The "systematic, persistent, and ruthless" persecution of Jews in Eastern Europe, which began in 1881, provoked a dual response from the leaders of American Jewry. In the international sphere American Jewish leaders, like the banker Jacob H. Schiff, of Kuhn, Loeb and Company, sought to ameliorate the condition of their coreligionists in Eastern Europe through a variety of financial and diplomatic methods. At home, they were confronted with the rising Jewish immigration into the United States. A particularly acute problem in this latter regard was the tendency of Jewish immigrants to carry the "impression . . . that there is only one place in the United States and that is the city of New York." To men like Schiff this posed an enormous burden for the Jews already there, who found that they had to "care for almost 75% of all the immigrants who come to the United States." 

The Politics of Deflection

In 1891, Jacob H. Schiff was sure that the United States could

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1 Maldwyn A. Jones, *American Immigration* (Chicago, 1960), pp. 102-3; Schiff to Simon Wolf, December 29, 1890, Schiff Papers, reel 678, American Jewish Archives, hereafter cited as SP.

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still absorb up to two million additional Russo-Jewish immigrants in the next decade or two, but only if those immigrants could be distributed over the interior of the country, rather than concentrating in the northeastern port cities. By that year, in fact, New York Jews had already undertaken serious efforts to "remove" Jewish immigrants from the unhealthful and crowded conditions of the ghettos to the interior of the country. These efforts were carried out through a variety of programs. Agricultural colonization was attempted in a number of states, from New Jersey to Oregon. The creation of the Baron de Hirsch Fund, in 1891, brought funds from Europe to aid in the solution of the problem. This fund of $2.5 million was contributed by Baron Maurice de Hirsch, a wealthy German Jew, and the trustees of that fund, according to its historian, "tried out almost every possible solution—agricultural colonization, suburbanization (on a small scale), the removal of industries to outlying districts, the transportation of families to a [sic] smaller towns and industrial centers, and so on." But all such efforts continued to be dwarfed by the size of the immigration of the 1890's, and the resettlement of a few hundreds of immigrants per year scarcely made an imprint on the crowded conditions in New York City and the other large northeastern port cities. In a further attempt to meet the problem, the Industrial Removal Office was organized in New York City by the de Hirsch Fund, and it sent agents to the various parts of the country to find employment for New York Jews. With such "requisitions" in hand from inland communities, the IRO sought out likely candidates to fill the jobs, and aided in their relocation. Close cooperation was fostered between the Industrial Removal Office in New York and the local Jewish communities throughout the United States. In the first year of its operation, the IRO was able to remove nearly 2,000 persons to 250 communities throughout the country.2

While contributing to these efforts as a member of the board of

the Baron de Hirsch Fund, Jacob Schiff continued to exert himself in behalf of improved conditions for Jews in Russia. He approved of the protest delivered to Russia over the Kishinev massacre in 1903, and during 1904-1905 he was instrumental in floating nearly $200 million of Japanese war bonds in the United States. He hoped, thereby, to contribute to Russia's defeat in her war with Japan, a defeat which he felt would trigger a revolution in Russia and bring to power a government that would be more liberal in its treatment of Jews. Indeed, it seemed for a time as if Schiff's strategy was succeeding when revolution did break out in Russia during the war. The Czar was forced to make concessions in the direction of more liberal government. The end of that war, however, brought reaction and renewed repression of the Czar's Jewish subjects. The tide of emigration from Russia rose once again in 1906, and Schiff began to despair that the conditions of Russian Jewry could ever be improved in their homeland. Perhaps the only solution lay in emigration. As he wrote Israel Zangwill in late 1905, Schiff believed that if reaction set in against the Jews, "then the time will have arrived for him to leave Russia as our forefathers have left Egypt and Spain and then, too, the fate of Russia will become sealed as has been the case with every country that has driven out the Jews." Should emigration be necessary, the United States, with its liberal immigration laws, offered the only prospect for the absorption of large numbers of Russian Jews, but not if that emigration continued to be funneled directly into New York City.3

There were at this time primarily three different approaches by those who saw in emigration the solution to the problem of Russian Jewry. The Zionists advocated the reestablishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. The Jewish Territorial Organization

(ITO), which had split off from the Zionists, was led by Jewish writer Israel Zangwill and sought to create autonomous Jewish territories wherever practicable. The Jewish Colonization Society (ICA), financed by Baron Maurice de Hirsch, assisted East European Jews in emigrating to new lands—primarily to Argentina. Jacob H. Schiff regarded both the Zionists and the territorialists as impractical and utopian, particularly in their inability to respond quickly and on the scale necessary to meet the problem that was emerging in Russia in 1906. But more than this, Schiff disagreed with the basic philosophy of both the Zionists and the territorialists. Schiff argued that "the Jew must maintain his own identity—not apart in any autonomous body but among the nations, where alone he can fulfill the mission which is assigned him to promote the unity of God and the brotherhood of man among the people of the earth." Jews should not seek to live apart in ghettos, even if they were self-governing states, but should integrate themselves into the life of the nation wherever they found themselves.4

