oppressors of the American public,” so “they cannot cry out oppression.”

The Judeo-communist Soviet Union was the paramount threat to the American way of life. Christian Identists thus began to perceive Hitler as a prophet or divinely inspired being, and Swift himself likely encountered this notion first at Monson’s school. He asks, “would it be

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210 Ibid., 3.

211 Ibid., 3.
strange for God to use Hitler to drive out the Jews from Germany?” citing other “kings”
employed by God for the same goal, including Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, and Shalmaneser.
Monson posited that Hitler was following God’s plan by driving Jews out of Germany and stated
that for “His demands” to arrive, it was first necessary for both “Israel and Judah” to be
“restored to the land.” The restoration of Israel to God’s true chosen people could only occur
when the “atheistic Jews” were “sifted out;” Hitler, therefore, was a key part of the Biblical
prophecy as he was responsible for rounding up Jews to prepare “for the return of Jesus Christ
as King of Israel.”

While it is unclear how much of the Führer’s speeches and writing Monson
encountered, it is clear that he was aware of what Hitler was saying and doing throughout the
1930s and into World War II. He routinely referenced Hitler throughout his newsletters and
sermons arguably because of his belief that Hitler was fulfilling Biblical prophecy. The
favorable view both students and faculty had of the Nazi leader makes it possible that, at the
very least, they read Mein Kampf. Monson emphasized the divinity of Hitler’s actions by
asserting that “one cannot fail to see God’s hand” in the “great drive of Hitler through Austria,
and contemplated invasion of Czechoslovakia and possible push into Yugo-Slavia and then Asia
Minor.” Monson insisted that this would hasten “the formation of God’s League of Nations”
that included “the Anglo-Saxon Scandinavian race” and would serve as “God’s battle axe and

212 Monson, 7–8.

213 Philip E.J. Monson, “Hitler Over Europe,” in Herald of Our Race, vol. 4, December 1940 (The Covenant
Evangelical Association, Los Angeles), 9.
weapons of war.” They were of the view that Hitler’s actions should be mirrored in the United States. Hitler was deposing Jews from power, and Monson believed that the Führer would not permit the Jews’ false cries of persecution, causing the Nazis to falter from their spiritual path.

Monson continued to connect Hitler to the Biblical past by explaining that in 721 and 595 B.C., God used Shalmaneser, the King of Assyria, and Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon to drive out Jews from their respective kingdoms. Similarly, God used Hitler to drive the Jews out of Germany and Austria. For Jesus to return, “both Israel and Judah must be restored to the land, and the atheistic Jews” removed so that the Anglo-Saxon countries can become prepared for the dawn of a new age. However, Monson did not believe that Hitler would be the one to destroy Jewish influence on earth; rather, he believed that it would be among the first tasks that the Savior would perform upon His return. Jews would not willingly leave their homes, so God had to act through Hitler to allow for the Savior’s return.

Like Gerald Winrod, this should not be misconstrued as Monson’s support for dictatorships that are antithetical to American democracy; instead, it illustrates Monson’s support for Hitler as a part of God’s plan for the restoration of “true Israel” and Anglo-Saxondom to its real position in the new age. This attitude became particularly prevalent


216 Monson, 7.

217 Monson, 7–8.
after America went to war with Germany. Like Winrod, Monson’s supporters were able to use Christian etiology to reconcile their contradictory support for Hitler with the condemnation of Germany as the enemy of America. The lynchpin, as in Winrod’s case, was the Jews.

Philip E.J. Monson and his Kingdom Bible college have not received considerable scholarly attention. The scholars who did study Christian Identity and Wesley Swift, at best, make vague references to Monson and the college but most simply state that Swift moved west to California. It is likely, however, that Monson’s school played a more significant role in the evolution of Swift and his brand of Identity and influenced his understanding of America’s proper place in Biblical history and its divine heritage and future. The evidence from Monson’s sermons, newsletters, and speeches suggests that he was instrumental in facilitating the transition from the anti-Semitism of British Israelism to the vehement, virulent, and often exterminationist anti-Semitic ideology endemic in Swift’s Christian Identity Movement. The transition of Jews from those whose rejection of Christ lost them God’s promise to the literal enemy of Christendom, and by extension, America, is evident in Monson’s work.

It is possible that Swift’s education at the college influenced his decision to remain in the pulpit and not seek the podium. An analysis of Monson’s work illustrates that it is considerably more likely that Swift developed many of his fundamental beliefs at Monson’s school and is possibly where he was exposed to the principles that allowed him to become one of the most important voices in the religious racist right. An essential facet of this matter that remains unclear is the time when Christian Identity truly transitioned from and supplant British Israelism. This suggests the importance of the school and Monson himself to Swift and the evolution of Neo-Nazism in America.
With the building blocks and developments outlined in Chapter One in the background, the stage was now set. The combination of Evans’ Klan’s hypernationalism, the theories of Jewish origins proposed by Cameron and Rand through British Israelism, and the successful blending of fundamentalism and Nazism, both at home and in Germany, all came together in the philosophies, ideologies, theologies, rants, speeches, and writings of one of the “greatest rabble-rousers seen on earth since apostolic times.”
CHAPTER 3: SWIFT’S MENTOR:

GERALD L.K. SMITH

Born in rural Wisconsin in 1896, Gerald L.K. Smith went on to become an ordained minister of the Disciples of Christ, an enthusiastic nationalist, an inflammatory public voice, and a charismatic leader. Though his goals were often disjointed, and his plans altered incessantly to match the public mood and his own shifting concerns, he gained public interest through his oratorical talent and passionate writing. In 1933, when his church in Shreveport, Louisiana, was foreclosed upon by Jewish banker Philip Lieber, Smith “left the ministry permanently for politics,” and, according to his biographer Glen Jeansonne, it was because “the taste of political power was irresistible.”  

Smith’s political career began with serving as Huey Long’s second in command and supporting Long’s “Share Our Wealth” program, and continued with the creation of a political party that Smith founded and twice utilized as a platform to run for President. Though he abandoned the ministry, Smith’s religious commitments shaped his political positions, and Smith would propagate the views of British Israelism, and eventually Christian Identity. Long’s “Share Our Wealth” program was a political initiative designed by Long to “guarantee every family an American standard of living (including a home of their own) by redistributing wealth and income.”  

Smith went on to promote the Kingfish’s 1936 presidential bid, a bid cut short by an alleged Jewish assassin in September of 1935. Regardless of this, Smith’s involvement with Long had a significant impact on his later career. “Huey Long,”

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Smith stated, “is a superman. I actually believe he can do as much as any ten men.” Smith idolized Long and believed him to be capable of stirring a vital national movement, while Long, for his part, dubbed Smith as the “greatest rabble-rouser in the country” apart from himself. Smith’s support for Long’s quasi-socialist wealth redistribution program seemed to conflict with his later espousal of anti-communism. However, it was his anti-Semitism that embellished this crucial, albeit well-worn, association: in Smith’s view, Jews were both bloodthirsty capitalists, intent on controlling the economy for their benefit, and unpatriotic communists, who threatened the very foundation of American life for the sake of their advancement. Anti-Semitism proved to be the unifying theme in Smith’s shifting views, and it became the single most persistent element in his peculiar career as a public figure.

The man who would teach Smith about the fundamental connection between Judaism and communism was the other “superman” in Smith’s life: the industrial tycoon and William J. Cameron’s boss, Henry Ford. After what Smith described as a “long conversation” with Ford in 1937, he came to understand and recognize the fundamental truth concerning the connection between communism and Judaism, and he integrated Ford’s analysis of this link into his ideology. Importantly, Ford’s work misappropriated numerous writings and quotes, citing them as evidence for his anti-Semitic claims, a practice that Smith also adopted. For instance, Ford employed Zionist leader Theodore Herzl’s writings to assert that Jews purposefully
fomented political disruption wherever they existed in substantial numbers. Ford quoted Herzl, stating that “when we sink, we become a revolutionary proletariat.” 223 Ford asserted that:

One is permitted to think that they really claim a stronger influence than they possess, especially in those higher regions where excellent and determinative influences have been at work. The Jews claim, indeed, that the fundamentals of the United States are Jewish and not Christian, and that the entire history of this country should be rewritten to make proper acknowledgment of the prior glory due to Judah. 224

To Ford, such Jewish claims demonstrated that they were a visible and vocal threat not only to American Christianity but to the United States as a political entity.

For his part, Smith believed Ford’s work to be “thoroughly objective.” Smith claimed that “the book does not contain one sentence of hate” and concluded that he would “defy any honest, well-meaning citizen, courageous enough to believe the truth when they see it to read this report and not be concerned with the plans, purposes, and programs of the International Jew.” 225 He also praised the founder of Ford Motor Company as the genius who “discovered what the Jew was up to,” and raising the specter of a Jewish conspiracy, he claimed that “the organized Jew” sought to suppress the publication of Ford’s work. That Ford could publish and circulate his book despite Jewish pressures would be a primary reason Smith considered him a “superman” and a true patriot. However, when “the arm twisting persecuting pressures of the organized Jew moved in on Mr. Ford,” Smith later wrote, there “suddenly appeared in

223 Henry Ford, The International Jew (Dearborn: Dearborn Independent, 1920), 44.
224 Ibid., 41.
American newspapers an announcement that Mr. Ford had withdrawn *The International Jew* from publication.” Smith related that Ford told him privately that if he did not have the opportunity to republish his work, he wished Smith to do so.

In 1948, Smith indeed republished Ford’s work with an introduction written by Smith that explained the reasons for the discontinuation of the *International Jew’s* publication. He further addressed the apology Ford composed in 1942 and decried it as a forgery. Smith explained the “forgery incident and revealed to the public in print, for the first time, that Mr. Ford did not apologize and that apology was written by the Jews, and his signature was forged.” For Smith, the most profound element of Ford’s work was the definitive conflation of Jews and communism, and before American involvement in the Second World War, that effectively demolished any distinction between Jews and, in his view, America’s greatest ideological enemy. Smith proclaimed that when he embraced Ford’s research, he “became courageous enough and honest enough and informed enough to use the words, communism is Jewish.”

One of the more intriguing aspects of Smith’s career as a critical influence on Wesley Swift was his changing views—before World War II, throughout the war, and after the war ended— regarding Hitler and German National Socialism. To a higher degree than his contemporary Gerald Winrod, Smith supported and embraced Nazism. Like the *Deutsche* 

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226 Smith, 113.


228 Jeansonne, 76.
Christian before him, the former preacher held the Führer in high regard. Smith’s attraction to Hitler appeared to involve a reverence for the Führer’s work to save the downtrodden German nation, and he wholeheartedly approved of Hitler’s anti-Jewish views and policies. Smith believed that Germany’s success was due, in no small part, to Hitler’s appropriate handling of the “Jewish question.” Writing to Dr. Hugo Fack, a man who “knew personally some of the officials in the Nazis hierarchy,” and was later identified as a German spy in the United States, Smith declared in 1933 that he was “anxious to get in touch with his honor, Adolph Hitler.” In the same letter, he asserted that current American “problems” were the “result of an attempt on the part of a Jew to take hundreds of homes away from people.” “Jews are trying to rob American people, just as they attempted to do in Germany,” Smith wrote, and he implored Hitler through Fack to help “overcome the terrible anti-German propaganda being promoted by the Jews” in the United States. He then closed the letter in what can only be assumed was an effort to placate the Führer, emphasizing his German descent by signing the document as “Gerald L.K. Schmidt.” Whether emphasizing certain aspects of his personal history or rewriting Huey Long’s murder to insist upon a Jewish assassin, Smith’s manipulation of history remained a continual trend.

Smith, in concert with Winrod’s views, is arguably a foundational point for Swift’s and Identists’ proclivity for viewing the Führer and the Nazis through a favorable and justifiable lens. In the early 1930s, Smith believed that America should mirror the Nazis program to bring the country out of the Great Depression and that the American government should ensure that

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229 Kaplan, 285.
Hitler’s Germany would be their ally in the nearing conflict. Nevertheless, after the commencement of the American involvement in World War II, Smith switched from being a staunch Nazi supporter to condemning National Socialism by conflating it with “godless paganism.” In time, he referred to Hitler as a tragic hero and a victim of a Jewish conspiracy, much as he perceived himself. Ultimately, Smith’s attitude toward Hitler acted as an influence on Wesley Swift, facilitating Swift’s creation of a position of religious significance for the Führer, despite his role as the head of a godless regime.

It is important to note that Roosevelt exercised a degree of importance in Smith’s career equivalent to that of Hitler, but it was an influence of an entirely different nature. Like Winrod, Smith’s obsessive hatred for Roosevelt was the source of many of his most outrageous claims, including persistent efforts to reveal his devious connections to communism and thus Judaism. If Hitler was Smith’s tragic hero, Roosevelt was his enduring villain. Until Roosevelt’s death in 1945, Smith never lost an opportunity to condemn him or identify him as an immoral influence in the United States and beyond. “Franklin Delano Roosevelt was a spoiled and pampered son of a doting mother,” Smith declared. “He was raised to be a Hudson River aristocrat...[And] he never learned how to make a living.” This class-inflected critique of Roosevelt typified Smith’s view of the man, but he also identified him as an underachieving scoundrel and a sexual

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230 Jeansonne, 74.
231 Ibid., 88.
232 Ibid., 74.
233 Jeansonne, 45.
deviant who won the presidency merely because of his family name. Smith concluded that “to orient one’s self to the time of Huey Long and Franklin D. Roosevelt and others, one must realize that Roosevelt was a conscienceless tyrant, a sex frustrate, and a complete whoremonger.” “He had no conscience, no character and no concern for anyone except his own welfare.” Smith charged that Roosevelt, fearing he would lose the election in 1936, orchestrated the assassination of Huey Long.

After Long’s death, biographer Glen Jeansonne wrote, “Gerald Smith had two objectives: to wreak revenge on President Roosevelt, who he believed masterminded the death of his mentor Huey Long, and to attach himself to a movement in which he could apply his organizational and oratorical talents.” Certainly, even after the president’s death in 1945, Smith achieved his goal of revenge through his frequent attacks; however, his goal of finding the appropriate outlet for his talents proved to be more difficult. Only when Smith could effectively build a coherent ideology by drawing upon the various resources represented in British Israelism, anti-Semitism, fundamentalism, and anti-communism was he able to achieve this goal. Fusing these various strands in the early 1950s, he attracted the attention and admiration of Wesley Swift, and in time, the collaboration of these two men turned out to be the key to both men’s enduring historical significance.


237 Jeansonne, 47.
Among Smith’s chief accomplishments during the 1930s and 1940s was the drawing together of his various enemies into one single conspiracy, something he accomplished, at least in his view and that of his supporters, with barely any evidence. Naturally, Roosevelt had to be cooperative with both Jews and communists, groups that Henry Ford previously claimed to be virtually synonymous. Smith asserted that “the Roosevelt administration cannot be understood unless it is admitted at the outset that the dominant position in the New Deal machine was held by Jews.”

He further claimed to have analyzed Roosevelt’s administration so thoroughly that he could conclude that any honest “close observers” must face the truth that “Roosevelt and his wife were out to do the will of International Jewry and International Marxists.”

Though some suspected that the president was a pawn or a dupe of the Jewish people, the fact that Smith believed that Roosevelt’s “Brain Trust” was Jewish signaled that the president himself was Jewish, and Smith had evidence to substantiate this claim. Smith went farther than Winrod and asserted that “it is now an established fact that the Roosevelts are Jewish,” he concluded, “and their ancestry can be traced back to Holland Jews who fled from Spain. The name originally was Rosenvelt.”

Smith completely embraced the conflation of Judaism and communism; when he spoke of communists, he spoke of the Jews and vice versa. He was not alone among Americans in this period. For example, Elizabeth Dilling—a writer and staunch anti-communist—wrote that

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239 Smith, “Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Adulterous Life,” 102.

“Judaism is the progenitor of modern communism.” 241 In this vein, Smith believed that American Jews spent millions supporting a propaganda campaign designed to defame Germany, in part, by spreading lies about the rise of anti-Jewish German laws in the 1930s. Citing a Gallup poll, however, he argued that despite the Jewish propaganda, “81% of the American people were opposed to going to war against Germany.” 242 Even though he revered and supported Hitler, Smith contended that the Americans “should pit Hitler against Stalin, weaken both nations and protect America from the risk of making a Frankenstein monster out of either nation.” 243 Offering an indictment of Roosevelt, Smith went on to contend that even though “the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Congress of the United States, Military Intelligence, and Naval Intelligence all agreed that we should not recognize the Soviet Union,” Roosevelt discarded their advice and opened official diplomatic channels with the Soviets, in the process signing away the future of the “Christian nations of Europe.” 244 Smith would later claim the Soviet “Frankenstein” that resulted from this formal relationship was Roosevelt’s fault, if not his intention all along.

As his pro-Nazi enthusiasm and obsession with Roosevelt suggest, the 1930s proved crucial to the evolution of the anti-Semitic ideology that Smith and Wesley Swift together championed in the post-World War II era. After war broke out in Europe in 1939, Smith joined aviation hero and fellow anti-Semite Charles A. Lindbergh to organize the America First

244 Smith, “Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Adulterous Life,” 102.
Committee (AFC), an organization determined to maintain the United States’ neutral and isolationist stance. On the surface, the concept of America putting its interests first is arguably easily supportable.\textsuperscript{245} The AFC, formed in 1940, claimed 450 chapters nationwide and boasted 800,000 members, arguably becoming the most influential group advocating against any U.S. involvement in the war, even when it came to the sales of munitions to Great Britain.\textsuperscript{246} Behind their efforts to restrain the United States’ involvement was the belief, shared by Smith and Lindbergh alike, that during the 1930s, Jews advanced efforts to propel the United States into a war against Germany.\textsuperscript{247} Though Smith never produced evidence to support any claim of this sort, it was mainly on this basis that he launched his frequent attacks against Roosevelt.

Smith believed that if America entered the war and fought on the side of the Soviets, it was for the benefit of “International Jewry,” rather than saving Jews from intimidation, violence, and death. The war represented a Jewish conspiracy that would provide them the necessary leverage to spread their influence across the globe. “The Jews all favored entrance into World War II,” Smith concluded, “and carried on a campaign of hidden handed (Jewish) persecution and abuse against all who opposed the war.”\textsuperscript{248} He contended that Jews and Roosevelt not only sought to orchestrate his imprisonment but also that of anyone who joined


\textsuperscript{246} Wayne S. Cole, \textit{America First: The Battle Against Intervention, 1940-1941} (Octagon Books, 1971).


him in opposing American involvement in the war. Whether Smith had ever been arrested is unclear, regardless, in the aftermath of Pearl Harbor, he adopted a new tactic, sponsoring “victory rallies” instead of anti-war events and attacking Roosevelt only as a politician, not in his role as Commander-in-Chief. Despite his previous appeals to Hitler and his ongoing admiration for the German leader, since America was at war, he could not support Germany in the way he did before Pearl Harbor.

Smith asserted that the Japanese had not masterminded the bombing of Pearl Harbor; instead, the attack was “precipitated by Roosevelt and the gang around him.” Furthermore, he claimed that the nation’s “hysterical reaction” after Pearl Harbor ensured that “Mr. Roosevelt got what he wanted: a Jew promoted declaration of war.” As a self-professed “super patriot,” Smith resigned himself to supporting the war effort and embracing the idea that American victory was of the utmost importance. Undoubtedly, his keen eye for public opinion and his capacity to integrate new developments into his pre-existing perceptions was at work here. Soon, he declared that it was “no longer necessary for us to separate the words Nazi and Communist,” stating that “the Communism of Stalin and the socialism of Hitler spring from the same root.” Now, he could comfortably conclude that both were “conceived in hate and they thrive only under the shelter of godless paganism.”


250 Jeansonne, 84.

251 Smith, “Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Adulterous Life,” 102.


253 Jeansonne, 68.
A complex and changing perception marred Smith’s assessment of Hitler and Nazism. While he supported his nation in the war against the Nazis, railing against the evils of Nazism after 1941, he also attempted to garner sympathy for Hitler. He spoke openly about the importance of America winning the war, but he never failed to point out that the country was manipulated into the war by Roosevelt and the Jews. He soon concluded that Jews, predisposed as they were toward communism, supported the alliance with the Soviets and the pro-war effort. In the 1920s, Russian Jewish anthropologist Samuel Weissenberg promoted the theory that Jews descended from the ancient Khazar tribe that resided in Eastern Europe near the Caucasus Mountains. Though many Jews would employ such findings to assert their racial “whiteness” during the postwar period, in Smith’s mind, their Khazar origins implied that all Jews, even those whose families that lived in America for generations, were ancestrally Russian, and thus their loyalty to the United States was suspect. For Smith, the fact that a Jew advanced this theory fortified its authenticity, and he cited it repeatedly during the 1930s and 1940s as more evidence of the synonymity of Judaism and Communism. He wrote that the people who claimed to be Jews were descendants of the “pagan phallic worshippers, the Khazars.” “The crucifiers of Christ were not God’s chosen people,” rather, they were “a throng of Devil possessed agents of the anti-Christ.”


257 Jeansonne, 103.
Smith believed that the war was the product of a Jewish-communist plot to increase the power of the Soviet Union, and in the end, advance a plan for a “world government” orchestrated by Jews.

Despite being a professed admirer of Hitler’s regime, during the late 1940s, Smith boldly asserted that “the only reason that Roosevelt has not Hitlerized America is because he is not as smart as Hitler.” Yet, in attacking Roosevelt in this manner, he also hoped to soft-pedle the threat Nazism previously posed to America and simultaneously highlighted the real threat represented by an alliance between Roosevelt and Stalin: Roosevelt’s “obsessive fear” of the Führer, he asserted, set the United States on a path that would, in time, lead them directly into the hands of Stalin. Further, as he crusaded against Roosevelt, Smith’s rhetoric approximated what had become his standard position regarding Jews: Roosevelt was both an exploitative capitalist in the pocket of international bankers and an unpatriotic communist working with, or for, the Soviets.

Throughout the postwar years, Smith would persistently refer to this cooperative Judeo-Soviet and Rooseveltian plan to run the world. The political ambitions of Jews were unending, and because he was well-informed and sufficiently intrepid to reveal their plans, it was he who saved America. Though Smith offered some lines purportedly gleaned from his secret sources, he followed what would be his standard practice and failed to publicize any unedited evidence to substantiate his claims. In general, he cited concern about the possibility of Jewish reprisal.

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259 Smith, 85.
However, such actions limited his credibility and relegated him to a position on the margins of the political conversation that he wished to influence and direct.

Consequently, Smith’s warnings regarding Jewish plans for world domination generally fell on deaf ears during the war itself. The context of the Cold War enabled him to promote his ideas in a way that would allow them to spread more extensively and exercise a significant role in shaping the tenor of anti-Semitism and racial discourse in the United States during the 1950s and after. Thus, Smith’s sensitivity to the power of anti-communist appeals enabled him to expand his base. Even then, he never amassed the following to the extent he hoped, and this is likely because he abandoned the religious pulpit for the political platform, a “mistake” his protégé would rectify.

Within the context of World War II and the early Cold War years, Smith’s ultimate ambitions became apparent. By the mid-1940s, he began to consider himself the savior of “Christian America,” admitting a deeply held desire to gain political control over the United States. Toward that end, in 1943, he reorganized the America First Committee into the America First Party and attempted to translate his ideology into a viable political platform. As the head of the America First Party, he advocated the protection of the white status, the deportation of foreigners as a means of job creation, and the development of an isolationist foreign policy as the best protection against the threats of fascism and Communism. Seeking to foment popular terror in the face of encroaching dictatorship, his foray into electoral politics

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260 Jeansonne, 66.

261 Ibid., 83–84.
nevertheless gave the impression that he wished to become a kind of home-grown American
dictator.

Though critics dismissed Smith’s statements as contradictory and inconsistent, Smith
captivated an increasing number of Americans during the war and in the postwar years with his
peculiar theories, seemingly capable of explaining a range of potential threats to American
liberty and ideals in the contemporary world. Though he ran for president as the America First
candidate in 1944, the Party gained minimal traction. Before the 1948 presidential campaign,
he strategically changed the party’s name to the Christian Nationalist Crusade but only secured
a mere total of 48 votes nationwide.\textsuperscript{262} Through this organization, Smith “sought out young
fundamentalist Christians who were militant about their cause,” and asserted that “he was less
concerned with what they believed in than with their commitment to following orders.”\textsuperscript{263} As
the head of the Christian Nationalists, he espoused the same notions regarding the Judeo-
communist threat to America but calculated that restructuring the organization to include the
word “Christian” would attract more people committed to opposing the godless Soviet regime,
including, significantly, Wesley Swift.

According to Smith, his first meeting with Swift solidified the younger Reverend’s place
in both Smith’s organizations and his personal life. At one of his speaking engagements at a high
school auditorium, a hostile crowd was picketing, and the police were unable to control the
situation and take Smith and his wife to safety. Smith claimed that he was terrified that the

\textsuperscript{262} Ibid., 157.

\textsuperscript{263} Ibid., 97.
picketers would attack him until he “turned to the right and there sat a young man about 30 years old,” who turned to Smith and said, “don’t be afraid Mr. Smith. Anyone who comes toward you will be sorry.’ He then lifted his coat and held a black automatic pistol.”264 After this event, Smith employed this individual as his lieutenant and bodyguard. He would grow within many of Smith’s anti-communist crusades, precede Smith to the podium at rallies, and grow to be as close as a son to Smith. This young man was none other than Wesley Swift.

Smith bankrolled Swift for a few years and advertised Swift’s ventures in his magazine, The Cross and the Flag.265 Swift’s involvement with Smith in the Christian Nationalist Crusade and California anti-Communist League (created by Swift) followed a similar pattern of anti-communist rhetoric as the organization’s primary focus until the 1950s. FBI’s intelligence on Swift in the late 1940s and early 1950s emphasized his rabid anti-Communist views more than anything else.266 While communism would remain the primary focus for Swift as the 1950s progressed, his version of Christian Identity took priority, and it was Smith who helped him popularize it.

Smith provided his protégé Swift with the opportunity to deploy his organizational skills and made him his West Coast Representative. This position within the Christian Nationalist Crusade allowed him only a modicum of power and influence and mainly served as a vehicle and opportunity to begin spreading the vitriol of Christian Identity among the public; because

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264 Barkun, 64.
265 Levitas, 26.
of both Smith’s genuine affection for and the obvious oratorical skill of the younger preacher, Smith often allowed the Swift to precede him to the podium. He recalled the night that Swift explained to him the foundational tenets of his doctrine, and Smith’s conversion and support provide Swift a platform to truly begin the dissemination of his message. Smith recounted:

One day, [Wesley Swift] said to me ‘Mr. Smith, I would like to bring my Bible up to your hotel room and talk to you.’ He did, and he made one of the greatest contributions to my life that any man had ever made. He opened the Bible and demonstrated to me with proper texts that Christ’s worst enemies were not God’s chosen people. He identified the ‘true Israel’ which gave us the Messiah, and demonstrated to me that we were heirs to the covenant that God made with Abraham, and we were indeed Israelites. He later pointed out the text which reads, concerning those who had accepted Jesus Christ who might not be able to trace their lineage to Abraham: ‘Ye have been circumcised by faith.’ He demonstrated that the crucifiers of Christ were apostates, sons of Satan, and the seed of Cain. He proved by Scriptures that Jesus Christ was not a Jew as we now know Jews, and that God is going to give His kingdom to those who have accepted Jesus Christ, and not to those who caused His crucifixion and still justify it. The modern apostates may say that if they had to do it over again, they would nail Him to a cross; but they, in fact ‘crucify our Lord anew’ every day.

Smith was unquestionably a vital influence on Swift, and his support allowed him to build a following within people faithful to Smith and implant Christian Identity onto the American landscape.

Smith took advantage of every possible media outlet to ensure his message reached the greatest possible number of Americans. His primary publication, The Cross and the Flag, circulated to 20,000 people in the early 1940s, and this figure steadily rose to 35,000 by the

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268 Kaplan, 297.
mid-1960s. Smith traversed the country delivering speeches and sermons wherever he could: in hotel lobbies, convention halls, or in a colleague or follower’s church. Moreover, in the fall of 1937, he officially took over the radio broadcasts of Father Charles Coughlin, a fellow anti-Roosevelt, anti-communist, and anti-Semite. This included airtime on 48 radio stations where his oratorical talents shone over the radio, and he utilized this medium to great effect.

Like members of Evans’ Klan before them, the moniker “true Americans” became central to the self-conception of Neo-Nazis. However, while in the early Cold War years this term had a seemingly innocuous connotation that merely distinguished Communists from patriots, but, for Smith and his following it came to have an explicitly racial significance. Hitler and the Nazis would retain a position of importance to Neo-Nazis—they would come to consider Hitler a Prophet or Biblically inspired—but to them and the Klansmen alike, the only “true American” was a white Protestant with Western European ancestry, preferably coming from the British Isles. These were the men and women he would lead to victory over those who would defeat their Jewish adversaries and claim the United States as their birthright.

Under Smith’s direction, the Christian Nationalist Party called for the immediate expulsion of all Jews from America and banned them from emigrating to Palestine as well. In Smith’s view, their communist identity implied that they belonged in the Soviet Union. If the Soviets denied them entry, then Smith believed that they should be deported to Poland where

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271 “Take Over Coughlin Network,” 64.
the war’s desolation left substantial space for a new population.\textsuperscript{272} Since the newly founded United Nations was complicit in the Judeo-communist plans for world domination, Smith demanded the organization’s expulsion from its New York headquarters, creating another group, the Citizens Congressional Committee, as an auxiliary to the Christian Nationalist Crusade dedicated expressly to that purpose.\textsuperscript{273} In this effort, he attempted to rally returning veterans, much like Hitler, calling for a return to isolationism and the promotion of a variety of “Americanism,” which implied Protestantism, whiteness, patriotism, loyalty, and the expulsion of foreigners from American soil.\textsuperscript{274} In the following decades, white supremacists would embrace this same vision of American identity, drawing directly from Smith’s postwar formulation.

Throughout the post-World War II years, there was a significant upsurge in vocal Zionists demanding the creation of Israel as an independent Jewish state. The horrors of the Holocaust provided a powerful impetus for the fulfillment of Theodore Herzl’s agenda and the promise made by the Balfour Declaration. To Smith, the rise of post-war Zionism thus appeared to indicate that a “one world government” led by Jewish Communists was a viable and tangible threat. As Israel was emerging as a new Jewish state, Smith emphasized that the “true enemy” was the “hidden hand” behind all international catastrophes, from the failings of capitalism to the tyranny of communism, the “Jew plotted in every way, in every country to arrange a Zionist

\textsuperscript{272} “Take Over Coughlin Network,” 107.

\textsuperscript{273} Smith, “If I Were President,” 138.

\textsuperscript{274} Jeansonne, 101.
Consequently, Israel represented an essential step in the Communist-Zionist plot to establish Jewish world hegemony. Jews led Americans into an unwanted war, and now they were preparing to do so again by drawing on the United States to protect their interests. “Jews, Zionism, and International Jewry in general would really like to have a world government with headquarters in Palestine conforming to the outline in much discussed Protocols of Zion. In order to establish their mid-eastern empire, they must first destroy the Arabs.” However, arguably because of Swift, he believed that the Jewish claim to Palestinian territory was not only unwarranted; it was irrational. Smith asserted that

Only the naïve, the innocent and the ignorant will deny that the enemies of Christ, spearhead in these days by an element known as World Zionism, are determined to crucify our Lord anew, evaporate civilization, capture world power—using the wealth and the munitions furnished by the United States of America to establish in the Middle East their imperial headquarters in the stolen State of counterfeit Israel.

Smith feared that Jews were going to lead the United States into another disastrous war over a territory to which these “Jews” had no claim and whose sincere purpose was to “destroy the Arabs and enthrone the Jews in the name of Zionism and eventually in the fulfillment of their ambitions for world government and world power.”

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275 Ibid., 112.
277 Kaplan, 293.
279 Jeansonne, 108.
By this assertion, such a government was, in fact, the hidden cause behind the Second World War, the reason American soldiers fought and died in Europe, and it only resulted in the strengthening of the Jewish, and consequently the Soviet, control over the world. “There is now definite evidence,” he declared, “that Bolshevism is an international movement controlled by Jews;”\textsuperscript{280} however, he never produced such evidence for public inspection. He declared that the “communism which eroded Russia began on the lower east side of New York City, and 275 Jews from New York journeyed to Moscow after the revolution to take over and run the government. The seat of the world revolution has not been in Moscow. It has been in New York City, financed and promoted by Jews.”\textsuperscript{281} Once again, however, the evidence, a United States intelligence report to which he claimed to have access, was never made available for public scrutiny.

Amid such claims, Smith’s assessment of Hitler underwent yet another transformation, and he became an advocate of Holocaust denial. As his anti-Semitism and anti-communism attained new heights in the postwar years, he came to perceive Hitler as a “misunderstood man,” and a man who, like himself, was “persecuted by Jews and maligned by the Jew-dominated media.” His wartime moderation regarding the Nazi regime abated fast, and he lionized the “gallant Germans” who had become the victims of a Jewish plot to destroy them. As evidence of the fact that Hitler could not have been the monster the Jewish-controlled


media reported him to be, he declared that “Hitler’s servants speak of him in the deepest regard,” reminding readers how men of good Christian quality and lineage would never have supported a monster.\textsuperscript{282}

The notion that Hitler was the head of an organization that orchestrated the murder of millions of people was preposterous. Smith “believed that Communists and Jews had formed an international conspiracy against Christian America” and “invented” the Holocaust because “the Jews hated Hitler... because he was a Bible believing Christian,” and it was an effective way for Jews to gain international sympathy. In the end, Hitler was “the innocent victim of a Jewish conspiracy to destroy the German race,” and Judeo-Communists had duped and deceived all Americans into sympathy for Jews by tall tales of murder and genocide.\textsuperscript{283}

As early as 1951, Smith suspected that the war, and by extension, the supposed mistreatment of Jews, was a fabrication with sinister intentions. In an article entitled “F.D.R Secret Letters,” Smith asserted that though “unbelievable,” it was “true” that “Stalin and Roosevelt plotted with the Jew Zionists to divide the world.” He suggested that he found evidence in a letter that the “American newspapers” had “been afraid to print” about a private meeting “between Franklin D. Roosevelt and Zionist agents of Joe Stalin.” An unnamed French newspaper discovered the letter, and it asserted that “FDR secretly instructed a private emissary (a Jew by the name of Zabrousky and leader of the World Zionist Movement) to approach Joe Stalin” and work on behalf of the Zionist World Order. This plan included

\textsuperscript{282} Jeansonne, 102.

\textsuperscript{283} Ibid., 89.
initiatives such as “to share the permanent government of the world with Russia,” to “turn practically all of Europe over to Stalin’s domain,” to “let Russia have its way in the Orient,” and also that “F.D.R would rule the Western Hemisphere.” Smith’s “evidence” for this possibly came from the Yalta Conference which outlined the “spheres of influence” for the post-war world, and “did confirm” the “acceptance of Soviet Postwar influence.” Furthermore, Smith believed that this “proposed agreement” between Stalin, Zionist Jews, and Roosevelt provided funds for a six million dollar “secret hideout built for Roosevelt in Mexico.”

Throughout his career, Smith claimed to have what he believed to be “evidence” that Roosevelt, if not a Jew himself, was under the control of, or working at the behest of Zionist Jews. As Stalin was the leader of a communist country and communism was “irrefutably” synonymous with Judaism, he was a part of the Zionist world agenda—despite the Soviet Union’s anti-Zionist position. Thus, it follows logically that the Judeo-Communists would seek to destroy, both through war and propaganda, the only regime, country, and leader who was sufficiently “gallant” to stand up to the International Jewish Conspiracy: Adolf Hitler. Thus, Smith already had a solid foundation to stand on when the reality of the Nazi atrocities committed throughout the Holocaust became public knowledge. To Smith, it was not soley denying that the Holocaust happened, but rather, it was acknowledging the goal behind this fabrication and ensuring that the American people were aware of it.

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286 Smith, 110.
However, the denial of the Holocaust did not begin with Smith, nor did it begin in America. As early as 1947, French public figure and a fascist, Maurice Bardeche “challenged the veracity of photographic and documentary evidence of the concentration camps” and suggested that they “had a hygienic rather than homicidal purpose.” He asserted that the Jews were deceiving the world and that the photographic evidence of the Holocaust was fake. It contained pictures of “war related privations, including starvation and illness.” The evidence presented misinterpreted the supposedly murderous intentions of the Nazis’ Final Solution to the Jewish Question as it had nothing to do with murder; instead, it merely referred to “the proposed transfer of Jews to ghettos in the east.” Bardeche’s assertions would influence future Holocaust deniers, including Smith and Swift. He believed “not only that the Nazis were not guilty of atrocities, but that the true culprits were the Jews themselves. Jews, both those who died and those who survived, deserved no sympathy because they instigated the war by supporting the Treaty of Versailles.” In his second book, *Nuremberg and the Promised Land*, published in 1948, Bardeche asserted that he was not “defending Germany,” but “defending the truth.” This has been a foundational point among those who deny the Holocaust: they are not speaking “against” anyone, they are simply stating the “truth.”

By mid-1950s, the denial of the Holocaust crossed the Atlantic, and historians have asserted that English Professor Austin App was among the first Americans to actively deny the Holocaust and consider it to be a “bloated libel” or a “hoax.” App engaged in a media campaign

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to expose the Jewish propaganda and rehabilitate the distorted image of the Nazis. As early as 1944, App spoke vociferously against the allied powers, expressing the belief that “Germany was innocent, and the Allies were guilty of starting the war.” At first, when Allied soldiers liberated the camps, App declared that the camps were justifiable in the “context of the rules of war.” As the revelation of the horrors of the camps became a reality, App altered his message and began to question the evidence indicating the number of Jews killed. He claimed that these “supposedly” dead Jews were living in America and that he had tangible evidence to support this. However, like all the American Holocaust deniers who would follow him, App failed to produce any evidence beyond conjectures or baseless counterpoints to verified statistics. App would continue to deny the Holocaust for the remainder of his career, but he helped plant a seed, and Smith was content to help that seed grow.

Smith may have already believed that the Holocaust was a lie, but it arguable that he was drawn to App’s absolute dismissal of it. In 1959, Smith, in an article entitled “Into the Valley of Death Rode the Six Million, or Did They?” published in his own The Cross and the Flag, he publicly claimed that the Holocaust was a lie, asserting that “most of the dead Jews whom Hitler killed are now walking the streets of American cities.” Similar to, or perhaps influenced by App, Smith concluded that “there were more Jews roaming the streets of our American cities now than ever before, particularly New York City.” It is possible that given Smith’s veneration for Hitler, he may never have believed the Holocaust happened; it is also plausible that he learned about “what really happened” from Professor App. It remains unclear as to

289 Levin, 1007.
291 Jeasonne, 91.
when these men met, but it is apparent they knew each other, as the Professor authored a few articles for Smith’s publication. Though Smith was not a major leader of the Holocaust denial movement, his platform and notoriety arguably facilitated the dissemination of the idea. It is essential to underline the fact that his disciple and lieutenant, Wesley Swift, championed the Holo-hoax—a term still popular with those who deny the Holocaust happened—as a means to counter label the Holocaust and brand it as a deception, and disseminate it to his congregation.\textsuperscript{292}

Historian Leonard Dinnerstein has observed that “a remarkable metamorphosis occurred in the United States in the two decades following the end of World War II. After more than half a century of increasing animosity toward Jews, anti-Semitism in the United States began to decline.”\textsuperscript{293} In postwar America, anti-Semitism did appear to have become taboo, and the public acceptance of Jews indeed rendered Dinnerstein’s statement to appear accurate. However, the rise of Gerald L.K. Smith’s variety of Americanism suggests an important countertrend. Self-professed crusaders against Jewish power failed to find a footing within the American political arena after World War II. However, taken together, Smith’s conflation of Jews and communism, his diatribes regarding Jews as the source of all the world’s problems, his vision of Jewish plans for world domination, and his innumerable conspiracy theories, combined, found fertile ground not in Smith’s political party but in a particular strain of fundamentalist Christianity.

\textsuperscript{292} Atkins, 51.
\textsuperscript{293} Dinnerstein, 150.
The political building blocks Smith laid for the rise of postwar Neo-Nazism lacked cohesion and socio-political impact. His assertions based on undisclosed evidence were not enough to overcome the country’s newfound sense of Judeo-Christian harmony. His reasoning proved faulty as the inspiration for a political party, and despite the significant reach he gained through his various mass media initiatives, he discovered that he would not be able to successfully mount a political campaign espousing anti-Semitism in such a blatant fashion. Indeed, he cemented his legacy of Judeo-communist conspiracy, hypernationalism, and America First demagoguery through his Lieutenant—Wesley Swift—who successfully blended Smith’s diatribes and socio-political crusades with Rand’s floundering Christian Identity theology, building a movement that remains a powerful and significant belief system that continues to thrive on the fringes of 21st century America.
CHAPTER 4: SWIFT’S TEACHINGS:
WESLEY SWIFT’S SERMONS AND
HIS BRAND OF CHRISTIAN IDENTITY THEOLOGY

Wesley Swift’s ideology and beliefs did not emerge in a vacuum. They were the result of the synthesis of British Israelism, Klankraft, Nazism, hypernationalism, and Christian fundamentalism. Swift built on his education at Kingdom Bible College and incorporated other tenets to rebrand the Christian Identity Movement as his own, codifying Neo-Nazism in America as a movement based on a radical reinterpretation of the Scripture.

Michael Barkun asserts that “more than anyone else Wesley Swift was responsible for popularizing Christian Identity in right-wing circles.” He succeeded in recognizing that Hitler was one of God’s chosen ones for fulfilling the Lord’s work on earth. He succeeded in evidencing the providential significance of “true Americans.” He also succeeded in founding a lasting movement that continues to affect sociopolitical change to this very day. The Reverend accomplished this by emphasizing an “obsessive anti-Semitism” and by never leaving the pulpit. Unlike any of his predecessors discussed, Swift never left the lectern of his church, sought political office, or sought to lead a social movement, at least publicly. He was thus able to

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294 Barkun, 60.
295 Ibid., 103
justify all of the unfounded accusations and baseless conspiracies of his predecessors, particularly those of Gerald L.K. Smith, by providing Scriptural evidence to support them.

Swift covered a variety of topics throughout his sermons and was always capable of shifting his focus to match both the public mood of the nation, and whatever “crisis” was prominent at any given time. He effectively incorporated any new findings or ideas into his existing ideology and was able to illustrate reasons due to which new information would not or could not disprove him. Examples of such “new” information included instances when more scientific discoveries and evidence regarding topics such as genetics or evolution became available.

In the early 1950s, the discovery of the double helix structure of the DNA molecule by Dr. James Watson and Dr. Francis Crick, along with the notion that hereditary traits transmitted from parents to offspring, generated national interest.296 Swift perceived genetics as an important tool and employed it to prove that Adam was not the original father of all the races. He argued that the study of genetics revealed this notion to be a “biological impossibility.” It was, he argued, “impossible for Adam and Eve to have become father and mother of Asiatic, Negroes, and White men all at the same time.” He went as far as to claim that “biological law” overthrew “Biblical law,” citing genetic science as evidence that the Genesis narrative was not the literal truth.

To supplement the Scripture’s creation story, he presented a theory akin to a divinely ordered version of biological development. He claimed that a “divine knowledge factor” unaddressed in the Scripture, was behind the “continuing cell division in mammals” and thus behind the unfolding of genetic lineage. Ultimately, Swift concluded that genetics confirmed the existence of what he termed as “soul consciousness.” He instructed his congregation that they, the modern Adamites, “inherited the patterns” and carried forward “all the experiences of your Adamic race, from Adam down to your time,” assuring them that their very genes contained the code for the natural intelligence, spiritual fortitude, and cultural superiority of their ancestors. This was his justification for opposing miscegenation: “divine law” and “biological law,” he reasoned, were directed “so clearly for the benefit of race” and affirmed the “necessity of maintaining racial purity.”

All of Swift’s sermons contained one common theme: The Jews were the root cause of every tragedy or problem that has befallen mankind. “Mankind” in this context had a precise definition, white Protestant Americans, particularly those whose eyes were open to the “truth.” Swift’s Identity is distinct from founder Howard Rand’s version because of this perception of the Jews. Swift and his followers believed that Jews are the literal “biological offspring of Satan, the descendants of Satan’s sexual seduction of Eve in the Garden of Eden” through their chief progenitor Cain, the world’s first murderer. “There has been trouble ever” since he was “cast

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297 Wesley A. Swift, The Races of the Earth and their Difference (Mountain City: Sacred Truth Ministries, 1961), 11.