As reaction began to gain the upper hand in Russia in mid-1906, Schiff sought to divert Zangwill’s Territorial Organization from what he regarded as philosophically incorrect and impractical objects into correct and immediately useful channels. It was no longer enough, he decided, to remove Jews from the eastern port cities as they accumulated there. If the United States were to absorb the two millions of Jewish immigrants which might have to be accommodated, those immigrants would now have to be “removed” directly into the interior of the United States by diverting them through ports other than those of the east coast. This was necessary since the eastern port cities offered such attractions to the Jewish immigrant that he rarely bestirred himself to move elsewhere. The large Jewish population of New York City, which made it by the early twentieth century the largest Jewish city in the world, meant the existence of a full religious, cultural, and social life for the Jewish arrival, no matter what his language. This contrasted markedly with the alien environment of the rest of the country for him. While there had, as yet, been little negative reaction to

4 Schiff to Zangwill, November 21, 1905, SP #679; see also Naomi Cohen, “The Reaction of Reform Judaism in America to Political Zionism (1897-1922),” American Jewish Historical Quarterly, XL (1950), 361-94.
Israel Zangwill, Zionist and Territorialist; critic and supporter of the Galveston movement
the growing Jewish population in the eastern cities, Schiff and others feared that further immigration, on the scale necessary to relieve conditions in Russia, inevitably had to lead to demands for restrictions on immigration. Thus, to preserve the United States as a destination for Jewish emigrants fleeing oppression in Eastern Europe required that the rest of the nation be opened up more fully to these people. But that would require a mechanism in Russia, and elsewhere in Europe, to propagandize destinations alternative to New York City among prospective emigrants, and to make the necessary arrangements for transporting them there. The ideal mechanism, as Schiff saw it, was the Jewish Territorial Organization. If the ITO would take up the Russian part of the operation, Schiff promised Zangwill, he would contribute up to $500,000 for the American end of the operation. He believed that if the operation were properly handled, up to four million Jews could be moved into the interior of the United States and into Canada within five or ten years, with two million of the total accommodated in the United States. Movement on such a scale would largely solve the Jewish problem in Russia, while simultaneously relieving the congestion in eastern cities. Moreover, Schiff believed that the United States Government would give such an effort "full moral support."

According to Schiff's understanding, more than 60% of the 1.5 million Jews in the United States were living in New York City and other eastern port cities, while "not ten per cent are located West of a North to South line, drawn through a point fifty miles west of Chicago." However, it bears repeating that Schiff was not concerned only with deflecting immigration from the east to the interior of the country. He was concerned also with making possible a larger Jewish immigration into the United States. As he wrote to Judge Mayer Sulzberger, he was concerned with the question: "What can we do . . . not only to divert the stream of Russo-Jewish immigration into the American 'Hinterland,' but even to promote a considerably larger immigration than we now receive, into this territory?" Schiff had good reason to believe that cooperation, or at least an understanding attitude, would be forthcoming

Schiff to Zangwill, August 24, 1906, SP, Box 2364; Schiff to Paul Nathan, August 27, 1906, SP #692; Schiff to Mayer Sulzberger, September 27, 1906, SP #2364.
from the federal government. A coreligionist, Oscar S. Straus, was serving as Secretary of Commerce and Labor, under which department operated the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization. And the Commissioner-General of Immigration, Franklin P. Sargent, had suggested just such a diversion of immigration, preferably through the port of New Orleans, when Schiff had talked with him early in 1906.6

America versus Europe

Throughout the formative period of the Galveston Movement, as it came to be called, and throughout the very life of the movement, Schiff had ever to be extremely attuned to the sensitivities of the leaders of the Jewish societies in Europe. Zangwill, especially, was ever cautious that his ITO should get at least as much credit as was due, and that its prestige should not be damaged by association with failure, by criticism, or by cooperation in an inferior relationship with other groups. Thus, Zangwill was at first not willing to fit his organization into Schiff's proposal. Schiff had in mind cooperation between the ICA, the ITO, and the Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden. Zangwill was unwilling to cooperate with non-territorialists like the ICA, and wanted the full measure of credit for the work in Europe for his own society. He even proposed that the American portion of the deflection work should be placed under the ITO banner if he cooperated in the venture. In putting forth his arguments, moreover, Zangwill showed no reluctance to be offensive in his language. Gradually, however, Zangwill was brought to accept a mechanism which would have the ITO propagandize in behalf of the southern gulf ports of the United States as entry points for Russian Jews seeking to emigrate to the United States. The ITO would then handle their transportation as far as Bremen, Germany, where they would be temporarily cared for by the Hilfsverein and placed on steamships destined for the gulf ports of the United States. By October, 1906, the plan had been broadened to include Galveston as a port of entry, as well as the New Orleans originally suggested by Sargent. In the United States, the placement of the immigrants in the American hinterland would be