299 Barkun, 4.
“out of heaven” and God tasked his true believers “to finish the job of defeating Lucifer” here on earth. Lucifer and God engaged in a space battle “long before” man was “born on earth” and the Devil had “tried to take over the Milky Way.” Since being defeated in the heavens, the Dark One began to operate on earth through his offspring, starting with Cain, who was also the world’s first Jew.\textsuperscript{300} At first glance, this may appear to be starkly different from British Israelism, and indeed, historians have observed the heightened anti-Semitism in the designation of Jews as the literal offspring of the Devil and thus irredeemable, a view unique to Swift. However, as elucidated in the last chapter, Monson himself wrote about this topic at Kingdom Bible College during the 1930s when Swift was likely a student. Thus, the vehement anti-Semitism and subsequent professing of the Satanic origins of the Jews was possibly something he embraced at the school.

Historian Chester Quarles asserts that “Christian Identity is an interpretation of the Bible and Christianity that provides a religious sanction to white supremacy.”\textsuperscript{301} Anti-Semitism is the common link that connects all that Swift proselytized and rooted in his seedline theory of Jewish origins. As the offspring of the Devil, this belief unites all of the seemingly disparate and unconnected accusations against the Jews under the banner of the powers of Lucifer. Swift provided a Scriptural justification that not only declassified Jews as members of the human race but explained why they had become the cause of much suffering and hardship for white

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\textsuperscript{300} Swift, 9.
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Christian America, the “true Israel.” Swift’s application of Biblical evidence to the cause substantiated and corroborated many of Gerald L.K. Smith’s inconsistent and unfounded aspersions about the nefarity of the Jews. To support Smith’s contention that Jews tricked the United States into joining the Second World War, as well as his position regarding the “Holocaust,” Swift readily detailed that the Bible evidenced this was all possible and true because of the simple reason that the Jewish people were descendants of Satan.

The basis of Swift’s theological proof was his interpretation of Jewish origins known as the dual seedline theory; a theory by which he both revised accepted Biblical history and furnished a new perspective on the Jews’ place in contemporary America. According to this theory, the serpent in the Garden of Eden seduced and mated with Eve, producing a hybrid creature, Cain, known in Biblical history as the world’s first murderer. Whereas the descendants of Adam and Eve would be the true “chosen people,” the descendants of Eve and the serpent were the Jews. Consequently, as Michael Barkun observed, Swift’s view was that Jews were not simply an “unassimilable or evil force, but rather the quintessence of evil, the literal offspring of Satan.” By locating the origin of modern Judaism in the Garden of Eden instead of the Brit Bein HaBetarim—the Covenant between God and Abraham—all of Gerald L.K. Smith’s different beliefs concerning Jewish wickedness and deceitfulness, beliefs that Swift also adopted, acquired a new Biblical foundation. At the same time, Swift furnished a feasible rationale for how the Jews could accomplish such fantastic feats, such as manipulating the United States into

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303 Wesley A. Swift, Reopening the Trial of Jesus Christ (Hollywood: New Christian Crusade Church, 1962), 7.
304 Barkun, 49.
allying with the Soviets during World War II, in the process, fighting against Germany, a fellow white Christian nation, and all the while strengthening the power of “organized Jewry.”\(^\text{305}\)

In a further development of his Biblical interpretation, Swift asserted that the man created on the sixth day according to the Genesis narrative was not, in fact, the white man created in God’s image. Instead, he was the seed from which the inferior races of “yellow” and “black” people were born. Only on the eighth day did God create Adam, the culmination of all creation, a white man, and the original Christian. Swift asserted that “on the eighth day He Said, ‘there is no Adamite to till the soil,’ and He brought forth Adam, the very issue out of Himself.”\(^\text{306}\) At the same time, Swift warned, due to their common parentage in Eve, Jews retained the outward appearance of full humanity and whiteness, despite their hybrid serpent-human nature.\(^\text{307}\) The persistent place of Jews as “outsiders” in western society, Swift contended, stemmed from these origins: as an offspring of Eve, they could pass as humans, though as children of Satan, they would always find themselves as the outcasts of human civilization.\(^\text{308}\)

Swift opened his first church in 1946 in Hollywood, but it was not until he rechristened it the “Church of Jesus Christ Christian” in 1957 that he assumed the leadership of the Christian Identity Movement and became an essential figure of the religious racist right.\(^\text{309}\) Certainly,


\(^\text{308}\) Swift, Who Crucified Jesus Christ?, 9.

\(^\text{309}\) Quarles, 88.
before Swift, British Israel congregations were characterized as “small, isolated, and remote.”  

Through his use of radio and his connections with other demagogues and organizations, Swift was able to attract larger audiences and disseminate his viewpoint further. Identity under Swift has aptly been referred to as a movement rather than simply a denomination of Christianity because it emphasized that if the “one world government, and the government of the United States of America in association with the United Nations will pledge allegiance to Satan, the United States government itself becomes the enemy. For many survivalists and followers of bloodline identity, the government already allied with Satan and should be resisted at all costs.”  

Swift “laid the basic underpinnings of Identity as it is known today” and serves as the bridge between British Israel and the Hitlerite identity establishment of today.  

As “the most influential of first generation of Christians Identity leaders,” Swift incorporated virtually every element of the racial intermarriage literature, although with some significant modifications. Swift began with the assumption that God’s primal commandment to Adam’s descendants was the prohibition on racial intermarriage. He says that God said that He had “separated thee from the other peoples of the earth,” and He will not “permit you to intermarry with these other societies.” The Jews, however, were those who systematically violated the commandment and “mongrelized with every people on the face of the earth;” they

310 Ibid., 93.
311 Ibid., 128.
312 Ibid., 147.
intermarried with Hittites and Canaanites “to produce a very cutting type of Jew” and then held the hazard of producing “the Mongolian Ashkenazi of our time.”

Swift called into question the “religious authenticity and racial homogeneity of the Jews.” The Khazar’s theory of Jewish origin, as discussed in a previous chapter, labeled modern Jews as descendants of the ancient Khazar tribe of Eastern Europe, the descendants of Biblical Canaanites and Hittites. He asserted that:

Mongol Khazars are the acknowledged ancestors of the majority of modern Jews, as the result of a nationwide conversion to Judaism, in the 8th century A.D., of the people in the Asiatic kingdom of Khazaria, who later migrated into eastern Europe. In ancient times the Mongol Khazars were recognized as a fierce, brutal and exceedingly evil, barbaric people. And the Khazars were related to the Mongol hordes under Genghis Khan and other Asiatic leaders that for centuries waged more or less continuous warfare against the White population of eastern Europe. These Mongol Khazars, or Gogites, are the traditional enemies of White Christian civilization. They are the implacable foes of all Christians today, just as they were in the days of Christ.

Swift did supply some credibility to the Khazar theory by stating that “Lucifer was a master of Asia.” This also fits in the context of the seedline theory, because if Lucifer was the master of Asia, and the Jews were Asiatic and the children of Satan, then it follows that he would be the master of the territory where his “children” reigned. Swift further asserted that “Jews which are Satan’s children which Jesus spoke so much about,” and “the synagogue,” which is the Jewish house of God, is a charade because it truly is a house of Satanic worship.

314 Barkun, 142.
315 Ibid., 146.
Synagogue, literally means, sin-O-Gog, the sin of Gog, which affirms the connection of Jews to Satan. “Magog” is the kingdom of “Gog” who is Satan.\(^{318}\) Thus, the word “synagogue” literally means “an assembly of Gogites.”\(^{319}\)

As Adam was the first true man created in God’s image, Swift labeled those who came before as “pre-Adamic” peoples.\(^{320}\) Swift asserted that “these people were connected with the race lines that had been on this earth” long before Adam.\(^{321}\) These pre-Adamic races, the red, yellow, brown, and black races, intermarried with Lucifer’s children, and Swift asserted that Cain himself helped destroy these cultures and peoples.\(^{322}\) “Cain is the son of Lucifer, he is also a Luciferian. And one of the situations we see all through the Scripture is that God refused to permit Israel to intermarry with Canaanites — with any of the races which Cain had intermarried with.”\(^{323}\) Adam, thus, was not the first man, but the first white man created in God’s image. These pre-Adamic people created by God are lesser races and sometimes referred to as “mud people,” or “beast of the field.”\(^{324}\) Swift explained that because of this, it was evident that neither Adam nor the white race was the first “man” created, and the Kingdom that would grow from his seed line was not the first kingdom on earth. He asserted that God warned the

\(^{318}\) Wesley A. Swift, *Not Guilty*, 2514.


\(^{321}\) Wesley A. Swift, *Not Guilty*, 2514.

\(^{322}\) Wesley A. Swift, 2120.


leaders of the Egyptian and Syrian empires that they would fail because they were not his chosen people. Moreover, there is no mention of Adam at all and the reason behind this was, simply, that Adam did not father these empires.

Further asserting his point, Swift contended that “there is not a student of antiquity today who does not know that when God planted a garden in Eden for Adam” that “the old text said, eastward in Eden — In Eden.” Thus, there “had to have been other plantings before this.” As evidence of this, Swift explained that while all of this was taking place, “there was also an empire going on in China. And when Adam started to grow up on earth, there was still a remnant of people in the valley of the Indus and dwelling in the caves of Kilimanjaro.” That, Swift explained, is the reason “my father said to my fore father Adam... Have dominion over it,” including all the “beasts of the field,” meaning all the “people” God created and populated the earth with before creating Adam in his image. God said to Adam that he wanted him to populate the earth; this at least was in line with the accepted Christian dogma. Swift, however, clarified that God ordered Adam to repopulate the earth. According to Swift, God said to Adam, “I want you to repopulate it, with white people.” Swift explicated that He would not have said “repopulate,” if there were not “people” already living on earth, and this reveals that God took Adam around the world and showed him all His creations, including the pre-Adamic peoples, “the people not having the spirit of the living God,” including the Negro and Asiatic races. Swift routinely referred to those godless beings as the Enosh: “Nonwhite, kinky-haired,

325 Swift, 809.

fallen Angels” who possibly originated on other planets “but predated the creation of Adam and Eve by thousands of years.” There are two conflicting tales about the origins of Enosh: that God created them on earth as precursors or pre-Adamites, or they were created by God on other planets and brought to earth by Lucifer after he was cast out. Swift’s disciple William Potter Gale asserted that “the sons of Satan knew that they must bring about a mongrelization with the Enosh to effectively destroy the sons of God.” Regardless of the doctrine considered, the same message becomes apparent: Adam was created in God’s image, pre-Adamic people had existed on earth, and their desire to intermingle with Adam and his progeny was at best a threat to white purity, and at worst, a nefarious plot by Lucifer and his children, the Jews, to overthrow the kingdom of God on earth.

If the premise that Jews were the actual children of Satan is accepted, it is plausible, if not possible, that all anti-Semitic tirades by Smith or any of Swift’s predecessors are supportable. On this basis, then, it must be therefore understood that the accepted historical accounts and chronology of the Bible are fraudulent. As mentioned in Chapter One, Swift and Neo-Nazism differed theologically in specific ways from Nazi Christianity because of its Scriptural foundation. The position and role of the Apostle Paul is one particular place where Swift’s movement differed. Hitler asserted that because Paul was Jewish and Jesus Aryan, he could be nothing more than a communist traitor. While Swift would agree that Jesus was

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327 Levitas, 80.

328 Levitas, 82.

Aryan, he disagreed with the Führer’s position of Paul as a Jew. As a disciple of the Aryan Jesus, Paul could not have been a Jew. As a leader of “true Christianity,” Paul could not have been a Jew. As someone who the Almighty Spoke to, Paul could not have been a Jew. As the author of some of the most important books within Christianity, Paul could not have been a Jew.

At a Bible study group in March of 1966, Swift was asked the question about the perceived Judaism of Paul. He responded:

We could spend all night on that. The King James Version of the Bible does not separate in translation, the difference between a Benjaminite and other people not of Israel, who lived in that area. Now, Paul said that he was an Israelite of the tribe of Benjamin but of the sect of the Jews. In other words, he grew up under the theological teachings of the Jews who were in control of the places of worship, and what they called Judaism or the religion of that time and had perverted and twisted this priesthood. It had been twisted by Cainanites, Amalakites, Hittites, and other ‘ites’. And thus Jesus said that this priesthood was of the children of the Devil and the work of their father, the Devil, they would do. And that they had been brought in to destroy. And Jesus accused them of being guilty of all the righteous blood slain from Abel to Zachariah. Now, remember that there was total hostility between Christ and Jewry. But not between Christ and the people who were from Judah and Benjamin who lived in Palestine. These of Judah and Benjamin were under control of an evil administration that had taken over the priesthood there in Judea. In other words, the people of the tribe of Judah and Benjamin who lived in Palestine were entrapped in a theological area of error. Because these false priests had taken over their religion. Even though these people may never have left the main facet of their faith and still believed in the true God, who was YAHWEH, and still looked for the manifestation of the Messiah, who was to be YAHWEH in the flesh as YAHSHUA--Jesus. Now, the Apostle Paul was from the city of Tarsus. He was a citizen of Spain which was under Roman rule, at the time and thus a part of the Roman Empire. So he came from a large city. He came from a family of merchants and they were wealthy. They were engaged in selling purple. Which meant the cloth which was made for Royalty and Rulers. And they also made tents which was a military operation as they were used by the military. And also, camping equipment for travelers at that time was made. Paul himself was a tent and sail maker as he knew the business of his family. So you see, he came from a very wealthy family and was highly trained and well educated. But when Paul went to the local temple then the Jews now ran the Temples. And these people called Jews in our translations were Hittites, Cainanites, and Amalakites and other ‘ites’ of that area. They were the descendants of Cain, in other words. They had taken over the Temples where the Scribes of Israel had before taught the people the Word of God and where the true Israelites had worshiped. Now these
‘ites’ were not true Judah and Benjamin. And they were not true Israel either. They were not the descendants of Israel. But they had perverted and twisted the doctrines as they sought to take over the Kingdom of God.\(^{330}\)

Throughout his sermons, Swift described Paul as an ardent and essential follower of the Almighty through Jesus. He cited Paul in a sermon entitled “The Glory of God” where the Apostle asserted that “all things were made by Him (speaking of Christ) and without Him was not anything made. All things exist in Him and through Him and by Him all things consist. Thus everything in the Universe exists in Him and through Him and every vibration moves out of the mind of the most created Most High God.”\(^{331}\) Throughout this sermon, Swift continually referred to the changing times of the 1950s and considered them fraught with lies and “changes” encouraged by Satan and his disciples. Swift utilized the Apostle and his devotion to Christ and the true “glory of God” to emphasize (both in this sermon and in sermons throughout his career) that in the time of Paul, times were changing as well. Thus, like Paul, Swift’s congregation must be steadfast in their devotion, and continue to know, learn, and preach the “truth” about Christianity and America’s place in the Kingdom of Heaven.

According to Swift, the Judaism of the Old Testament has tainted the contemporary versions of the Bible. These were lies spread by Satan’s children to manipulate the masses and garner sympathy for the so-called children of Israel. When Swift’s sermons appear inconsistent with Scriptural history, it is because he and his followers understood and knew the “true” story as they believed themselves to be the “true Christians” descended from “true Israel.” Serving as


a highly effective and all-defying ideological tactic based on a twisted view of prevalent theological narrative, the acceptance of this notion reduced any evidence presented against Swift to insignificance and demonstrated that any individual with different interpretations or perspectives had been duped by or was freely serving the Devil.

Swift insisted that the perception that he was contradicting the Creation story was false, because “the Bible is the book of the Adamic race” not those who came before. Swift asserted that God was “a segregationist” and secluded Adam and Eve into the garden in order to prevent the intermarriage or the spoiling of God’s seed. In a sermon entitled the “Races of Earth and Their Difference” Swift preached that “we the offspring of the most high” and “the greatest of nations – the United States” are “not as old as the earth,” effectively stating that the earth we live on is old and that the white man or the “true” man was His last creation. However, accepting, understanding, and knowing that did not make a person racist; it merely presented as true a statement as “up is up.” In the same sermon, Swift contended that “early theology recognized that there had been an early creation which had been destroyed, or had passed into catastrophe and was re-altered even before the Genesis story of recreation, and the account of God preparing the earth for Adam man.” The sermon serves as an example of how Swift could seamlessly weave science, history, and archaeology into his discourse. He spoke about carbon dating, evolution, Darwin, genetics, and even took on previous Biblical notions of racial origin. Through carbon dating, he attempted to explain that it was clear that there were “people” who walked the earth long before Adam. He observed that the idea that “every race, color, and

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“creed” evolved from Adam is indeed a “strange philosophy” and a part of the tainted Scripture he and his followers were attempting to undo. Swift then proceeded to use genetics as evidence that what the Bible said was true, but only if the “truth” of the story of the Adamic race or “true Christians” was first accepted. He asserted that the idea that the others originated from the Adam seed was:

Biologically impossible because the Bible teaches ‘Kind begets kind, seed having life in itself’. This teaching overthrew Biblical law, for inside the genes, the chromogen inside the Chromosome by the process we have discussed with you as... mitosis, there has been a continuing cell division in mammals and a Divine knowledge factor which determines the exact form of the developing embryo. So, we have had no change in biological law, and it would be impossible for Adam and Eve to have become father and mother of Asiatics, Negroes, and white men at the same time. This is a biological impossibility. More than that it is impossible to say that out of Ham came Negroes.333

One of Swift’s most repeated statements was that his goal was to explain to people that the earth is much older than the Adamic race, and the peoples who inhabited the earth before him were not his kin. He asserted that “the earth you came to rule over, to save, to carry out the will of the Father is an old earth, and people have been on it a long time.”334 The six days in which God created the world were so in God’s time, not ours. We, as creations of Yahweh, cannot understand or fathom how long a “day” is to God.335 However, science and archaeology have allowed humankind to understand that it was likely that it comprised millions of years,

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334 Wesley A. Swift, 834.

and because of what we “know” about the truth of the origins of different races and peoples, it fits into the “true” Biblical chronology and history.

During the 1950—1960s, when segregation and integration were controversial issues, Swift’s sermons illustrated how he was able to incorporate contemporary topics easily. He asserted that segregation was Biblical, and integration was against the will of God and biology. After all, in nature, different species do not intermingle, and the “races” of man, in fact, constituted different species. Furthermore, he stated that Adam’s descendants “do not have to intermarry, interbreed or, integrate with, or make a society out of those of the ancient past.” These people “who lived here long before,” the white man, do not share a kinship with them. God warned his chosen people about this, and Swift proclaimed that “once you understand these facts,” it does not “place in your heart hatred. It does not make a person racist or ‘anti-Negro, or anti-China men’ to accept and live this truth, but it does make one intelligently determined that these prehistoric peoples are not going to take over the civilization which came down out of heaven from God, which is now being developed until the earth will be like it is in heaven.” Jesus’s teaching of “thy kingdom come thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven” serves as evidence that the goal of true Christians should not be to reach heaven but to create heaven on earth. Accordingly, it was necessary first to acknowledge and accept and understand that God, Himself, was a segregationist, that heaven formed a segregated community. Integration on earth was against God’s will and His plans for all humankind.

The essential truth that Swift understood and exposed was that white people, Aryans, or true Israelites were the ones with whom the Old Testament was concerned. Adam and Eve
were not the first people but rather the first white people. Scripture that indicated otherwise was either misunderstood or manipulated by Satan through the Jews. Swift asserted that:

Christianity was given a very false concept of the Jewish religion. The Christians have been told that the Jewish religion was the religion of the people of the Old Testament and that these people then rejected Christ. So therefore, they were dropped from God’s plan, and that the Church was formed by Jesus out of anyone who would accept Jesus. And thus form a new substitutional society for God in the earth, in place of the Jews until a specified time. This is a phoney lie. In fact, the Jews do not embrace the inspirations of the Scriptures. They do not embrace the things advocated by Moses or the things taught to Holy Men of Israel, who wrote as they were moved by the inspiration of God. Actually, they take this Scripture and they work it and rewrite it and twist it. And then each and every verse is picked apart and reset up by the decision of the Rabbi. Then each verse is set up to establish their own kind of society which is evil, vulgar, corrupt and without justice. This is their way. They can’t help it, as they are like their father the Devil and his work they will do. Now, Jesus knew this. For He said: ‘Ye are of your father the Devil, and his works ye will do.’----I expect ye to do the work of your father.  

It follows that the place the true Israelites and true Christians resided in was God’s true chosen land and where God’s kingdom will arrive on earth: The United States of America.  

For Swift, Monson’s Kingdom Bible College demonstrated the importance of America to Biblical history and prophecy. As the descendants of Joseph born through Manasseh and the recipients of God’s blessing, America was established as the “Castle on the Hill” within British Israelite and Identity theology. Swift advanced this notion further and modernized it while simultaneously providing ancient Biblical history supporting it. “America,” he asserted, was “the most blessed” place “on the face of the earth, among the nations of God’s kingdom.” The

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336 Christogenea, swift.christogenea.org/articles/03-02-66-bible-study-qa.

337 Wesley A. Swift, 816.
people of this most hallowed country were the inheritors of God’s blessing, who received it through his Adamite seed line. Monson professed that true Israel was a descendant of the house of Joseph through his children Manasseh and Ephraim. Swift incorporated this notion into his sermons as evidence of the importance of America and Great Britain to Anglo-Saxondom and acknowledged that there were white people in every western country, and some among them may be true Christians. With regard to Britain and America, the House of Joseph, he asserted that God made a covenant with these two houses because they “carry the name of true Israel” that the “Scriptures” clearly profess. The “symbols of the House of Manasseh is identified in two places in the book of Isaiah as the “outstretched wings of the Eagle.” 338 The Eagle has always been a symbol of America, and this was evidence of the truth that America is godly through Manasseh. The book of Isaiah, Chapter 18, that Swift references stated: “Ho to the land shadowing with wings.” In Swift’s sermon “the Lord of the Eagle,” he claimed that God spoke to Isaiah to signify the “identity of a people, of a land marked by the Symbol of the eagle.” Thus, “there is no other land to which Yahweh could have addressed this message because we are the land of the Eagle.”

America is, was, and would remain the Promised Land, and the founding fathers were aware of this. Swift believed that our founding fathers were Godly and that they founded this nation to be a Christian one. America was the embodiment of God’s promise to “true Israel,” and when the founding fathers “established this nation in the hour of our independence and established our Constitution, we recognized the blessings of God upon us as aforetime. We set

up a constitution that marked the fulfillment of prophecy.”  

“Our founding fathers were given wisdom enough to place upon the great seal of our nation these words: annuit coeptis, translated as ‘he (God) prospers our beginning.’ Yahweh had promised to make prosperous the household of his people. Our founding fathers, on the reverse side of our seal, put the symbol of the Great Pyramid, with the thirteen tiers of its placement set upon a sharp bluff and fixed upon a solid rock.” Swift insisted that the symbolism was no accident and proved that the founding fathers knew how the land was settled and founded. He continued:

They established this nation as though set upon a rock, and while all other foundations may be as shifting sands, this nation was built to endure. It was set to endure and to fulfill its Messianic destiny with its 13 tiers marking us as the 13th Tribe of the House of Israel. This nation will be the nation where the ‘gathering’ of the people was to take place. There is one outstanding factor which covers your heraldry which is important to us as we stand upon the edge of a ‘New Age.’ ‘He prospers our beginnings’ and we are going to see that He prospers New beginnings, and then great power and great force will move out of this society. We are going to discover that the powers that seek to destroy us cannot be successful. For we are the Nation of the Eagle, and this symbol belongs to the House of Israel, but most especially to the House of Manasseh.

The founding fathers were aware that the Eagle was the enemy of the serpent. The eagle was godly, and as America was “legally an eagle nation,” it was also a godly nation, a holy nation. The serpent represented Lucifer, the symbol of the Devil and his children, the Jews, whose symbol was a “six-pointed star with the head of the serpent holding its tail in its

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341 Wesley A. Swift, 4562.
mouth.” The eagle and the serpent were in constant combat. Swift claimed that the Jews split apart the nations of the brothers Manasseh and Ephraim—America and Great Britain—and orchestrated the Revolutionary War. “This great world conspiracy of Jewry which had fought against the Christian Faith from the days of The Christ. And in the days of the Birth of your Nation had created the conditions and brought the pressure that resulted in your Declaration of Independence, and the formation of a New Nation”

Swift utilized this symbolism to associate everything with their Biblical enemy—the Jews— but at the same time, their contemporary enemy as well: communists.

In this battle against the forces of evil and the powers against us, we are paired off in the mind of the world with all its assembly against the Soviet Union. And the Soviet Union is symbolic with its hammer and sickle, of the politics of Lucifer, and the climax for the design of world conquest... politically. So since the emblem of Lucifer is the Serpent, and the politics of Lucifer today is socialism and communism, and America as a nation which is Anti-communist by purpose even though there are a lot of rascals working in high places in our government seeking to destroy you, the most dangerous thing we face today from these rascals is that while we battle communism on the outside and send boys to die against communism in South East Asia, and even have trouble with communism in the Caribbean, we still haven't learned to wipe communism out of these United States. I believe it is a Divine order upon the pattern of the MOST HIGH that communism be wiped out of this nation. And that everything associated with the Soviet Union and its Red revolution. I think we owe this not only to our sons who we send abroad but we owe this to the great Destiny which God has bequest us in our responsibility to His service... that these enemies of God... these enemies of Our Christ who are in our nation, these enemies with allegiance to a foreign power shall be broken and stripped of their power... thrown into concentration camps, or executed for their treason.

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343 Swift, 3745.

344 Swift, 3757.
Essentially, the eagle nation would never be able to save the world from communism without stopping world Jewry first. What Swift accomplished here was weaving a tapestry of Biblical prophecy with contemporary fears and then fit it seamlessly into his hitsoriosophy. The Jews are the enemies of America and the children of Satan. The Soviet Union is the enemy of America, and the “connection between Judaism and communism” has already been well-established. Thus, it followed logically that the Jews were responsible for communism and Lucifer himself provided the power behind the Soviet Union. By the time Swift opened his church in 1957, it was evident that the international threat of communism was the contemporary manifestation of the International Jew.

For Swift, accepting the established precedent was insufficient. He submitted further evidence of the synchronicity between Judaism and communism by asserting that through Satan’s descendant Esau, Jacob’s brother, the line of the Edomites continued. He further stated that “Edom” means “red” in Hebrew, thus proving the synonymy. “The line out of Esau – has a supernatural mind – a Satanic mind” and are “deadly” and “wicked.” Continuing in the same vein, he asserted that the “Esau line – the Edom line” was where the Russian “kike Jew” comes from, once more associating Russia with the Jews.345 Here, Swift essentially asserted that communism preceded Karl Marx. In fact, it was Biblical. Communism as an ideology has been around since the earliest Biblical days; the “hour of climax,” Swift alleged, prophesied in the book of Ezekiel was evidence that the “kingdom of God,” America, was “locked in a struggle for survival against communism.” When the hour arrived, the first thing God was going to do “is

reveal to the world the truth,” that Swift and his followers were correct and courageous enough to recognize the threat of International Jewry and its modern Soviet incarnation.\textsuperscript{346}

American ascendancy to a superpower after the Second World War served as further evidence that it was God’s chosen land on earth. Thus it was no surprise that Satan’s Soviets also acquired the atomic bomb and emerged as an adversarial equal. What was bizarre and potentially inexplicable was the fact that God’s chosen would knowingly enter into a pact with the Devil. “The United Nations is a Jewish conspiracy against all Christian nations which stems out of communism.”\textsuperscript{347} The United Nations provided a vehicle for those looking to undermine Christian civilization in the United States and prevent America from succeeding in leading the world. Swift claimed that “There are more spies coming and going inside the United States without any way to stop them,” and because the United Nations supposedly provided them with immunity, they were free to wreak havoc on Christian America.\textsuperscript{348} This global movement was the Devil’s trick to persuade America to join an international conglomerate run by Judeo communists and disrupt God’s kingdom on earth. They hid behind lies and false truths as well as this notion of “equality,” which formed the core of communism, essentially reiterating the argument about the association with the Devil.

During the 1950s—1960s, Swift believed a war was being raged against Christians in this country, masquerading as a fight against segregation and discrimination. He further asserted


that “if the communist can use the Hollywood High School, on the 24th, then the John Birch Society, and the KKK, and the Christian Nationalists, should be able to have it on the 25th. If the enemies of Christ can use our public auditoriums, then those who support the Kingdom should have equal rights to proclaim and strengthen their approbation of their love of America.” The accusation that Christian America was discriminating against anyone was repugnant to Swift. It stood as evidence of a socialist war against America’s “right to be Christian.” Because of that, he contended that “any intelligent American that doesn’t discriminate in favor of Christianity” is “not a true Christian,” and “any individual that doesn’t want to separate from America the forces that they are trying to flood into by any illegal gate, is not intelligent.” In essence, if someone claiming to be an American is not a white Protestant and not in favor of white Protestant rights in Christian America, then they were an enemy of the country. Moreover, Swift claimed that these people should not be allowed into the country, and those who were already present should be kept segregated from “true Israel.” As was evident in Biblical times, the Devil walked among us and wanted to poison the race of God through his progeny.

Jesus, therefore, is a discriminatory God walking among men. Remember, He says, ‘I call for My sheep by their name and I lead them out.’ He never attempted at any time to make sheep out of goats. He left that up to silly clergy to try later on. You cannot make that genealogical switch. And God didn’t try it at that time biologically. He never tried to make sheep out of goats. Discriminating God? Yes. He said I shall discriminate. I shall in the hours I come with power and great Glory, I am going to assume the Kingdom which is My Kingdom and the throne which is My throne. The throne which the Scriptures earliest records of it, said the throne of His father David. He said, ‘I am going to separate the nations of the world and divide the sheep nations from the goat nations. And I am going to give all the power to the sheep nations. I selected these sheep nations from before the foundation of the earth. I separated them.  

349 Swift, 70.

Swift suggested that segregation was the natural order of things; it was what God wanted, and it was what Jesus wanted. Those who spoke of integration had either been manipulated or were doing the Devil’s work willingly.

Moreover, it implied that racial purity was essential for the survival of America, and segregation was the means to attain that prosperity. Indeed, segregation was divine. Swift believed that it was impossible to serve America and God without segregation enforcement. Integration was against God’s plan and a sin. A perversion of this magnitude would affect “true Israel” and America’s progression, not merely spiritually, but also America’s ability to attain and maintain its supremacy in the world. If America did not adhere to and enforce spiritual law, then America would lose its place and the Devil would reign; making it incumbent on “true Americans” to never waver in enforcing the laws that their spiritually inspired ancestors and forefathers intended, including segregation.

The God I serve is a segregationalist. He is discriminating, He is Omniscient, and knows all about what He is doing. He is not cruel, He is not unmerciful, but in the vastness of His Wisdom and in the greatness of His Mercy, and in the vastness of His plan He has placed in this world the best and the greatest and the highest human that ever walked upon this earth. And He... to do this... transplanted the children of His Spirit into physical earth, for the raising, the elevating, the lifting, and the civilizing of the world. These people are... the white race, who have descended from the loins of Adam, who was the offspring of the Most High. I want you to know that any Christian minister who will not advocate segregation and discrimination on the part of God, is a traitor to the Gospel and to God Himself. Someone said: what should happen to ministers like that? They should be given a good opportunity to learn the truth, the facts should be presented and laid before them, and then my friends, the time should come when we should treat an individual who carries the kinds of poison to men’s minds that destroys our race... treat them as we would an individual carrying a contagious disease... and isolate them.351

It should also be observed that beginning in the 1960s, there was a significant uptick in references in Wesley Swift’s sermons to African Americans or the black race as a severe threat to the American way of life. This was undoubtedly because of the notoriety and success of the Civil Rights Movement. African Americans were a lower species, a “beast of the field” as it were, so it was impossible that they could conceive of such a disruptive movement on their own. The only solution was that they must be getting their orders from somewhere. Swift asserted that black people were the foot soldiers of International Jewry and communism, allowing his focus on African Americans to still fit neatly within the wheelhouse of anti-Semitism. According to Swift, to be against integration was to stand against Jews and Satan.

Naturally, given his stance on segregation, Wesley Swift took issue with the landmark case of *Brown versus Board of Education* and Chief Justice Earl Warren. In 1954, the case *Brown versus Board of Education* found that segregation of races and schools was unconstitutional and thus began the erosion of the Jim Crow laws. Swift was a vociferous supporter of segregation in all aspects of American life because of the dangers posed by the “mongrelization” of God’s chosen race. Swift believed that Warren’s “dismissal” of segregation was a betrayal of the natural order of things. The Chief Justice quickly became a focus for Swift’s sermons on the subject of integration.

The design in the first place, was to create a great upheaval over the treatment of minorities in this country. I do not think that minorities have very much to cry about here in America, for they are better off here than in any other place in the world. If they were not better off here, we would not have as many of these undesirables coming into this country to begin with. And they understand that as well. And then having arrived, then instead of leaving the symbol and the shape of America as they found it, they seek to destroy it with their conspiratorial design. So we point out to you that the design was
to place a Civil Rights plank in your Constitution and this was designed after Governor Warren became Chief Justice of the Court. He participated in this Black Monday decision and he said, as he went into that office, prior even to being confirmed—that he would use his influence, if confirmed, to integrate the South showing that he was preconceived in his opinion. He should have disqualified himself from this case because he had already passed judgment without hearing any of the litigating circumstances.

Swift explained to his congregation that he and some early supporters went to Washington to protest the confirmation of Warren to the Supreme Court, but they failed because of international pressure. “Integration,” he claimed, was not “based upon the text of the Constitution” but the design of the Jewish Negroes. Swift further asserted that the “Constitution was not written for Negroes,” it was “written for White Men” and the founding fathers believed that it only applied to white men because only white men could be citizens. Swift also asserted that the reinterpretations of the Constitution were not what the founders intended it to be. It followed that because Warren supported integration, he was perverting that Godly document, could not be trusted, and his rulings should not be accepted because they were un-American, anti-American, socialist, and arguably worst of all, Jewish. Swift lamented that he “cannot determine whether Mr. Warren has become a Jew, or whether he carries the synagogue to the Supreme Court. But he has the skull cap on and he got his training from the Talmud.” Swift asserted that during Warren’s time as governor of California, he was taken over by Jews and the mid-twentieth century version of the “deep state” that was, of


353 Wesley A. Swift, Help From the Heavens (Hollywood: New Christian Crusade Church [ca.1955–1965]), 1236

course, run by Jews. Thus, it was clear that the Chief Justice and the Supreme Court, in general, were under the control of a Jewish “invisible hand” and behind integration and the destabilization of American society.³⁵⁵

When Martin Luther King, Jr. began to organize non-violent protests and campaign for equal civil rights for black Americans, Wesley Swift took to the pulpit to immediately vilify his fellow preacher. He referred to King as “a fat headed Demagogue of the Negroes who likes attention. In a sermon entitled “Why You Cannot Turn Your Back,” he referred to King as a “negro educated in Communist schools, and who was cited by Communist leaders as the man to watch for leadership, as they taught their students he was not of the top operators for the Communists, and was doing the bidding of the Communist Party. He was chosen as the Negro leader for the Communist Party uprising in America.”³⁵⁶ Swift believed that the African-American community wanted to overthrow white Christian civilization in the name of communism and the Soviet Union. Declassified intelligence documents revealed that during the era of Civil Rights, Swift made periodic appearances and delivered speeches at events hosted by the White Citizens’ Councils, whose primary concern was curbing integration and emphasizing black inferiority.³⁵⁷ During the Civil Rights Movement, Swift’s sermons would feature an emphasis on the inferiority of African-Americans, their savagery and depravity, and he consistently associated them with animals. He claimed that the “beasts of the field,” created on

³⁵⁵ FBI, Dr. Wesley Albert Swift—Racial Matters; Espionage X, January 30, 1959.

³⁵⁶ Wesley A. Swift, Why You Cannot Turn Your Back (sermon, August 15, 1965).

the sixth day of the Genesis narrative, included the “black and yellow” races. In doing this, he
was echoing the sentiments of his white supremacists and segregationist predecessors.\footnote{Wesley A. Swift, \textit{Who Crucified Jesus Christ?} (Mountain City: Sacred Truth Ministries [ca.1955–1965]), 7.}

No other icon drew Swift’s attention more during the civil rights era than the man who
has since become synonymous with the struggle for racial equality, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Swift frequently incorporated Dr. King into his sermons and the Judeo-communist conspiracy
against God and the United States of America. “Communist organizers and left-wing controllers
is where all the troubles come from,” and no one was more responsible for the Judeo
communist trouble going on in the south than the “gypocrat communist Mr. Martin Luther
King.”\footnote{Wesley A. Swift, \textit{Armageddon- Local and Worldwide} (Mountain City: Sacred Truth Ministries [ca.1955–1965]), 51.} According to historian Stewart Wexler, a “gypocrat” was a term coined by Swift that
was defined as “the Jewish-controlled hypocrite.”\footnote{Stuart Wexler, \textit{America’s Secret Jihad: The Hidden History of Religious Terrorism in the United States} (Counterpoint: Berkley, 2015), 49.} It is not surprising that Swift believed Dr.
King to be under “Jewish control,” but Swift believed it went deeper than that and what was in
the news was not the complete story. Instead, Jews were representing falsified images to make
viewers sympathize with the unruly mob of Negroes, feel antagonistic about law enforcement,
and condemn the supposed brutality against African Americans.

When asked by parishioners in 1963 about his personal opinion of the civil rights
activists, Swift did not mince words:

I think we have a fat headed demagogue of the Negroes, who likes the attention, and
the prestige. And he likes the press, and he will go along with the Communists. He will
go along with anyone. He actually has the same attitude as those whose ultimate
achievement is Black Supremacy such as the Muslim X movement. The willingness of the NAACP and King’s movement that is being organized among the churches, and the Muslim movement shows that they have coordination and that they have a design for the overthrow of White Christian civilization, and the establishing permanently and firmly a Black supremacy in America. This will not take place if every Negro has to die before it is over. I can assure you that the Whites in America are not going to let the Negroes take over America by force and violence. There are not enough of them to win by election. And their attainment by force and violence is clearly impossible unless it were done by revolution. 361

Continuing in the same vein, Swift asserted that all reports of whites bombing and burning black churches were ludicrous, ridiculous, and untrustworthy because “no white man goes out and burns down Negro houses and churches for them just to get insurance and build a better one. There is no sense in giving them insurance” and the means to “propagandize.” 362 Swift believed that King’s leadership of the civil rights movement was something akin to a military general; the Reverend sits atop his army of African-Americans that stood ready at a moment’s notice to upend traditional white American society and advance the agenda of the ascendant black supremacist.

Although Dr. King and African Americans led the civil rights movement, it was not they who organized it, or, indeed, who was in control of it. It was, of course, the Jews. Only Jews could manipulate an entire nation. Only Jews had absolute control over the press and media, and only Jews were willing to destroy America and battle God’s true chosen people to establish Jewish and Satanic rule over the world. Swift asserted that rabbis in New York met and decided the best ways to “stir up” trouble in Birmingham and that any whites in the crowds of


362 Swift, Evidence of Divine Assistance, 1437
protesters were not whites but Jews or Jewish agents. Swift further accused Dr. King of bastardizing the word of God because it was impossible for King to be Christian. As the head of a Jewish organization, he could not possibly be a Christian, let alone a reverend, and was actually “the smartest communist of them all.” As Judaism and communism were supposedly synonymous, and King was a Jewish proxy or puppet, it implied that King himself was a communist. As such, King could not know the word of God, did not believe and rose to prominence by employing tricks and manipulations of the Devil’s agents, causing the entire movement and its leader to be anti-American, anti-white, anti-Christian, and anti-God.

“God is not only not integrationist, but God’s plan for the world is a segregation, and a preservation of Kind, and the developing and uplifting of all people.” The entire “work” of the Judeo communist-led civil rights movement was in direct opposition to God’s plan for His Kingdom on earth. God did not create an equal world. He did not create all people to be His true Israel. As discussed earlier, Swift believed that the black race long preceded the white race on this earth, but these “beasts of the field” were not permitted into the garden of Eden and were not permitted to intermingle and Mongrelize with God’s chosen people. Mongrelization and integration were not God’s plan, they were Satan’s. This, Swift asserted, was the Creation of a false standard of equality, and an attempt upon the part of others to level what they call inequality is not development. This, my friends, is the process of degeneration. It is a scientific and a biological fact and is understood very cunningly by those who are seeing to put over these ideas, that the moment that you integrate the various races of a higher and lower society, that you degenerate the higher society, and end the administrative abilities of that society or nation.

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363 Swift, 1445.
Swift further asserted that the very concept of integration was a sham, and if it was to be believed and accepted that white and black men were equals and there were no differences between them, integration would only benefit the black men in the current scheme of things. Swift claimed that Negroes wanted to infuse their blood with white blood and gain the advantages that came with that action. Integration was not concerned with equality, but with ensuring the superiority of the black race. Swift explained that Biblical and scientific law both supported segregation and there was no rational reason behind integration. Thus, there must be an irrational reason: hatred for God’s chosen people, white Christians. The entire civil rights movement, its leaders, marches, legal cases, activism by both white and black people, were serving a higher power but that power was not God. It was a Jewish-led enterprise with the specific goals of disrupting God’s plan and achieving Satan’s dominion here on earth.

The fact that Swift could shift so seamlessly between anti-Semitic and anti-black rhetoric is evidence of the most dangerous aspects of his theology. The Christian Identity Reverend was well aware of the mood of the nation and was able to remain topical and relevant. He continually succeeded in weaving contemporary issues of the 1960s into his sermons and provided Biblical evidence to support them without altering key facets of his belief system. It is evident that during the civil rights movement, Swift and the broader Identity movement focused on opposing integration and African American rights, but never strayed too far so as to make it unbelievable within the core of his belief system: The Jews were the children of the


365 Wesley A. Swift, Terror By Night (Mountain City: Sacred Truth Ministries [ca.1955–1965]), 3383.
Devil. If that premise was accepted, then even the most outlandish or seemingly disparate events can, in fact, be associated with the work of the Jews.

As discussed in Chapter Two, Gerald L.K. Smith and Charles Lindbergh formed the America First Committee that focused on putting “true Americans” above all others. In short, the America First initiative translated to “America for Americans,” which signified “America for white Protestants” only. Swift completely supported his mentors’ America First initiative and often provided armed men as security detail that supported and defended Smith at rallies and speeches. As Smith’s chief Lieutenant and close confidante, Swift embraced this philosophy, utilized it, and emphasized it in his sermons. America First fit perfectly into Swift’s preaching because he ordained America as true Israel. Thus, it would seem logical that America should be not only America’s priority but all of Christendom’s. Indeed, in the Cold War era, Swift asserted that “the world seeks to embrace God’s kingdom” and aid America in its war against the Devil’s forces. Swift believed that America serving as the “world police,” the federal government and military sending money, aid, and soldiers overseas to protect, “foreign interests” did a disservice to the country and was contrary to God’s plan. “When you hear” the federal government “committed to one worldism and destruction of our sovereignty and have them” persecuting and “harassing people in the South and into the North believe in the Commandments of God and believe in racial self-respect,” then “the FBI becomes the OGPU.” Essentially and according to Swift, this meant that if the federal government continued to spend its time focusing outward instead of putting America first, then they would

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not be doing their jobs and protecting the sovereignty of this nation, considering that “one worldism” was a philosophy closely attuned to the plans of the international Jewry. The embracing “one worldism” signified embracing communism, which meant embracing Judaism, which, in turn, meant embracing Satan, and any “American” institution that served this agenda was traitorous.

One of the institutions that Swift spent a considerable amount of time denouncing and condemning was the Anti-Defamation League (ADL). Founded in 1913, this non-government association served to “stop by appeals to reason and conscience, and if necessary, appeals to law the defamation of the Jewish people.”\(^{368}\) The ADL grew to encompass and focus its defense and campaign for equal treatment for more than just the Jewish people. To Swift, the ADL served as evidence of Jewish infiltration on American soil, and as early as 1955, his sermons provided evidence of world Jewry attempting to create an International Jewish-led world government. Swift believed that Jews could organize and manipulate other species of man, and perceived the ADL as a significant vehicle of that transgression. Swift claimed that through the ADL, International Jewry was “gathering the hordes of Asia for another assault against God’s kingdom” and “sparked the race of Negroes against whites.” The doctrine that linked the Civil Rights Movement to “hordes of Asia” was communism. The Soviet Union had its grip on Europe and Asia, and America was confronting the “communistic” Civil Rights Movement. The connection between the two disruptive groups was – and is – not hard to observe: Jews. The ADL’s existence not only proved that Jews were the servants of the Devil, but Swift viewed it as

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the fulfillment of the Biblical prophecy. “Thus the prophecy of Jesus said the product of the beast” would lead an “assault upon Christian nations” and “it’s clear that no amount of peace treaties and no amount of appeasement or agreement, which actually weakens your existence” would protect us “from the suddenness of their evil thought which descends upon them of world Communism and all of the cohorts there with them.”

This, Swift asserted, “is the cunning with which the Antichrist works.” The ADL was the public face of Jewish treachery and had convinced the country that they were a force for good. In reality, the organization began to achieve its goals of uniting lesser beings and enemies of God against the white race and true Israel. Swift believed that the Devil now had control of “the fallen races and sub-races which are degenerate in the fall which they have made.” The ADL’s supposed initiative of equality was a smokescreen for “the cunning of the false prophet” who intended to “stir up the coming of the Negroes” and other enemies of God against all white men in America.\(^{369}\)The treachery of the ADL’s war against Christendom reached its apex in mid-century America, but it was not the only time the “Satanic” organization attempted to thwart or destroy God’s kingdom on earth. In fact, because the ADL was a labeled by Swift as a Jewish creation, he argued that the organizations’ wickedness long predated 1913 and the “official” founding of the organization. Swift asserted that “when we consider the conditions that preceded the trial of Christ, we discover that the Jews had gathered their Jewish soldiers and had sent them out, (not Roman soldiers, but Jewish soldiers) to seize Christ in the garden. When they sent out their Jew soldiers, they did not know exactly where Christ would be, but

\(^{369}\) Wesley A. Swift, Strategy of the False Prophet (Mountain City: Sacred Truth Ministries [ca.1955-1965]), 1597.
they had hired one of their own agents, Judas Iscariot, who was an ADL agent of his day, to go out and find Christ and betray Him to them for thirty pieces of silver.” According to Swift, the ADL was an organization that had existed to serve Jewish interests since ancient times and was an intricate part of the sinister plans and plots made by International Jewry. Swift connected his tirades about the Satanic duplicity of the ADL with “proven” assertions concerning Jewish “crimes.” In this case, it was the betrayal of Jesus. He believed that the ADL was betraying America; Judas betrayed Jesus, and the correlation for Swift and his follower’s perspective was not only seamless; it was glaringly obvious. Thus, the only reason “ordinary” folks did not recognize this was because they were being deceived by, or were agents of, International Jewry.

Swift took issue with another standard trope of the far-right wing: universities and higher education. He asserted that they were the bastions of Marxist ideology and accused International Jewry of being behind poisoning the minds of America’s youth. Because of the “well-documented” connection between Jews and communism, Swift suggested that “there is unlimited evidence in the files of the un-American activities committee in Washington DC, in the records of the internal affairs committee and in the branches of the Investigated Research Division concerning a continual and constant design to take over the schools of our nation to replace American history with the concept of world socialism and destroy our national greatness and make us second place in the thinking of the child as he studies his history.” He cited a supposedly credible University study that tasked over 15,000 students with filling out a

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questionnaire; more than half reported believing that “the policies of the economy and that the thinking as it related to the division of property and land as Karl Marx advocated it” was better than the American way of life. Swift specifically targeted Stanford University—the site of several Civil Rights protests—for distributing economic textbooks that advocated that the American system was outdated. He further claimed the textbooks stated that “socialism is the only working system,” that it should have “control of everything from cradle to grave,” and that “the concept of private enterprise is not only outmoded, but also will not operate any longer.” Swift believed that university professors had retained too much influence on American society since the 1930s. Whether it was through their teachings or, as in the case of FDR, some of the President’s most trusted advisors, liberal Jewish academia was a dangerous entity.

By remaining a firmly spiritual leader, Swift canvassed all of Smith’s topics, tirades, and speeches in a venue where hard evidence was unnecessary because of the accepted premise about the mendacity of the Jews. In this regard, Swift suggested that universities in this country began with good intentions and a strong Christian background but became corrupted. Organizations such as the National Education Alliance whose support for the aligning of educational standards to make students fit in the Judeo communist revolution “that they are attempting to put over,” were clearly corrupt. In his sermons, Swift appeared to show genuine concern for the children of America, but it is equally plausible, that he was simply


emphasizing an already common trope that had arisen in the aftermath of *Brown versus Board of Education*: socialists were corrupting the youth of America. Swift contended that he was

Most concerned about this attempt to destroy the minds of our children, for this makes a great inroad when it wipes out at an earth age, if they can accomplish this, any spiritual responsibility to God and to His moral and ethical laws, to his person, and to his identity, and leaves a sort of vacuum in the mind of that child, that only the intervention of God in a spiritual experience, will wake him up some time in his life. But you have lost the great formative period when that spiritual devotion becomes a character forming element in his life. I want you to know that with this program, this has been times as a design in our schools to lower the morals by this peculiar parasite which should never have been allowed to enter.

Certainly, he appealed to women in his congregation by telling them that other mothers had approached him about schools taking “their children on field trips” and forcing integration on them. Even worse, he stated that schools were “forcing young girls to believe by giving them better grades that they should accompany Negroes on their field trips.” Swift then employed another Smith style tactic by assuring his audience that he possessed proof and could produce witnesses but did not want to shock his audience so dramatically.373 He asserted that this did not apply to all educators or institutions; he did suggest that some of them, he assumed, to be good people, but it was time for these “godless teachers” with their “anti-Christian background” to be “cleansed” from “the system,” and that they as a nation should fix this disease afflicting them.

The established synonymy of communism and Judaism would prove to be an effective way to link otherwise disparate groups together under Swift’s anti-Semitism. Accordingly, he

373 Wesley A. Swift, *The Battle for the Mind of our Youth*, 572.
was easily able to encompass another supposed bastion of Judeo communism: Hollywood. To this day, Hollywood is tarred with a liberal brush. However, during the red scare years and the era of McCarthyism, the entertainment industry came under particular scrutiny. In the late 1940s, Hollywood began to blacklist any directors, producers, actors, or writers who had alleged ties with communism. The most infamous of these was the Hollywood Ten. These ten men refused to answer questions regarding whether they were communist and went to prison as a result; blacklisting began shortly thereafter. This became an event that caught Swift’s attention, and the topic appeared in his sermons. To Swift, Hollywood was second only to Sodom, and Jews were responsible for all the sin and vice that emerged out of that city and infected the nation. The Hollywood Ten “proved” the communist infestation of Hollywood and further evidenced the Jewish control of the entertainment industry, if not of all media. Swift also utilized Hollywood to substantiate further his claims concerning African Americans as Jewish “tools” to destabilize American society. In mid-20th century America, and in particular during the civil rights movement, African Americans began to appear more and more on the silver screen. Swift asserted that:

They said that they would see by their assistance to these Jews out here in Hollywood and all over, would push these Negroes into motion pictures and into all kinds of sports, and into all areas in which their power as physical giants could be shown. They were going to use them therefore, in every field of sports and at the same time, make it acceptable so they could move them into places with White girls, and eventually cause intermarriage which eventually would help the Communist party overthrow the United States.  

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With this one sentence, Swift cast numerous aspersions against Jews. The attack on
Hollywood illustrated the control Jews had over all media, and even sports, while
simultaneously reaffirming the position of African Americans as tools of the Jews. It further
illustrated a Klan tenet that remains consistent to this day: the aspirations of undesirable races
to pollute the white population and the danger they pose to the sanctity of white womanhood.
Through his theology, Swift expertly associated these presumably disparate themes together in
a comprehensive and somewhat logical manner. If it is accepted that the Jews are the literal
children of the Devil, then all of the evils proposed in the one sentence above are possible.
Satan was behind communism, Satan was behind integration, behind Jewish propaganda, and
was trying to overthrow the United States through his children, the Jews.

Hollywood was not the only media that Swift routinely attacked in his sermons. He
would also routinely attack the primary source of news for the majority of the country at that
time: newspapers. In addition to citing and possibly misrepresenting articles, Swift lumped
reporters, journalist, and writers under his headline of the Jewish conspiracy. He asserted that
most newspapers in the country were corrupt simply because the Jews controlled them. “The
Devil,” he asserted, utilized the newspapers in “every city in the United States” to “lift up his
son” and “build him up for his next Devilish move.” He cherry-picked lines from newspaper
articles across the country and exploited them as evidence of the existence of a Jewish
conspiracy. Swift would hold up newspaper clippings to his congregation during his sermons as
props to support his claim as if the physical copy of the newspaper cemented any and all of his
assertions. It is interesting that he regarded newspaper sources that supported him as
legitimate and those that were critical of his perspective as illegitimate, and at the behest of
the Devil. Essentially, fake news stories were part of Satan’s plan to disrupt America, and Jews were the chief proponents of a deep-state plot to control all media.  

Illustrating the corruption of the media or the legal system by Judeo-communist influence was not sufficient to reveal how deep the infiltration of Jewish treachery was. Swift’s vitriol also targeted American politics, particularly the highest office in the land: The Presidency. It is important to remember that Swift and his followers believed themselves to be representatives of true America and the real American nationalists. Despite this, he regularly attacked and defamed American institutions, soldiers, and the founding fathers. During the Cold War red scare era, this could have been deemed as treasonous, and yet, he accused multiple presidents of treason.

According to Swift, President Harry Truman was to blame for American involvement in the globalist Judeo-communist United Nations, and he routinely accused Truman of naïveté. Swift did confess, however, that unlike Roosevelt, or “Rosenvelt,” Truman was not a Jew, but he had willingly sold-out America. He accused the President of being disingenuous and renouncing his “100% Americanism.” He cited Truman speaking out against the John Birch society and how the President referred to them as “Klansmen who could not pay for their hoods” and reminded his congregation that Truman himself was a member of the Second Klan. When the President left the Klan, however, Swift believed he showed his true colors. Thus, Truman’s criticisms “merely emboldened” every member of the Invisible Empire against him and not to forget that

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he “had been exiled out of their midst for his act of treason.”\textsuperscript{377} The Jews bought Truman his election, and Swift asserted that Truman was not only aware of this but actively courted American Jews. Truman knew that “anyone who opposed Jews would be cursed, “so he possibly fulfilled the Jewish wish of recognizing Israel in return for securing his position.\textsuperscript{378} The fact that Truman made a deal with world Jewry and received their blessings was a recurrent theme throughout Swift’s sermons, and he would routinely remind his congregation about the President’s Jewish connection. Swift likely did this to illustrate that he and his followers were more patriotic and loyal to the United States than the President, thus openly criticizing and defaming the President became the ultimate act of loyalty and patriotism.

During the Cold War, and particularly during Truman’s presidency, overt criticism of American institutions came under intense scrutiny. It is no surprise that during this period, the FBI investigated and surveilled Swift and his followers. Swift blamed Truman for the “failure of the Korean War” but had nothing but praise for General MacArthur. With regard to him, he asserted that “Truman was about the weakest president we ever had” and that “placed General MacArthur and our troops under tremendous pressure.” The military and MacArthur, Swift contended, had been “betrayed by politicians in Washington,” and especially by the President.\textsuperscript{379} One of Swift’s followers and Identity zealots, William Potter Gale, served as a chief aide to General MacArthur; Gale himself was an ordained Christian Identity minister. While this

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{377} Wesley A. Swift, \textit{The Horses of the Apocalypse} (Mountain City: Sacred Truth Ministries [ca.1955–1965]), 1270.
\item \textsuperscript{378} Wesley A. Swift, \textit{Crushing the Serpent} (Mountain City: Sacred Truth Ministries [ca.1955–1965]), 1389.
\item \textsuperscript{379} Wesley A. Swift, \textit{The Government Ends at Armageddon} (Mountain City: Sacred Truth Ministries [ca.1955–1965]), 2939.
\end{itemize}
does not by any means provide conclusive evidence that MacArthur was an adherent of Swift, it does suggest a tangible connection as to the propagation of Identity in the military. Swift also asserted that God wanted Truman to crush the communist Antichrist, and the Lord delivered to him the perfect general to accomplish this divine task. However, “bee-bee brain Truman relieved us of our greatest General,” and as punishment, God declared that Truman could “go no further,” thus the Korean War ended in a stalemate rather than victory.\(^{380}\)

Truman was not the only president who attracted the Identity pastor’s attention or ire. At the beginning of Eisenhower’s presidency, Swift branded him a traitor to the party, country, and God. “When Mr. Eisenhower was selected,” it was “probably the first time he had been Republican in his life,” but, he “met with Truman’s approval.”\(^{381}\) If Eisenhower was Truman’s agent, and the Jews were controlling Truman, it signified that they controlled Eisenhower as well. Swift observed that “Eisenhower had already made secret commitments and secret agreements” with the Soviets that he did not wish to come to light.\(^{382}\) To make a deal with the Antichrist was unforgivable and put Eisenhower on the same level as Truman. Swift took Eisenhower to task for not finishing the Korean War with a solid American victory and categorically asserted that his actions were treasonous, traitorous, and kowtowed to the Jewish hidden hand. He accused Eisenhower of failing to fight for America, Christianity, and God, and instead focusing on the distraction of “segregation and discrimination.” This was the Devil’s tactic, to get the country to look away while he undermined the authority of God’s kingdom, to


\(^{382}\) Swift, 65.
see flaws where there were none, and to protect those who served the Devil rather than God. Eisenhower’s failures had “filled” the nation with enemy spies who came to rob this country blind. According to Swift, what was even worse was that these spies were coming to destroy the American way of life and “make war” on Christianity.

The 1957 Civil Rights Act showed where Eisenhower’s “loyalty” lay: not with Americans and not with Christendom. In the State of the Union address in 1957, President Eisenhower stated that “much remains to be done” regarding Civil Rights and racial equality in America. Eisenhower made his commitment to working towards Civil Rights clear and believed that any action that would prevent a portion of the country from voting was unacceptable; his administration proposed legislative action that would attempt to ensure American voting rights. The “obsession” that Eisenhower’s administration had with what Swift dubbed as, “civil wrongs” was evidence that Soviet Jews had the President “so twisted around their fingers” because “any intelligent American that doesn’t discriminate in favor of Christianity as against evil conspiracy to lie, is no true Christian. And any individual that doesn’t want to separate from America, the forces of evil that they are trying to flood into by any illegal gate is not intelligent.” This essentially implies that if any “American” or “Christian” did not agree with Swift and his followers, then they were both treasonous and stupid. If a person supported Eisenhower, he was a traitor to God and country; if they supported Swift, it implied that a person was a patriot, righteous, and “really smart.”

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384 Swift, 70.
Swift’s executive office tirade continued immediately after the election of President Kennedy and proclaimed that he had “no hope of faith” in America’s first Catholic president. Swift baldly asserted that Kennedy’s victory over Nixon was fraudulent. “It is rather generally believed by all those who are observing the situation in Washington that the election was never decided on the amount of votes cast.” Nixon was one of the most ardent anti-communist crusaders, making it virtually impossible for him to win because of the power of the Judeo communists supporting Kennedy. Thus, the Jews resorted to voter fraud, and as Swift observed that “the election had been won as to the matter of numbers in most of deciding states by Mr. Nixon.” Kennedy’s administration was full of educated Marxist individuals; these people were behind the country’s unexplainable “turn left.”

With all that Kennedy did for civil rights, Swift routinely spoke of accusations of violence and sexual assault by African Americans against whites that went unannounced, unreported, and unpunished. Swift stated that it “did not appear in newspapers,” that he himself “hunted for it,” and found the information for his congregation. Essentially, there was no evidence to back these accusations but his own word; yet, the evidence did not seem to matter because the accusation fit soundly into his theology presented in previous assertions. Swift cited Scripture as evidence: Jews controlled the presidency, the media, African Americans, they hated white society, and unleashed black people to poison and pollute white society. He asserted that the book of Jeremiah, Chapter 30, Verse Seven, predicted that “The Time of


Jacob’s Trouble” was ongoing and predicted the assassination of President Kennedy by a “Marxist assassin.” He emphasized that “The Time of Jacob’s Trouble” could be seen in:

this design that Christ was unveiling to John in the book of Revelation the great danger of this hour. He told him about the pattern of world government, about its design, and its manipulation to control areas of World economy, World finance, and eventually seeking to take over the entirety of government, and the entirely of the whole world structure. This is constantly told to us, and symbolized as One World Government and Peace.

The “world government” Swift referenced was communist and the “powers of darkness and forces of evil” behind it were the communist Jews. Biblical prophecy and interpretation revealed that the President Kennedy’s murder by “the Marxist Hand” was evidence enough that “The Time of Jacob’s Trouble” was real, and synonymous with the anti-American Anti-Christ.

“Swift assailed Kennedy for his handling and losing of Cuba or rather allowing the communists to take Cuba willingly, as Kennedy himself was a “commie left-winger.” He stated that “if this Irishman had some of the stamina of some of the Irishman I know, he would have flattened Mr. Khrushchev behind those closed doors.” Swift told his congregation that “the Seed of the Dragon are in Washington, and they surround Mr. Kennedy with bad advice and he has picked seventy-five of the Dragon’s seed to sit in positions of power in these United States of America.” As the “Jews are Asiatic,” he believed that they supported any initiative

387 Wesley A. Swift, God’s Liberation (Mountain City: Sacred Truth Ministries [ca.1955–1965]), 745.


that made Asia stronger and continued to elect or manipulate the American people to enhance the Judeo communist world order, and Kennedy simply represented another notch on the belt.

The greatest danger you can get yourself into with this battle with the Dragon seed is to permit yourself to surrender. Last week, you created a Disarmament Committee and this is the most despicable thing this nation was ever trapped into doing. A program to disarm in a day when God tells you to beat your plow shears into swords, and they say disarm. This just goes to show that the Kennedys are not led by God. They are led by the Devil. Someone says, ‘You should not talk that way about the President.’ Well, the President is a prisoner, so let’s set him free. And if not, let’s find a man to lead us.  

Kennedy immediately drew Swift’s wrath for being the first Catholic to be elected. “Here we have a president coming out of a church that boasts it is the strongest one in Christendom, and it is by numbers; and on that situation, to be accurate, he had seventy-six men around him who did not believe that Jesus is the Christ. And he knew this when he appointed them.” Echoing the sentiments of the second Klan, he believed that Catholics were not true Christians, nor could they be “true Americans.”

As a Klansman, Swift embraced the distaste, distrust, and derision for Catholics that was endemic in Evans’ Klan. This tenet of Klankraft was evident and present in Swift’s teachings, but it also included a bizarre kind of outreach for the Catholic community as well. Despite his attacks on Kennedy’s faith, Swift recognized Catholics as Christians but perceived their loyalty to the Pope as suspect. When the Vatican joined the United Nations, Swift asserted that “Jewry” had “gained early control of Catholicism” and the current “Pope is a half Jew.” He continued his attack on Pope John XXIII for his Easter Message in April of 1963. He accused the

390 Swift, 1059.
Pope of “total Apostasy” because of his message to freely worship as a person chooses. Swift interpreted this to be a dismissal of True Israel and the true prescribed path to God. He stated that the Pope was bowing to either external pressure or his true Jewish nature and castigated him for daring to claim that there were “many ways of reaching God.” The fact that he “acknowledged” other paths to Salvation confirmed his transformation from a servant of God to the “Apostle of Darkness.”

Swift contended that “organized Jewry has penetrated the Catholic Church and has contaminated its doctrines and has revitalized the areas of heresy. Has destroyed the doctrines and their rituals, has destroyed the fundamental Faith in the Crucifixion and the resurrection of Christ concerning the positions of the Church. It has removed from the Church the responsibility of those who crucified Christ and said they had no part in this matter.” He asserted that they were making Catholics either willing adherents or unwilling dupes and the ploys of International Jewry, President Kennedy included. In a sermon entitled “The Time of Jacob’s Trouble,” delivered in November 1963, Swift caught the attention of the FBI due to his comments concerning the assassination of Kennedy and what sounded like his presumed knowledge of the attack.

There is a great feeling of distress in these United States, and in this great country of ours. For a President of the United States has been struck down by a Marxist assassin. There are those today who in their discussion of these events are trying to give a guilt complex to our entire nation. They are trying to turn in areas of emotion to a process of political strategy. They are attempting under the areas of these events also to have a quick passage of the things the President stood for.

391 Wesley A. Swift, The False Church Speaks Satan’s Lies, 2334.

392 Ibid., 4873.
He continued:

I want you to know also that in this design, from the very moment the assassins’ bullet struck down the President, that an even more sinister design then comes to light. All over everywhere, a great hue and cry against the right wing comes forth, calling them extremists.  

Swift used Kennedy’s assassination to illustrate the anti-Americanism of Marxist Jews and illustrated that, despite him being Catholic, John F. Kennedy was a Christian.

The last President to earn Swift’s attention before his death in 1970 was President Lyndon B. Johnson. Initially, Swift appeared happy with Johnson’s assumption to the presidency because he believed he was “on our team.” This belief seemed to alter drastically over the course of the decade. He quickly began to assail Johnson for his bias against the right and violating God’s plans because of his support for integration. Swift continued to assault Johnson, stating that:

The President says that it is our national policy that a nation shall be free from want, free from hate, and a world full of peace and justice, a world free with abundance, in our time and all times to come. And to attempt this, said Mr. Johnson, we are going to lift all bars of discrimination against those who seek to enter our country, and thus, we will get the much-needed skills as we are joined by their many families. Johnson called, in his State of the Union message, for the end of the immigration laws so that we will be flooded with Asiatics and Negroes who have no capacity or vision for anything relating to your society. Jews who hate everything about your Christianity, and Negroes who would overthrow the balance and force a mongrelized integration into this strategy to your destruction. Listen. Mr. Johnson says throw the doors open. But I say, you better throw out Mr. Johnson, instead of throwing the door open.

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From the safety of the pulpit, Swift attacked the President for deceiving the American people and for actively permitting God’s enemies into the country and allowing Satan’s soldiers, who were already there, free reign. He warned his congregation that their freedom was at risk from a “communist socialist conspiracy” called “the United Nations.” He asserted that “more and more of these African nations” were voting “with the Soviet Union,” and this came as no surprise. Swift confirmed the Biblical connection between “Negroes” and Jews, and since Judaism and communism were synonymous, and Negroes were either the unwitting pawns or knowing foot soldiers of Satan’s plan, any actions taken by “African nations” was at the behest of Judeo communism. 394

Swift proclaimed that this Judeo communist aggression was “evil and consistent” with “this program against God’s Kingdom.” He interpreted Chapter Nineteen of the Book of Revelations to signify that God stated that “I will interfere into the internal affairs of earth. I am not only going to back up my people, my offspring, but I am going to join them in this fight against this great evil.” Given the content of this verse, it is not difficult to reason with Swift’s interpretations. Again, he seamlessly wove his Scriptural interpretation into his Identity dogma while lambasting Johnson for disarming and endangering America by acquiescing to Satan’s UN demands, by putting everyone “under a peace treaty” while “the world government and this beast system and these Satanic powers got to make war against Jesus Christ.” 395 In Swift’s tirades, Johnson bore the blame. By siding with the Jews, he betrayed the country and did not root out the corruption that had been rotting the core of the American system. The weakening


395 Swift, 2301.
of America’s borders and contamination of the racial homogeneity made the country too feeble to ward off the serpent, and the Devil would assume the throne in heaven, while the Jews began their reign here on earth.

Identity theology preached by Rand and Cameron and taught at Monson’s school was interpreted and broadened by Swift into a nationwide movement. From his pulpit, he deftly wove Scripture and Biblical evidence to support and rebrand Christian Identity and ensured its longevity on the radical racist right. “Wesley Swift’s influence on white supremacy is so profound that it’s now in the ether of what the white supremacist movement breathes. Specifically, the focus on a race war.”396 The emphasis on the coming racial war was endemic in the movement into the 1960s. This was not surprising as Swift’s popularity reached its apex in the decade of the Civil Rights Movement. God and Satan were destined to battle, and earth would form the battleground. This notion continued to allow Swift to actively condemn his enemies in the socio-political sphere through nothing but Scriptural evidence. It also illustrated the reason why Swift was so successful and influential in comparison to both his predecessors and successors. It was simply more difficult to disprove religious beliefs or Scriptural evidence than evidence of any other kind.

The White nations are never called the beast nations. For they are the children of the Kingdom. And there is a vast difference between the beast system, which is the world order, and the Kingdom of God. I point out to you clearly, that by the content of the Scripture, that the beast nations are gathered together by the forces of Anti-Christ, led by Lucifer’s representatives who make war on the occupants of earth who are HIS occupying race. This is one of the reasons why along with the political and economic

program and this strange sociological design that they make war against your race. This is actually race warfare all over.397

From inside his church, Swift could use the impending race war to discuss and possibly affect social and political change; he could be an active political and social figure but also be able to retreat to the safety of the Scripture and theology when evidence was scarce or even non-existent. When violence broke out in Cambridge, Maryland in the 1960s, he asserted that the race war had begun. “Negroes” were “roaming the streets” and “shooting white men with high-powered rifles” and “white men started shooting back.”398 Thus, began “a night of warfare” that unsurprisingly “must be laid at the feet of Jews.” Jews had been funding “this Negro revolution” and “urged the Negroes, saying they had contributed to their cause and would continue to contribute to their cause.” Then, in reciprocity, the Jews instructed African Americans to integrate and include them into black neighborhoods where they continued to proselytize allowing Jews to gain footholds across the country through bribery, deception, and manipulation. Swift further implored “Christian Americans to defend” themselves from the Negro “roaming cannibals” and promised them that God’s true chosen would defeat not only these cannibals, “but also their financiers.”399 Swift asserted that the existence of the United Nations was evidence that the race war was ongoing and that true Americans were loyal to the United States, not the United Nations. “The United Nations is an International project of the

397 Wesley A. Swift, The Unclean Frogs of Revelation, 1501.


Devil, although the newspapers have whitewashed it. But this ‘Thus saith the LORD’ moving out of HIS people, is going to repudiate it,” and God will help defend His kingdom against the Devil spawn. Swift believed that the strategy of Satan’s brood “is quite obvious” and “against” all “things which are Scriptural.” He asserted that:

All of the forces of darkness are pitted together today against the nations of God’s Kingdom and against the patterns of God’s word. They understand this word far better than you realize. There is a cunning in which Lucifer is involved. And Lucifer is the master strategist of the forces of darkness. He knows the purposes and part of God’s Kingdom. And he knows that the occupation of the earth is a part of that strategy. So he has attempted from the very beginning of the coming of your race to absorb it, mongrelize it, violate it and destroy it. So we tell you tonight that the strategy of the false prophet has been to gain the areas of attention through the lines of communication, thru press, T.V., radio, and through communication, and even through the church itself. And most especially, through religious activities, to seek to guide people falsely in a direction not in the plan of God’s Kingdom. The false prophet has to be very subtle in this hour. And the Scripture talks about the false prophet. In fact, one of the things which Jesus warned His disciples about in the climax of the age, would be that there would be false Christs and false prophets. And that they would seek to seduce, if possible, the very Elect. To do this it seems, that they would have to wage their influence inside of the Ecclesiastical structure, and the organizations to which the Elect would respond to.

Satan had his hold on American society and Armageddon was upon the country in the form of the “holy race war.” From Swift’s perspective, there could be no greater call to arms or unifying call to defend God’s kingdom and destroy the Devil’s armies.

The fact that the race war rhetoric coincided with the most active and successful Civil Rights Movement was no accident. Swift seamlessly tied another of his preferred targets of the

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400 Swift, 1501.

401 Swift, 1558.
period into this fight: the ADL. This followed logically: the unification of a Jewish organization that campaigned against discrimination, with a movement that focused on discrimination comes as no surprise. The ADL was active in the civil rights movement, and its visibility supported Swift’s claims regarding Jewish financiers backing the movement. Indeed, he contended that “this whole race war of Negroes against whites has been organized by world Jewry and is being carried out in these United States by the Anti-Defamation League.” Swift combined the Jewish manipulation of African Americans while conflating the ADL with United Nations, adding his hatred of communism while simultaneously propping up Christian Americans and the importance of defending Christian America in this racial war. This was all rendered possible because of the Scriptural evidence of Jewish patronage by Satan, and as previously noted, if that premise was accepted, it would serve as the nexus for all of Swift’s most disparate claims.

Swift asserted that “most of the problems that affect our nation today, and that is creating the critical conditions that effect our society, and the race war which is upon us would not exist if we had maintained the attitude toward race that our forefathers maintained.”

The Jews were against God’s program, and Swift and his followers were aware of this, and no amount of Jewish treachery was going to silence their voice. With regard to that, it is clear why Swift made a point of founding, joining, financing, and associating with virtually every white supremacist organization, both Christian and not, both pro-Nazi and not, in order to create a

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white power network that crisscrossed the country that afforded his message significant power with a lasting influence, even though many to this day do not acknowledge or even recognize it.
Swift’s position as a religious leader afforded him the ability to associate with a variety of different organizations. The number of groups and individuals in Swift’s network reveal how established his brand of Identity theology was within various white supremacy groups. An analysis of declassified FBI documents has revealed not only was he the founder of the Church of Jesus Christ Christian, but he was also the silent head of the Christian Defense League, leader of the Christian Knights of the Invisible Empire—Swift’s reinvention of the Klan— as well as the militaristic California Rangers. Swift was also the West Coast Representative of the National States’ Rights Party, which allowed him to exert nationwide influence. It was also true that he had power and influence within Robert Depugh’s Minutemen, a militant white power organization that came to encompass Swift’s own Rangers and allowed Identity to seep into the ranks and spread across America. FBI intelligence documents have divulged that agents tracking Swift suspected his involvement in nearly every white supremacy organization in America at the time, including the White Citizens Council, American Nazi Party, and the John Birch society. Intelligence documents have demonstrated that Swift used his church not only to proselytize but also to recruit and screen potential “soldiers” for more militant organizations, such as the Rangers, Minutemen, and National States’ Rights Party. Swift’s followers and disciples spread

403 FBI, Special Agent in Charge (SAC), Los Angeles, to director of the FBI, Wesley Swift and Espionage, 1958.

404 Quarles, 93.
his teachings across the country, solidifying Swift’s role and influence in establishing Identity as a staple interpretation of Christianity for the Radical Christian Right.\textsuperscript{405} The opening of the church of Jesus Christ Christian in 1957 was a pivotal moment in the creation of a nationwide network and coincided with the increase in FBI surveillance of Swift.

Unlike his predecessor and mentor Gerald L.K. Smith, Swift himself never strayed from the pulpit or his position as a religious leader; however, he was able to “inspire” men and women to accept Identity and enlisted them to fight in the coming battle for the soul of America. Given the violence in Swift’s rhetoric, as well as his denial of the Holocaust and reverence for Hitler, it is not surprising that intelligence organizations, particularly J. Edgar Hoover’s FBI, began tracking and monitoring Swift. The earliest mention of Swift in intelligence documents unsurprisingly occurs in conjunction with Gerald L.K. Smith as an “adherent,” focusing on anti-communism.\textsuperscript{406} Throughout 1948, Swift attracted the FBI’s attention for reportedly being aware of the planned Russian attacks in Los Angeles. In a speech given at the Embassy Auditorium in Los Angeles, Swift asserted that “three hundred Negroes” were “sent to Russia” and “given sabotage training” and then brought back to the country to execute the Kremlin’s orders.\textsuperscript{407} The FBI began tracking Swift because of his association with Smith, but he became a person of interest and tracked individually when the Bureau witnessed more of his

\textsuperscript{405} FBI, “California Minutemen,” 1962.

\textsuperscript{406} FBI, Special Agent in Charge (SAC), San Francisco to director of the FBI, \textit{Formation of Organization of Gun-Owning Sportsmen to Cooperate with Law Enforcement Agencies Against Communists Internal Security. Dr. Wesley Swift. Gerald L.K. Smith}, 1955.

\textsuperscript{407} FBI, Special Agent in Charge (SAC), Los Angeles to director of the FBI, \textit{Professor Wesley Swift Information Concerning}, 1948.
speeches and observed his anti-American perspective. With Smith’s focus on anti-communism, the FBI first associated Swift with militant anti-communist groups. They found that Swift had well-armed “sportsmen” under his guidance, who were ready to take action at a moment’s notice should an “emergency” arise. Documents also reveal that Swift branched out beyond his base in Southern California. In Salt Lake City, he held a meeting, delivered speeches, and asserted that he and his followers stood ready to aid the Salt Lake City police against the invasion of Communists.\(^{408}\) It is unclear how many followers were armed and ready to fight for Salt Lake City, but it is possible that Swift did indeed train parishioners in firearm usage, as FBI documents stated a significant arms cache was in Swift’s possession. In a document dated 1951, Swift delivered a speech in which he stated that because of his close knowledge about the dangerous communists who were threatening America, the FBI contacted him for advice. It is likely that if the FBI did contact him, it concerned his un-American activities, not his counsel.\(^{409}\)

Swift’s recruitment activities effectively made Identity the connective tissue between otherwise seemingly disconnected and disparate groups. The FBI quickly realized that attaching Swift to any conspiracies or crimes was going to be difficult because, as previously detailed, he never strayed from the pulpit. Declassified documents explain that the Bureau (the FBI) attempted to uncover more chargeable links between Swift and the criminal actions of his subordinates but were unsuccessful. In two separate reports dated October 30 and December 3, 1958, the FBI Special Agent in Charge indicated that he recommended an interview with


\(^{409}\) FBI, Special Agent in Charge (SAC), Los San Francisco to director of the FBI, *Wesley Swift*, 1951.
Swift regarding allegations of espionage. In his speeches and sermons, Swift continually referenced information he obtained from intelligence sources for information concerning the Russians and mission activities. In this era of espionage, the Bureau took notice because it suggested that someone within the organization was leaking information to Swift. There were members of Swift’s inner circle who were retired military personnel, including William Potter Gale. It is possible that these people voluntarily passed on information to Swift, and these could be the people he referenced when he discussed matters of national security. This connection was plausible enough to catch the attention of the FBI and for agents to request an interview with Swift, and agents stated that “it is believed necessary to interview Swift.” Intelligence agents also made it a point to recommend that despite Swift’s clear sentiments concerning civil rights and integration, he should not be questioned concerning any connections with bombings in the South because “he is the type of person not likely to cooperate in furnishing data.”

Swift did not, as far as is known, actively participate in any violence or acts of domestic terrorism, but it is indeed plausible that his rhetoric and sermons incited others to do so.

Special agents interviewed Swift at his home on January 22, 1959, only weeks after the compilation of the report mentioned above. The goal was to ascertain if he had ever “received information taken from US Army files” or had “contact with any officer on active duty.” He flatly denied any wrongdoing and made “no remark suggesting” that he ever read any information from Army files. Although he was “acquainted with a few retired Army officers who like himself,

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410 FBI, Special Agent in Charge (SAC), Dr. Wesley Swift – Espionage – X, 1958.
are engaged in ‘patriotic activities,’” he insisted that he had not “quoted any other officer” in “a manner that would have led one to mistakenly think he was referring to information derived from military intelligence files.” He went ahead to claim that “anyone making such an allegation against him was nonsensical unless it was someone seeking to cause him trouble.”  

Despite this fervent denial, in one of his earliest sermons from 1955, titled *False Economy*, Swift made statements that categorically contradict this interview with the FBI. In this speech, Swift stated that “while in Washington, I talked to one great military man—a man of experience and a man still associated with polity as far as the department he represented was concerned.” Following this assertion, Swift proceeded to discuss matters containing information associating Russia, China, and the struggle for Europe and troop deployment. He continually referred to assurances he received from “our military men” regarding “military policy, yet he does not name that those he had spoken to.” Many of his sermons included this same notion, and it is likely the reason the Bureau continued sending agents to his Church to ascertain the veracity of his words.

In a sermon from 1961, referenced explicitly by FBI documents, titled *The Seed of the Dragon*, Swift asserted that he remained a person of interest to the FBI and they continually interviewed him. However, the 1959 interview appears to be the only time the FBI interviewed Swift. Swift stated that “the last time that I made a report on the strength of the U.S., the

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411 FBI, Special Agent in Charge (SAC), *Dr. Wesley Albert Swift (Officer Connection with U.S. Army Military Intelligence, Washington, D.C., Allegedly Supplying Information to Unauthorized Individual) Racial Matters; Espionage- X*, 1959.


413 FBI, Mr. S.B. Donahoe to Mr. A. H. Belmont, *Wesley Swift and Espionage*, 1958.
Federal FBI came by to see where I got the secrets. They thought that we had tapped the Pentagon and were giving away U.S. secrets. But, my friends, when it comes out in the U.S. News and World Report, it is no longer secret. If the FBI wants to do something good, they better keep their eyes on the enemy and let the Patriots alone.” He gives the eerily familiar and contemporary impression that he is fighting against the corruption in American institutions and enduring hardships because he is a patriot and stands firmly in support of the true Americans. He proclaimed that he is not against the FBI but supports them, what he is against is corruption. “We believe we should have an FBI and it will do a good job if you have a good administration. But if you have a bad administration, it will do an evil one.” 414

The FBI kept tabs on the organizations Swift was affiliated with or founded and began monitoring the people he met. They routinely referenced Swift’s sermons by name, so the FBI likely had, at the very least, a frequent presence at his church services. The Church of Jesus Christ Christian was a “safe space” for Swift to spout his vitriol from the comfort and protection of the pulpit. The FBI suspected that Swift utilized his church as a screening ground for some of his other more “activist” minded organizations, and it was through Identity that he connected with many white supremacy organizations of the Civil Rights Era, including the American Nazi party and the White Citizens Council. Both intelligence analysts and historians have labeled Swift as a “prolific organizer,” as he was able to tie all his affiliations together through Identity. Devout supporters would join other groups, and Swift’s gospel disseminated nationwide. Swift’s organizational efforts and his religious tenets revealed his significance to the establishment of a

white power network. However, an examination of intelligence documents and historical accounts of his most devoted followers indicates how broad that network’s reach was and illustrates how their efforts nearly altered the course of American history.

Charles Conley “Connie” Lynch was “simultaneously ordained as a minister in Jesus Christ Christian Church, state organizer for the National States’ Rights party, a member of the Minutemen, and a member of Swift’s Christian Defense League.” He was devoted to Swift and his teachings. He was an active member of Swift’s church throughout the 1950s, and in the 1960s he began to travel outside of California as a representative of Swift. The FBI noted that Lynch was a particularly violent man, embracing the notion of an impending race war, encouraging violence and armed conflict against the Zionist captured government, and never lost an opportunity to incite a riot. As the “official policy speaker” for the National States’ Rights Party, his career reached its peak in Florida at the 1964 St. Augustine riot in response to the civil rights protests that were succeeding in integrating schools in the south by 1963.

FBI intelligence reports state that another Swift zealot, Reverend Oren Fenton Potito, was the southeastern director of the Church of Jesus Christ Christian that was comprised of 14 states. In addition to being Swift’s principal southern minister, the documents reveal that Potito, unsurprisingly, was involved with the National States’ Rights Party. His position advanced, and he became the National Organizer of the States’ Rights Party and would frequently invite and host Swift at events at his Identity church in St. Petersburg, Florida. Potito


416 Wexler, 46.
also published an “anti-administration, anti-communist, anti-negro, anti-interrogation newspaper” out of Florida entitled “National Christian News.”\(^{417}\) His periodical would frequently spout the Gospel according to Swift. Moreover, it would be rife with many of the same anti-Semitic themes and accusations that Swift espoused. In his publication, Potito emphasized the synonymy of communism and Judaism, and because of this, America is “poison to world Jewry,” which is why they seek to destroy it. He further echoed Swift by noting that all the “racial strife” brought on by the Civil Rights Movement in America existed because of Jews and their ministrations. The foundational tenets and information Potito published was a direct result of his time and education at the hands of Wesley Swift.\(^{418}\)

Perhaps the best-known public devotee of Swift was William Potter Gale. He was the nominal leader of several organizations in which, as revealed by FBI documents, Swift reigned, including the Christian Knights of the Invisible Empire, CDL, and the California Rangers.\(^{419}\) Gale proved to be an asset to Swift in several different capacities. Through his military service as a Colonel under Douglas MacArthur, Gale provided an inroad for Identity in the United States military. Rear Admiral John G. Crommelin fought in the Second World War, and when he returned from the conflict, he maintained contact with Gale, who, in turn, brought him to Swift. Crommelin stated after hearing Reverend Swift’s sermon and speaking with him, he discovered the “truth” about America. In a speech in 1963 where the Reverend preceded him to the podium, Crommelin stated he “subscribe(s) 100% basically to exactly what Dr. Swift”

\(^{417}\) FBI “Christian Youth Corps” 1964, 28.

\(^{418}\) Ibid., 65-67.

\(^{419}\) “Christian Knights of the Invisible Empire –CKIE – aka the Klan—Appendix.”
preaches. Crommelin would represent the National States’ Rights Party in their bid for the presidency in 1968, as the vice-presidential candidate for governor Orval Faubus.

The intelligence reports reveal that Gale often acted as Swift’s proxy. As good as Swift was at organizing, Gale appears to have been better at recruiting. Gale recruited several of the most prominent members into Swift’s fold, including the future Aryan Nations founder, Richard Girnt Butler. The FBI tracked many of the people recruited and converted by Gale and Swift, and several were under suspicion or indicted for assassination attempts, acts of terrorism and criminal activity, including assaults and bombings against those persons and businesses they deemed were “destroying” America. Gale was allegedly responsible for the bombings of several African American churches and was reportedly active in both Mobile and Birmingham throughout 1963, two cities that were hotspots for the freedom struggle. Historians and intelligence documents alike have described Gale as a violent, militant man, devoted to Swift and the notion that “undesirables” had corrupted the American government, people, and dream. Gale, a true disciple of Swift, believed that it was essential to do what was “necessary” to ensure the future prosperity of the United States.

FBI intelligence suggests that Wesley Swift played a significant role in providing financial assistance to George Lincoln Rockwell’s American Nazi party, even though he did not share Swift’s religious beliefs. The report from an agent who interviewed Swift stated that the

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420 Admiral John G. Crommelin (speech, Los Angeles, California, 1963).

421 Admiral John G. Crommelin (speech, Los Angeles, California, 1963).

Reverend differed drastically from Rockwell and did not support his use of violence. However, one year after Rockwell organized the American Nazi Party in 1959, FBI agents observed a meeting between the two in which Swift handed Rockwell a significant amount of money. The two also united in trying to encourage southern senators to embrace their white supremacist agenda. Intelligence agents also reported a meeting in August 1960, in which Swift and Rockwell attempted to gain an audience with Senator James Eastland of Mississippi, who, because of his opposition to civil rights and support for state rights, they felt would be an asset to their cause. Despite their differences, Rockwell and Swift convened again in 1964 to discuss a potential merger of the American Nazi Party with the Christian Defense League. The documents have not revealed a further coalition beyond this supposed merger, but this episode suggests that the American Nazi Party and Swift’s various organizations maintained a relationship based on their shared reverence for Hitler and National Socialism.

By 1965, Swift’s name appeared on a list of right-wing paramilitary organizers produced by the California Attorney General Thomas Lynch. Two of Swift’s earliest creations were the Christian Defense League and the California Rangers, both of which came under investigation by the FBI. Initially, the FBI did not perceive either group as a threat, but as the 1960s progressed, they were suspected of plots and attempts to assassinate Martin Luther King Jr. and connected with other far-right extremist movements throughout the 1960s, including George Lincoln Rockwell’s American Nazi Party. FBI documents have confirmed that Swift and Rockwell met in 1964 in San Francisco to propose a merging of their efforts and to call for a

423 Special Agent in Charge (SAC), memo, San Diego.
meeting among the “heads of all right-wing organizations for the purposes of selecting an arbitrary head for such matters as publicity and public relations.” Swift encouraged Rockwell to put aside their ideological differences and collaborate for the greater good of society and white racial purity.\textsuperscript{424} The FBI documented Swift’s ability to draw seemingly unrelated factions within the extreme right-wing together, and his organizational talent helped him rise to a national prominence.

The CDL brought many of Swift’s most prominent successors, including William Potter Gale and Richard Girnt Butler, into the fold. The CDL asserted in its official mission statement that:

(a) Its specific and primary purpose to encourage Christians to join together and cooperate for the promotion of their mutual interests as Christians and the propagation of their religion; to oppose all persecution which may be directed against Christians by reason of their religion and all attacks directed against Christianity; and by all lawful means to defend Christian individuals and institutions against persecution or any attacks made against them by reason of their religion.

(b) To promote the knowledge and belief in the doctrines and tenets of Christianity and the high standards of morality and ethics advocated therein. \textsuperscript{425}

“Christianity” in this context denotes Swift’s brand of Christian Identity, and it is evident from this that the CDL served as an organization that would help spread Swift’s message nationally. The CDL also produced his publication called “Christian Defense News,” and its regional director was Retired Admiral John G. Crommelin. In this publication, the CDL described itself as “an organization designed to unite ‘White Christians’ in opposition to such Negro and

\textsuperscript{424} FBI, Special Agent in Charge (SAC), Los Angeles to director of the FBI, American Nazi Party Racial Matters, 1964.

\textsuperscript{425} Barkun. 68.
Jewish organizations as the NAACP, CORE, the urban league, and the American Jewish Congress Anti-Defamation League and B’nai B’rith.” The CDL presented its message as a peaceful one, and yet, members of the organization were arrested and charged on several accounts. In 1964 in Cucamonga, California, CDL member William H. Garland was arrested when authorities discovered a huge arsenal of guns and bombs at his home comprising of “nearly 100 other weapons including rifle, shotguns, and pistols— A barn on the premises was found to be used as an ammunition dump for 105 mm rockets, incendiary bombs, smoke bombs, flares, blasting caps, and thousands of rounds of ammunition.”  

The weapons were being stored for usage by the CDL, but Garland admitted that he would have sold them to “any patriot” who wished to arm and defend himself against potential invaders. Bertram Comparet, a colleague of Swift and an Identity minister, served as Garland’s attorney. In fact, declassified FBI documents reveal that Comparet served as a defense attorney for several associates and disciples of Swift’s who were facing legal troubles, including Conrad Lynch and members of the National States’ Rights Party. Comparet met Swift while working with him on Smith’s Anti-Communist League and embraced Swift’s brand of Identity theology. Comparet and Swift’s home Bible study course taught at “The American Institute of Theology” is still available with the Kingdom Identity Ministries. Comparet was also a member of the Christian Knights of the Invisible Empire, Swift’s recreation of the Klan.  

In 1965, the FBI found that the CDL was an organization that was “open to fund” other groups and was the primary vehicle for Swift to make connections and spread his influence.

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nationwide. It was through the CDL that Swift associated with Edward R. Fields, the founder of the National States’ Rights Party, where he became one of their organizers and represented the Party on the West Coast. Although the National States’ Rights Party (NSRP) did not originate with Swift, it was a group over which he retained significant power and influence. The NSRP began with Fields in Birmingham, Alabama and was certainly in line with Swift’s ideals. It was both anti-black and anti-Semitic and believed Jews to be the root cause of all-American problems. They perceived the “Civil Rights Movement” as “an instrument of Jewish conspiracy.” Fields likely had an overinflated sense of support, as he continually claimed, yet never proved, that the “NSRP was the third largest political party in the United States.” Crowd size notwithstanding, veneration of the Confederacy remains an issue America continues to grapple with to this day. The NSRP stated the following in its objective(s):

We of the National States’ Rights Party believe in the Christian heritage of our people, the white race in the nation which the white man created out of the wilderness of this continent... We believe in the principles laid down by our forefathers, the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights contained therein... Will not allow the blood of our people to be polluted with that of black, yellow, or mongrel peoples... All that is patriotic, good, clean, and decent springs forth from the foundation of our white folk... We dedicate ourselves the task of saving America and the white race and the preservation of the pureblood of our forefathers, that all future generations would come after us will be born as white children with the creative intelligence that will strengthen our civilizing influence over the world for the good of all mankind.\(^{428}\)

From this, it is not difficult to see why there would be some overlap and joint membership with Swift’s organizations. FBI documents revealed that in 1962 the NSRP asked Swift to deliver a

speech at a rally in Florida and that this became a recurring theme.\footnote{FBI, “Report on Wesley Swift,” 1964.} It is also worth noting that Swift’s Identity radio show was broadcast only in California and Florida.\footnote{FBI, “Letter from Hal Verb,” 1968.}

Fields created the NSRP in 1958 with the help of a friend and former law school colleague, J.B. Stoner. Similar to Swift, Fields was a former Kleagle in the Second Klan, and both he and Stoner venerated Hitler. Believing that Judaism was a “crime punishable by death,” both men attempted to forge a political identity for the white supremacist organization.\footnote{FBI, “Report on Private Armies in California,” 1965.} The NSRP was never as popular as Stoner and Fields made it appear to be, but it was undoubtedly a popular organization among the religious racist right. Several of Swift’s disciples and parishioners were active members of the NSRP including William Potter Gale, Conrad Lynch, and Oren Fenton Potito. The NSRP held national conventions and associated with other organizations in which Swift was a founding or active member, financial supporter, or minister, including the White Citizens Council, Robert Depugh’s Minutemen, and smaller offshoot groups. It is evident that Swift’s gospel and disciples were present in high ranks and in good standing with virtually every single organization of the far right at that time. “The activists who followed Swift, both those who could be considered members of his network and others, were motivated by common beliefs and incited by Swift’s messages. His followers were part of an entity that in today’s terms, we would characterize as a social network.”\footnote{Wexler, America’s Secret Jihad, 43.} The FBI had been actively tracking the NSRP from as early as 1962, claiming that the reason was not only that
their rhetoric was concerning, but because its members, in particular, founding member J. B. Stoner, were suspected of involvement in bombing attempts and threats against African-Americans and Dr. King.\textsuperscript{433}

Identity filtered into these groups and spread nationally because of these connections, causing Swift’s church to emerge as both a recruiting and training ground—almost as a “safe space” to associate with like-minded individuals within the comfort and protection of religious freedom. Although it remains unclear whether Fields himself had any direct contact with Swift, many of Swift’s followers were members of the NSRP. None, however, were more prominent than NSRP cofounder J.B. Stoner himself, who “championed the sectarian doctrines of Dr. Wesley Swift.”

By the time Stoner started to lead the NSRP, he already had a history with right-wing extremist causes and ideas. In 1941, he served as a Kleagle in the Klan and joined Smith’s America First Party—it is possible that he encountered Swift while he was under Smith or as a Klansmen. However, the lack of anti-Jewish focus in the Klan proved disillusioning for Stoner, and by 1946, his constant conflicts with the Klan forced him to seek out other organizations and comrades. Stoner stated that “we ought to get all Jews out of our country and I don’t mean send them to some other country. I’ll never be satisfied as long as there are any Jews here or anywhere. I think we ought to kill all Jews just to save their unborn generations from having to go to hell.”\textsuperscript{434} His vehement anti-Semitism found fertile ground within Identity beliefs and

\textsuperscript{433} Wexler, 22.

embraced the notion that all Jews were the literal children of Satan. Indeed, he believed that since Jews were destined for Hell, it was better for them and the world if they were not born in the first place. Stoner was a suspect in several anti-black church bombings including the May 11th bombing of Dr. King’s hotel. Swift himself referenced the bombing and the resulting riots in a speech called “Evidence of Divine Assistance” merely two days after the bombing. He asserted that Dr. King was a “communist tool” and that the administration’s support of him was like supporting America’s enemies. Swift stated to his congregation that it was treasonous for a current President to side with Russians over American people. The fact that both Presidents Kennedy and Johnson invited Dr. King into the Oval Office confirmed for him and his followers—including Stoner—of the Judeo infiltration of the United States as well as the role of the “Negro” as their foot soldiers. Stoner believed that as the head of the FBI, Hoover was equally as corrupt as the department and President he served. Stoner accused the FBI of framing him, and he believed that they themselves were responsible for the Birmingham bombings.

Stoner helped rally disaffected whites and those against integration to form counter-protests whenever and wherever there was a Civil Rights Movement activity. His ambitions to “heal” and save the country from Jewish oppression and integration were so great that he and the NSRP made a run for the white house. As the Civil Rights Movement was achieving success, Stoner shifted his focus to attacking African Americans because—thanks to Swift—he knew that Black people were the tools of the International Jew. Stoner asserted that “negroes” possessed

435 Wexler, 68.


437 Newton, National States Rights Party, 77.
a lower mental acuity and that the “only good ones were dead ones.” Stoner went to St. Augustine with a friend and fellow Swift disciple Conrad Lynch to protest integration and the eventual passing of the Civil Rights Bill in 1964. It resulted in a violent race riot that Swift’s rhetoric and supporters were instrumental in sparking. In response to the sit-ins, walk-ins, and Dr. King’s presence in St. Augustine, Florida, they began to discuss holding a “white man’s rally,” and the test-run was in St. Augustine. Stoner, armed with a bullhorn and the Confederate flag, shouted, “there’s nothing in the Constitution that gives Congress the authority to tell us we’ve got to eat with niggers.”

He called for a “strong white marching song to drown out the fraternal mush from negro residents” and civil rights activists. Stoner was instrumental in stoking segregationist flames in St. Augustine (and elsewhere) but, according to FBI documents, it was another Swift disciple and Christian Identity minister, Conrad Lynch, who “Florida authorities” believed incited and instigated the “mob violence in St. Augustine.”

Reverend Lynch was ordained as a Christian Identity minister by Swift himself, and FBI documents reveal that he “served as a minister in Swift’s Church of Jesus Christ Christian throughout California,” was the “state organizer of the National States’ Rights Party” and a leading member of the CDL. Traveling cross-country spreading the gospel of Swift alongside J.B. Stoner, Lynch delivered speeches that would incite his supporters to violence or encourage violent activities against those who were poisoning America. In St. Augustine, Florida, he led

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439 Branch, 345.


segregationists to attack a protest march shouting insults about them and Dr. King. In Baltimore, Lynch proclaimed to a crowd of 800 young white men present—including a mixture of Klansmen, Minutemen, and National States’ Rights Party members—that “I represent God, the white race, and the constitutional government, and everyone who doesn’t like it can go straight to hell. I’m not inciting you to riot—I’m inciting you to victory!” After inciting his followers to “victory,” he and his supporters then tore through the city’s black neighborhoods shouting “kill the niggers! Kill! Kill!” and attacked “blacks with fists and bottles.”

Lynch was also a member of Robert DePugh’s Minutemen, a group that absorbed many of Swift’s own California Rangers into the organization. Minutemen were also at the St. Augustine riot, probably because of Lynch, and through Lynch and the Rangers, Swift’s theology continued to spread across the country. Perhaps the most descriptive piece of evidence showing the extent of his violent nature comes from the founder of the National States’ Rights Party himself, Dr. Edward Fields. In an article published in the *Saturday Evening Post* in August 1964, Fields stated that he kicked Lynch out of the party because he was too extreme, stating that he “scared away the more substantial elements of the community.”

In Kentucky, “Lynch’s diatribe was followed by two fatal shootings,” and in Alabama, he spoke to his audience, “if it takes killing to get the Negro out of the white man’s streets to

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442 Wexler, 14.

443 Wexler, 17.

protect our constitutional rights, I say yes, kill them.” After this declaration, a crowd of Lynch’s supporters attacked and killed a black man.

Lynch’s vitriol was not reserved solely for African Americans. Like his friend and mentor, he knew the “truth” of the identity of the Jews. “Some of you say, but Jesus was a Jew,” he told the crowd, “that just goes to show you how these cotton picking, half witted, preachers afford it. Jesus wasn’t no Jew, Jesus was a white man!”

In February 1963, Lynch was arrested for starting a fight at a drive-in restaurant in San Bernardino where he and several NSRP members, wearing Nazi stormtrooper outfits, “began to yell ‘kill the Jews;’” they attacked the Civil Rights demonstrators, injuring 40, and causing the Governor to call in the National Guard to quell the riot.

State investigations revealed that this recruit and supporter of Wesley Swift was instrumental in causing some of the bloodiest and most violent riots during the Civil Rights period.

Unsurprisingly, Swift’s key Southern Minister – Oren Fenton Potito— was also involved with the National States’ Rights Party. Indeed, within the NSRP, “virtually every senior leader” was “also a devout follower of the Christian Identity Religion.” As the national organizers of the NSRP, Potito and Lynch often worked together. Intelligence documents revealed that Potito set up his own Identity church in St. Petersburg, Florida, and he would frequently invite Swift to

445 Wexler, 14.

446 Trevor Armbrister, “Portait of an Extremist,” Saturday Evening Post, Aug. 22, 1964, 80


448 Armbrister, 80.
host events at his church. The documents also revealed that at a rally for the NSRP in St. Petersburg in 1962, Swift was the keynote speaker.\(^{449}\) Potito illustrates yet another path for how Identity bled into other far-right groups and how essential Swift’s brand of Identity was in uniting them. Potito was undoubtedly accepting of the violent style of protest and action that became synonymous with Lynch in this era and was a part of the Identity church’s “guerrilla warfare unit.” These groups, Potito asserted, “were designed to defend the country in case of a takeover.” He claimed that they had “regular rifle practice,” and that “Jeeps and boats in different places in different states” were ready and waiting.\(^{450}\) It is plausible and possible that this regular rifle practice took place at Swift’s own home. As a former rifle instructor for the Klan, Swift was already proficient in the use of firearms.

Swift was a major proponent of the coming race war and spoke for the necessity for white men to arm themselves and prepare for this war. The FBI suspected that “the use of the church of Jesus Christ Christian” was “a front for paramilitary activities” for organizations connected to Swift and his Identity message.\(^{451}\) The California Attorney General observed that Swift had a “rifle range in his backyard,” and as a zealot of Swift, it is plausible that Potito’s rifle practices happened at Swift’s residence. FBI documents also tracked Swift for his purchase of large quantities of handguns, shotguns, and rifles. In this regard, Swift stated that “the day has come when every Christian should get a rifle, shotgun, ammunition and some shells and lay


\(^{451}\) Wexler, 35.
them in, they’re going to need it to protect themselves and their homes.” Furthermore, the California Attorney General also observed that Swift’s CDL served a “secondary function of providing” an extreme vetting process, allowing for screening and admittance into the more militant and “active” groups. As the head of the California Rangers, Swift’s arsenal and rifle range would constitute a perfect training ground.

It is not surprising that the integration of James Meredith into Ole Miss was a point of contention for Swift’s ilk, and in their view, served as evidence that the “the Time of Jacob’s Trouble” was upon them. “Zero hour has come,” Swift said, and “we will watch the signs as they develop and we will watch the measures as they follow in the course of this year.” Meredith’s integration convinced Swift that he was right, and because it was a development supported by the Kennedy administration, it confirmed that the American government was under the control of “undesirables.” Potito was present at the riots, and in fact, he arguably was essential in starting them. However, counter protests or riots proved insufficient for Potito, and he attempted to send what would have been a considerably more devastating message. A police officer arrested Potito at Ole Miss where he had a “trunk full of firearms,” and Potito admitted that he was a participant in Identity Church led “guerilla warfare units.” Based on this information, it is plausible to assume that he had every intention of using and distributing them in the effort to stop the integration of the University. Almost immediately after Potito was arrested, Swift gave a sermon entitled “As in the Days of Noah,” in which he stated that “we have watched the President of the United States trying to enforce a decision the Supreme Court


453 Wexler, 124.
admits was based upon a design to eventually bring together a mixing of the races,” and was part of the “socialist revolution started by Marx, financed by Jewry, and abetted by a whole world of demagogues who served their cause.”454 He closed the sermon by telling his parishioners to meet force with force and applaud those who try to fight against white people’s oppression by the tyranny of America’s infiltrated government. Whether or not Swift was aware of what Potito was going to do is unclear; however, given their close relationship and how devout a follower Potito was made it conceivable, if not likely that Swift knew in advance or at the very least, encouraged Potito to act in the name of God, America, and the white race.

The National States’ Rights Party and its members did not settle for social activism; instead, they tried to affect the larger political world. According to declassified FBI documents, the NSRP engaged “in a variety of public activities such as rallies, demonstrations, picketing, and political campaigns.” The NSRP put a great deal of focus on achieving political power as a means to protect white America, and there were instances in which they endorsed and ran a candidate for local politics. In the 1969 race for Governor of Ohio, Reverend Jack Crites was the NSRP candidate. His program was straight out of the NSRP playbook as he pledged to:

Make the United States a ‘white Christian’ nation; eliminate public welfare except for the sick and elderly; outlaw civil rights laws, open housing, integrated schools, and school busing; make interracial marriage or association a felony; bar the Communist Party, USA, and its front organizations; forbid the fluoridation of water; allow only white Christians (Anglo-Saxon, Nordic, Germanic, or Celtic) to be elected or appointed to public office; let the United States out of the United Nations and get the United Nations out of the United States; declare all decisions of the Supreme Court null and Void unless reviewed and approved by two thirds of the Senate, the House, and all state legislature;

454 Wesley A. Swift, As in the Days of Noah (Mountain City: Sacred Truth Ministries [ca.1955–1965]), 4680.
Crites was not successful, and he did not even make it on the ballot for the 1970 Gubernatorial election in Ohio.

In the 1960s, the NSRP put Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus on the top of the ticket, and more significantly for Identity propagation, Retired Admiral John C. Crommelin for Vice President. As mentioned earlier, Crommelin was a World War II veteran and a decorated war hero. He was “the most well-known public anti-Semite in America in the mid-1950s” and “the most serious threat to Jewish society and the southern states.” While they received a negligible number of votes, the fact that an Identist and an Identist sympathizer could secure any support at that level is disconcerting at the very least. In furtherance of the NSRP’s agenda, Crommelin’s campaign was staffed exclusively with Identity ministers, including Lynch, Potito, Gale, and Swift himself. Potito was the campaign manager, and Swift’s impact on Crommelin was crucial. Before a speech in Los Angeles in 1963, Swift introduced Crommelin to the audience and called him “a man who is not only a great patriot, but a man who has earned recognition from one end of this nation to the other for his opposition to the Powers of Darkness, and to the forces of evil in the international conspiracies by Jewry that seek to destroy our Nation.” After this glowing introduction, Crommelin took to the podium and asserted that he and all who gained knowledge concerning the truth from Dr. Swift were the true Americans and knew the truth: “that communism is the Communist Jewish conspiracy”

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456 Wexler, 16.
and that it was necessary for “good white Americans” to see and acknowledge it because, according to them, time was effectively running out. Crommelin recalled that “since that time, I became convinced beyond a shadow of a doubt what communism is, a ‘worldwide Jewish conspiracy.’” It appears that Swift’s “army” of devotees who were crisscrossing the country enjoyed a reach sufficiently broad to infect the military as well.

As the candidate for the NSRP, “Bomb Run John” Crommelin was sympathetic toward the Confederate’s plight and their voice growing louder in the South, particularly in Alabama. In addition to being the candidate and an outspoken representative for the NSRP, he served as the Eastern regional director of Swift’s CDL. He related a common trope of Swift’s, but from the platform rather than the pulpit, thus, his speech had a political legitimacy and relevance for Swift’s religious movement. Throughout his speeches, Crommelin continually acknowledged that while he did not know the Bible as well as Swift did, what he was aware of was who the people of Alabama were, and by extension of that knowledge, who the real people of the United States were. “Most white Christians” are “segregationist,” and the “few exceptions” have “been completely brainwashed.” Swift knew the truth, embraced the truth, and preached the truth, and so, he believed the rest of America should learn the truth as well. Crommelin embraced the fact that the “hidden hand” of International Jewry controlled all media and all voting machines, a fact that accounted for the limited number of votes he won. While his political message failed to allow him to reach the political heights he strove for, it revealed the reach of Swift’s message to a national audience. It further revealed that although

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Swift never left the pulpit, he was “inspiring” others to take to the platform, as well as take up arms and violence. Essentially, Swift served as the connective tissue between the spread of Christian Identity and the broader white supremacy movements. By the time Crommelin left the military in the 1950s, the fact that he appeared to have already been aware of Identity theology raises the question of how it reached the military, and the most tangible link is arguably through Swift’s most devoted disciple: William Potter Gale.

William Potter Gale was arguably the most well-connected adherent of Wesley Swift. As perhaps the most popular of Swift’s disciples, he was at the receiving end of considerable FBI attention and surveillance. He was so significant to the Bureau that he was tracked well beyond his association with Swift; he had several files of his own as well. Certainly, Gale appears to have been a part of more organizations than any other member of Swift’s network. He served as Swift’s proxy and nominal leader for the Christian Knights of the Invisible Empire, CDL, and California Rangers. Moreover, he was connected to the Minutemen and founded a group called Posse Comitatus; he was also responsible for bringing the “spiritual heir” of Dr. Swift, Richard Girnt Butler, founder of the Aryan Nations, into the fold. Historical accounts of Gale conflict with his account, although and as described earlier, FBI accounts reveal just how profoundly entrenched Gale was in Swift’s network. Gale entered Identity after finishing his military service and formed a tangible link and plausible path for Identity theology to reach military men such as Crommelin. Gale served under MacArthur in the Pacific theater, and the injuries he received in the war forced him to retire from the military by 1950. Historians have been unable

to categorically ascertain how and when Gale was exposed to Identity theology as the accounts that he has presented are themselves contradictory and conflicting. He supposedly met both Henry Ford and Gerald L.K. Smith, and it is possible that Smith was the one who took him to Swift. Regardless of how the connection transpired, by 1956, Gale was as an Identity minister.459

Gale’s influence on the Identity movement was immense, including recruitment and connections with prominent public figures such as George Wallace.460 In the summer of 1963, Gale met Wallace with a plan to “stymie the increasingly successful movement to integrate Alabama.”461 However, the famed segregationist governor believed Gale to be “too radical,” much in the same way Joseph McCarthy considered Gerald L.K. Smith to be. It is not difficult to surmise the aspects of Gale’s brand of radicalism that the Alabama Governor found distasteful. Gale was a suspect for and openly involved in several violent acts against civil rights protesters. He was allegedly responsible for the bombings of several churches. The FBI suspected him and Admiral Crommelin for the bombing of the 16th St. Baptist Church, supposedly an attempted assassination of Dr. King but resulted in the death of four young black girls.462 It is not difficult to understand why even Wallace disapproved of this movement.

The FBI tracked Gale for, among other things, his work with the CDL. He aided in casting it as a defensive organization that was attempting to ward off “alien and anti-Christian

459 Barkun, 66.
460 Wexler, 57.
461 Ibid., 57.
462 Ibid., 33.
elements” which aimed to “destroy” the “Christian virtue” in American life. Gale considered it a war against an enemy that possessed considerably more ardent troops who were absolutely the aggressors. Gale was particularly active during the 1960s, and as someone so close to Swift, this was not surprising. He utilized his position as a veteran to lend more credibility to Swift’s movement. In a speech delivered in Miami in June 1963, Gale implied that his position both as a serviceman and clergyman gave him an authority on the Constitution and its defense. He accused both Eisenhower and Kennedy of using the military as a “posse comitatus” or “police force” to commit crimes against the American people. When Eisenhower utilized the National Guard in Arkansas and Kennedy in Mississippi, he observed that both Presidents were aware that they were committing a felony and believed that it should not pass unnoticed.

Declassified documents reveal that Gale recounted that the FBI was investigating him for being present in Mississippi, and he admitted to his “being there to oppose the armed forces” and its commander-in-chief. This displays the contradiction of Swift’s brand of hypernationalism, a fundamental component of Neo-Nazism: how they actively attack and accuse the federal government and the President of treason, while simultaneously proclaiming their unyielding service to America and her government. The next time Gale was investigated by a federal agency, it was not the FBI, but the Secret Service, and they reached out to him for information on Swift. As discussed in the previous chapter, Swift’s sermons concerning the assassination of JFK attracted the attention of federal investigators. Gale continued to echo Swift’s beliefs by stating “I support the Federal Government of the United States, that is a


constitutional republic, upholding the constitution of the United States but if that Federal Government you are talking about for me to support is a communist government, I’ll fight it to the death. And they asked me if I thought it was going communist, and I said it has already gone.”

It is not surprising that Gale focused particularly on Alabama. He ranted continuously against presidential overreach, fearing that a federal abuse of power and forced integration in Alabama would occur as it had in Mississippi. Given the rhetorical connection between himself and Governor Wallace, he urged the government to declare martial law if the Jews forced integration; he further went on to lament the Governor’s hesitation. He accused Attorney General Katzenbach of pushing unwanted integration on true Americans; he further asserted that because Katzenbach was a Jew, it was intentional. “This Jew Katzenbach stood” and said:

These Negroes have the right to go to school. This is another lie. There is nothing in the Constitution of the United States that gives anybody, white, black yellow, green, purple or regardless of what color. They have any right to an education. The education you receive is a privilege, it is granted by the State and the local community. It is not a constitutional right, and again there is no such thing as a civil right. It is a phrase claimed by the communists again and has been put in your newspapers, you’ve been constantly told of it, these civil rights. There are no civil rights mentioned in the Constitution of the United States. There are Constitutional Rights, no such thing as civil rights. So, let’s get some of these terms straight. I can tell you from contact, that Southerners are waking up and the Southerners now know that the Jew is behind communism.

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465 FBI, 4.
466 FBI, 6.
Gale fully embraced Swift’s doctrines, and despite his break after his mentor’s death, Gale remained an ardent Identity minister for the remainder of his life; his actions, speeches, violence, and rhetoric are inexorably traceable to his time as a devotee and zealot of Swift.

After Swift’s death, Gale became increasingly critical and dismissive of his mentor, publicly breaking with him and detailing the account in Cheri Seymour’s book *Committee of States*. It is arguable, however, that the seeds of the break were planted when Swift was still alive. In the late 1960s, Swift began to rely on and favor disciple Richard Girnt Butler over Gale, something the latter took issue with as he was responsible for introducing Butler to both Swift and Identity. As a former engineer for Lockheed Martin, it is indeed possible that Gale and Butler moved in similar circles. Butler proclaimed that his meeting Swift was a “turning point” in his life and that Swift “had the answers.”\(^{467}\) Like most of Swift’s proteges, it was the CDL that attracted him and gave him his start. He became so enamored and felt that Swift’s mission was so important, that in 1968 he quit his job at Lockheed and devoted his life to preaching and spreading Swift’s doctrine.\(^{468}\) While it is possible to contest the fact that Butler was the only heir of Swift, it is significantly more difficult to challenge the fact that he was indeed the most famous and visible one. In this regard, Butler himself claimed that he was Swift’s “favorite disciple” and said he spent hours studying with Swift at his “magnificent library.” Swift did indeed hold several “educational” meetings with parishioners and members of his

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\(^{467}\) Barkun, 68.

\(^{468}\) Kaplan, 35.
Butler became the head of the CDL in the mid-1960s, and the CDL was instrumental in both the expansion of the Identity message and a front for preparing, in terms of military power, for the upcoming racial war.

Richard Girnt Butler is most well-known for founding the Aryan Nations and continuing Swift’s Jesus Christ Christian Church. Butler’s organization served as a vehicle to bring different white supremacist elements together, and in a way, providing a new “safe space” for “true Americans.” The organization appears to be the perfect fusion of Neo-Nazi theology and white nationalist ideology. It allowed public and sociopolitical movements and organizations to meet and plan while maintaining the legal protection of a religious institution. “Butler formed the Aryan Nations as a political wing of the Church of Jesus Christ Christian, as a secular rather than religious organization.” After Swift’s death in 1970, Butler shifted the church and founded the Aryan Nations’ headquarters in Hayden Lake, Idaho. When asked, “why Idaho?” Butler replied, “Aryans are Nordic by blood,” thus, “North Idaho is a natural place for the white man to live.”

Moreover, Butler also knew that reaching and teaching people the truth in the increasingly diversifying and cosmopolitan Southern California was not going to be effective. He believed it was appropriate to assume a more “heartland” approach and focus on more rural Americans who were becoming displaced and felt threatened by those same cosmopolitan forces. Butler spent considerable time discussing agriculture and lamenting the lack of focus on America’s identity. This type of rhetoric rang true with many in rural America, and it continues to be applicable even today. When white supremacy groups or individuals use this rhetoric

today, lamenting or criticizing the heartland or the “America that was,” it is often coded language for their racist agendas.

Over the next few decades, neither the Aryan Nations nor Butler appeared to be concerned with emphasizing Identity theology. This was arguably a significant point of contention with other presumed heirs to Swift. The Aryan Nations was an apparently “generic” organization and thus placed a broad emphasis on those who were granted memberships. Perhaps this is one of the reasons due to which historians downplay Swift’s influence in the modern movement because it pays greater homage to Butler and his more public Aryan Nations. However, Identity remains a powerful impetus and uniting force, and there is evidence of it spilling over into other smaller offshoot organizations such as Bob Matthews’ The Order. The Order was a splinter group of the Aryan Nations and was responsible for a rash of race-based crimes in the 1970—80s. It was comprised of Identity followers who embraced Swift’s message regarding undesirable elements infiltrating the government, and they attempted to stage a coup that resulted in several arrests and the death of its leader Matthews.470

Wesley Swift was never indicted. Regardless, declassified documents reveal evidence of his socio-political influence. The Reverend inspired myriad organizations and individuals through his sermons and speeches, and he helped found or served in some leadership or organizational capacity in various other groups. The influence and the inspiration he provided for his disciples and his popularity within the far-right fringe of American society cannot and should not be overlooked. Indeed, beyond the more public and well-known followers like

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Butler, Gale, Crommelin, Potito, or Stoner, other lesser known supporters came close to altering the course of history because of Swift’s words and messages.

One example of his Swift’s impact was his routinely mentioning of the danger that “fat-headed demagogue,” Martin Luther King Jr., posed to true Americans. He communicated to his congregation that “America is going to have to choose between Christian leadership and Martin Luther King.” 471 Keith Gilbert, one of his devoted followers, did make a choice. In February 1965, Gilbert was arrested for stealing 1400 pounds of dynamite from a powder company for the attempted murder of an unnamed black man. Upon further questioning, he revealed that he intended to blow up Dr. King at the Hollywood Palladium. Gilbert further illustrated the interconnections between the far-right groups of the time as he was not only a member of Swift’s church but also a member of DePugh’s Minutemen. Gilbert was sent to San Quentin Penitentiary, the location from which the prison gang the Aryan Brotherhood emerged. While today it is known that Identity theology certainly falls within the Brotherhood’s orbit, it has been unclear as to how it got into the prison system. Gilbert serves as the first tangible connection. After getting out of prison, it is not surprising that he was living in Idaho and involved with Butler’s Aryan Nations. Gilbert himself said he “brought convicts out of San Quentin” and that they converted to Identity. However, Gilbert broke with Butler after the two had a falling out; Gilbert supposedly blamed Butler for his arrest and was angry with the fact that Butler himself never went to prison; Gilbert formed his own group called the Third Reich

Missionaries.\textsuperscript{472} Other FBI reports have indicated that Gilbert enjoyed being in charge and blamed a second Swift acolyte, Dennis Mower, for his arrest for the plot to use dynamite to assassinate Dr. King.

Similar to Gilbert, Mower was a member of the Minutemen. He was the organization’s West Coast Leader. Mower was also Swift’s chauffeur and the man who, according to Gilbert, was responsible for the plot against Dr. King.\textsuperscript{473} Mower established his organization called the Southern California Freedom Councils, and FBI intelligence suggests that its purpose was to “infiltrate left-wing organizations,” that it was a group affiliated with the Minutemen, and fully embraced Swift’s brand of Identity.\textsuperscript{474} Mower also believed that Jews had infiltrated the FBI, causing the Bureau to lose its focus. In a newsletter observed by the FBI, he stated that “in the last four or five years, the Bureau seems to have focused its investigations and harassments not on criminals or subversives, but on patriotic organizations such as our own.” Mower believed that this charge was that of treason; “Marxist agents” such as Lee Harvey Oswald were able to assassinate President Kennedy.\textsuperscript{475} Throughout 1965, FBI officials continually received flyers from Mower’s organization which consistently railed against the FBI and provided advice for actions if a Bureau agent accosted a ”patriot.” Mower and the SCFC perceived groups such as CORE and the NAACP as threats and tasked his “over 200 able-bodied young men” to infiltrate


\textsuperscript{473} Wexler, 27.


\textsuperscript{475} FBI, 7, 13.
these organizations.\footnote{Wexler, 48.} Like many others in Swift’s network, Mower worked with other right-wing organizations, including Swift’s church, the Minutemen, and an organization whose members were considered “strong candidates for King’s murder”: The White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan of Mississippi. Mower’s relationship with this group thus extended Swift’s theology and rhetoric to other right-wing extremists, Sam Bowers, and Thomas Tarrants.

Samuel Bowers was the leader of the Mississippi White Knights, a Klan splinter organization. The FBI connected Bower’s group to an “estimated ten murders, to the burnings of an estimated seventy-five black churches, to at least three hundred assaults and beatings.” Bower himself stated that he was on “very good terms” with Mower, and given Mower’s close relationship with Swift, it is possible that Mower facilitated their introduction. After his service in World War II, Bowers enrolled at UCLA in the late 1940s during the same time Swift’s movement was beginning to make a name for itself in Southern California. Although it is unclear when he met Swift in the intervening years, by 1963 he began forming an organization that was responsible for several violent acts and plots to take Dr. King’s life. Bowers believed that his actions were necessary to stop the forces of Satan on earth. As the Imperial Wizard of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Bowers presided over a four-year campaign of pervasive white terrorism. It remains unclear when Swift’s message captivated Bowers, but by the time he returned to Mississippi and formed his organization, he had become an Identist.\footnote{Ibid., 50.}
Bowers’ primary targets were civil rights activists who were campaigning in Mississippi, and who, according to Swift, were the foot soldiers of the Jews or working at the behest of the Jews. Like many of Swift’s supporters and inner circle men, Hitler fascinated Bowers, and according to some observers, he routinely stood at attention and shouted “Heil Hitler” whenever he said goodbye to his dog. Bowers embraced the “end times” theology that Swift had been espousing, and he believed that the Civil Rights Movement confirmed Swift’s teachings. According to Swift, Satan was gathering his forces, and they posed a clear and imminent danger to God’s chosen land. Bowers believed that God called on him to lead his fellow Klansmen and handle the “COFO’s nigger-communist invasion of Mississippi.” As both the Imperial Wizard and preacher, he went beyond where Swift would go concerning activism. As the essential voice and organizer of the Christian Identity Church and theology, Swift never left the pulpit, never committed any crimes or acts of violence. At best, Swift was under suspicion. Bowers took it further; like many of his disciples, Bowers felt Swift’s sermons were so inspirational that they were a call to action. In this case, Swift’s message inspired Bowers for what amounted to a Holy War against the Civil Rights Movement. Bowers preached to his congregation that:

*When the black waves hit our communities, we must remain calm and think in terms of our individual enemies rather than our mass enemy. We must roll with the mass punch which they will deliver in the streets during the day, and we must counterattack the individual leaders at night... And personal attacks on the enemy should be carefully planned to include only the leaders and prime white collaborators of the enemy forces. These attacks against these selected individual targets should, of course, be as severe as circumstances and conditions will permit. No severe attacks should be directed against the general mass of the enemy because of the danger of hurting some actually innocent person. The leaders, of course, are not innocent, and they should be our prime targets, but the innocent must be protected.*
We must always remember that while law enforcement officials have a job to do, we as Christians, have a responsibility and have taken an oath to preserve Christian civilization. May Almighty God grant that their job and our oath never come into conflict; but should they ever, it must be clearly understood that we can never yield our principles to anyone, regardless of his position. Respect for Christian ideals cannot yield to respect for persons nor statutes and procedure which have been twisted by a man away from its original Divine design.478

Swift was such an inspiration to Bowers that the Imperial Wizard actively recruited for Swift and went so far as to play tapes of Swift’s sermons at his own meetings. Even though Swift was never indicted or arrested, it is clear that the majority, if not all, of Bowers’ actions, were, at the very least, inspired by Wesley Swift. Swift’s connection to Bowers and Mower also brought a young Tommy Tarrants into the Identity orbit, and like both Mower and Bowers, he engaged in conspiracies and potential assassination attempts of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.479

Described as “one of Bowers’ operatives,” Thomas Tarrants called Wesley Swift “his hero.”480 Originally from Alabama, Tarrants moved to Mississippi for the express purpose of connecting with Bowers and would serve as his representative and the representative of the White Knights in meetings with Swift.481 Tarrants proved his mettle by boasting of highly connected Identity figures being in his corner, including Admiral Crommelin—who introduced him to Swift. Similar to all the Identists, Tarrants was against integration, anti-communist, and

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479 Wexler, 101.

480 Ibid., 47.

481 Ibid., 107
vehemently anti-Semitic. With Mississippi still a hotbed for integration and civil rights, Tarrants quickly rose in the ranks within Bower’s organization, becoming the “chief terrorist for the White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan of Mississippi.”

Tarrants—or the “Mad Bomber” of Mississippi—was radicalized by Swift and noted that he had first heard the Reverend speak over the radio. Swift was thrilled by Tarrants’ devotion and took him in as an understudy. Like all his contemporaries, Tarrants dabbled in multiple organizations, including the John Birch Society, Citizens Council, and the Klan and was well-positioned to disseminate Swift’s teaching within Mississippi and serve as something of an ambassador for Swift’s Identity message.

Bowers and Tarrants would listen to Swift’s sermons and often discussed them, in particular, Swift’s position on the Jew being “of the Devil.” Tarrants was involved in several anti-Semitic attacks that eventually led him to be shot by police and sentenced to 30 years in prison. Tarrants was indicted on September 18, 1967, for the bombing of a synagogue in Jackson, Mississippi, that caused more than $25,000 worth of damage. He hated Dr. King and everything the civil rights icon represented, so much so, that he drove to Swift’s ranch to procure a gun for the explicit purpose of killing King. “That was my ambition, to shoot Martin Luther King. Oh yeah, I hated him worse than any of the blacks.” Tarrants was arrested in a

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482 Wexler, 366.

483 Quarles, 147–148.

484 Quarles, 64.

sting operation and sentenced to 30 years in prison but has since reformed and been released from prison.\textsuperscript{486}

This chapter illustrates the possible reason why federal government agents continued to track Swift. Within Swift’s sermons were the “solutions” to all possible threats to God’s kingdom here on earth. He crafted a network that interwove many different organizations from the American Nazi Party to the National States’ Rights Party. Swift and his theology served as both a connecting bridge and a central influence in white supremacist and right-wing religious circles. Furthermore, it is exceedingly difficult to find a right-wing extremist organization that existed during Swift’s heyday with which he was not involved in some capacity. Each one of these groups, organizations, or individuals, would help to create the network of white Supremacist and Neo-Nazi organizations that spread across the nation, a network that has, and continues to have, Christian Identity as a core principle. Moreover, both Swift’s home and ranch served as a meeting place and a training ground for these people. Swift’s ranch was rumored to be the training ground for white supremacy militias such as the Rangers and the Minutemen. Six years after Swift’s death, authorities found evidence to support this rumor. In a nearby plot of land owned by a known follower and racist zealot, a small arsenal was discovered in an underground bunker holding tons of munitions and weapons. Whether considering the ideological, financial, organizational, military, or theological levels, it is undeniable that Wesley Swift played an influential role in the proliferation of white supremacy organizations. More directly, however, his thoughts, writings, sermons, and speeches remain at the core of Neo-

\textsuperscript{486} Wexler, 123.
Nazism to this day. Wesley Swift was able to craft a network and disseminate his beliefs so effectively that, despite his relative obscurity, he is the man most directly responsible for the spread and infiltration of Christian Identity throughout American society.
CONCLUSION

The new form of religious anti-Semitism that emerged in America after 1945 – a form which persists today – was not created in a void. Its evolution is traceable to the explosion of religious faith that began in roughly 1940 and continued through the 1950s. The most critical component of the Neo-Nazi movement that evolved during these years would be Christian Identity theology. It provided religious proof that Nazi anti-Semitism was Biblically justified and represented a worthy, spiritually inspired endeavor to which an individual could dedicate his life. The peaceful goals and a general embrace of the notion of religious tolerance encouraged by the religious revival were not as complete as historians have suggested. Instead, the mid-20th-century religious revival provided the groundwork and the impetus for a significant hate movement.

The “success” of the national ambitions of interfaith cooperation and religious toleration has been incomplete. The ideology constructed on the foundation of Smith’s racist politics and Swift’s Identity theology developed in opposition to the emergent “Judeo-Christian tradition.” Along with other fundamentalist leaders who retreated from political life and fell from the public eye, the leaders of religious racism retreated from the political and public arena with the advent of World War II, but they did not disappear. The anti-Semitism and racism endemic in American society coalesced in a new way during the mid-20th-century religious revival and, though it would remain in the shadows politically and publicly, it went on to establish a viable religious rationale and foundation for Neo-Nazism.
As a vital member of Smith’s inner circle, Wesley Swift’s significant contribution was providing Biblical proof for Nazi ideology, and categorically defining the role of Jews in history. In the decade between 1946, when Swift founded his first church, and 1957, when he created the Church of Jesus Christ Christian, Swift molded Christian Identity into the most racist and anti-Semitic religious doctrine ever seen on American soil. During the evolution of Christian Identity, it is possible to locate many early 20th-century fundamentalist ideals, ideals that would be essential in the rise of this racist religious denomination. Examples include the perception that these ideals represent “true America” and the imminence of the apocalypse are two elements of American fundamentalist Christianity that were appropriated by Christian Identity theorists. The racist right experienced its own revival in opposition to the positive force of rising religious toleration. It espoused conspiracy, treachery, and sedition, and it provided Biblical and religious “proof” that the Jews were the perpetrators behind every tragedy in white Christian history. In founding his Church of Jesus Christ Christian in 1957, Swift inaugurated Neo-Nazism by successfully tying the doctrines of Christian Identity to the tenets of Nazism, Holocaust denial, and Communist conspiracy advocated by Gerald L.K. Smith.

Previous historians and analysts of the religious racist right have recognized that Swift played a vital role in the proliferation of this white racist Christian theology, and previous works that feature him have provided information about his ideas, beliefs, and religious tenets. However, they fail to engage Swift outside of this role. Swift was a "prolific organizer," and he created a foundation for sustaining a nationwide network of religious white supremacist organizations suspected and indicted in several criminal and conspiratorial enterprises that
could have affected significant moments in American history. This network he helped create crisscrossed the nation, involved a few well-known public figures (Henry Ford), and even entered the prison system where Identity found fertile ground to grow. It is evident that many of the organizations and ideologues of the post-World War II years owe Swift a debt either organizationally, financially, or spiritually.

Swift’s most important and influential organization was his Church of Jesus Christ Christian, and its creation in 1957 was arguably a pivotal moment for the continued proliferation of the religious racist right in America. Swift’s church was arguably the first step toward the creation of a nationwide network of white power and Neo-Nazi organizations. Throughout the 1960s, FBI intelligence agents noted that Swift used his church not only to recruit parishioners, but also to screen and assess potential members for more militant groups that were within his sphere of influence, to include the California Rangers, the Minutemen, and the National States’ Rights Party. From the pulpit, Swift “inspired” followers to accept Christian Identity and he enlisted potential soldiers in the coming conflict he believed was imminent: a battle to be fought over nothing less than the “Soul of America.”

It is during the period after 1945 that nearly all contemporary white supremacy and racist organizations locate the rise of their most important doctrines and religious beliefs. This commonality provides evidence that the racist counter-revival had successes of its own.

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Without these formative years in opposition to the revivalist ambitions, the movement likely would not have been equipped to exude influence in American society and politics. The sentiments, discourse, and beliefs fashioned in that era have not evaporated. In fact, they have shifted focus depending on the mood of the country. In the 1960s, it was anti-black because of the advances of the Civil Rights Movement. The 1970s wrought an anti-Hispanic sentiment because of the wave of Latino immigrants. Today, it has considerably more outlets than many Americans care to admit. Since 2007, The Southern Poverty Law Center has noted that there has been a 700% increase in hate group membership. In 2012, the Aryan Nations marched for the first time in Washington, D.C. Even more recently, in South Carolina, Dylan Roof used Neo-Confederate, Citizen’s Council, and other white supremacy dogma to justify his massacre. Declassified intelligence documents reveal that these were organizations in which Swift’s teachings held a significant amount of influence. I attended the Aryan Nations rally, and it was quite clear that the marchers – who professed to be there campaigning for white South African rights – were citing Christian Identity tenets – or at least a modern version of it, Kingdom Identity – in their chants, slogans, and signs. As the Aryan Nations has become the vehicle of the self-appointed “spiritual heir” of Wesley Swift, Richard Girnt Butler, it demonstrates that the teachings of Swift have arguably endured the test of time.

Many would argue that because a large amount of criminal activity potentially happened without Swift’s knowledge or say-so, that Swift was tangential to these events. Alternatively, perhaps the reason why Swift did not make as strong a political impact as his

predecessor Gerald L.K Smith or his successor Richard Girnt Butler, was because each of his
groups failed to have a visible socio-political impact. In response to the former, the fact that
each of these organizations and individuals was linked to other like-minded citizens through his
network, and they utilized his theology as a justification for their violent and militant racism, it
is arguable that Swift was influential in these cases, if only indirectly. To the latter point,
criticizing Swift of a lack of political impact is moot. Reverend Wesley Swift was decidedly a
religious figure, and arguably never showed any overt political aspirations. Indeed, whether or
not his organizations stood the test of time—and some did—is not entirely the point. These
organizations and the network it created were the vehicles for him to spread his theology
nationwide, and by so doing, assured Christian Identity an indispensable position on the
religious racist right fringes of American society.

Perhaps the reason why historians downplay Swift’s influence is that the modern
movement pays homage more to the founder of the Aryan Nations, rather than the man who
was his teacher. Furthermore, Butler’s organization served as a base for the many splinter
groups that emerged in the late 1970s and into the 1980s and were responsible for several
racist hate crimes, arguably placing the focus squarely on this white power conglomerate. Lack
of awareness of Wesley Swifts’ existence makes it possible that many white supremacists, and
Neo-Nazis particularly, who either follow the modern incarnation of Christian Identity—
Kingdom Identity—or support some of the tenets of Swift’s creed, do so unaware of the “debt”
they owe to Wesley Swift. This, in turn, would cause the organizational impact of Swift and his
theology to be overlooked, ignored, or diminished by historians, despite his essentiality to the
foundation and impact on religious-based Neo-Nazism that still affects the 21st century.
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