6 Schiff to Mayer Sulzberger, September 27, 1906, SP #2364.
handled by the Industrial Removal Office working in much the same way as it handled the removal of Jews from New York City. Incoming immigrants would be met at the gulf ports, matched with the "requisition" from the inland communities arranged for by the Industrial Removal Office, and then sent on their way to their new homes. To Zangwill, Schiff emphasized the necessity for sending only young, sturdy immigrants, ready to do whatever work was available.  

On November 12, 1906, Cyrus L. Sulzberger presented Schiff's plan for the diversion of immigrants into the interior to a meeting of the Industrial Removal Committee. By this time, Schiff had definitely settled on Galveston as the gulf port to be utilized. Galveston was chosen because it was served by regular steamship service from Bremen by the North German Lloyd line, and was served, also, by a railroad network which penetrated into all of the proposed area of settlement. It was also a city sufficiently small that it would not likely attract immigrants to settle there permanently in preference to those locations arranged for them by the removal office. Another reason was doubtless the determination that the immigrants should not be placed in the southern states. As Schiff put it: "I am afraid Jewish immigration into the South would, to a very large extent, be used to place it in competition with Negro labor, and to attempt...to diminish the 'black predominance.'" Such a situation would work to the detriment of the Jewish immigrants and ought to be avoided. The "Plan for the Diversion of Immigrants by Way of Galveston," presented to the Industrial Removal Office, provided that immigrants arriving through that port under the auspices of the mechanism should be sent on into the interior almost immediately after they arrived there, making their journey a continuous one. Since the agency at Galveston would have a manifest containing all the relevant information concerning the immigrants at least a couple of weeks before they arrived, sufficient time would be available for arranging for their distribution into the interior. This "continuous journey" would not only spare Schiff's group the cost of boarding the immigrants in Galveston, but would also prevent their developing

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7 Schiff to Zangwill, October 16, 1906, and Schiff to Nathan, October 25, 1906, SP #692; Schiff to Zangwill, October 25, 1906, SP #678.
any attachment for Galveston. In conducting the operations at Galveston, the cooperation of the small Jewish community in that city was to be enlisted. As for the distribution of the immigrants, Schiff's plan provided that: a) the immigrants should be placed west of the Mississippi river exclusively, if that was possible, and only if sufficient cooperation could not be obtained in that area were they to be sent to contiguous states east of that river; b) they were not to be sent directly to industrial establishments at first, because needs changed and because immigrants needed a chance to adjust. Instead, they would be consigned to Jewish communities, but "should the Jewish community in any case refuse to cooperate for insufficient reasons, it might possibly serve our purpose to obtain direct requisitions from employers in that locality"; c) distribution should preferably be made to communities where there were already some Russian Jews; d) discretion should be allowed the organizers to commit the removal office to a grant of not more than $10 per immigrant. The office should also seek to obtain half-rate railway fares for the immigrants on the railroads leading out of Galveston. 8

Schiff refused to label the American portion of the operation as an ITO concern. When the immigrants arrived at Galveston they must sever their relationship with the ITO, and must understand that before they ever left Germany. Searching for a name for the agency to be established at Galveston, Schiff first considered "The United Immigration Office," before settling, finally, on "The Jewish Immigrants' Information Bureau." Schiff's problems with Zangwill were not at an end, however. Schiff was insistent that the immigrants be aware that in the United States they were likely to be required to work on Saturdays, the Jewish Sabbath. For Zangwill, this was only further proof that Jews could not be integrated into non-Jewish societies, but ought to exist separately in the kinds of autonomous communities that his ITO was seeking to establish. By early January, 1907, however, the difficulties had been ironed out, and an understanding had also been reached between the ITO and the Hilfsverein for their cooperation in the

8 "Minutes of the Meeting of November 12, 1906," in Industrial Removal Office Papers, Box 1, American Jewish Historical Society Library; Morris Waldman, "The Galveston Movement," The Jewish Social Service Quarterly, IX (March, 1928), 201; Schiff to Zangwill, November 8, 1906, SP #678.
European end of the movement. Schiff now busied himself with creating the Jewish Immigrants’ Information Bureau [JIIB] to prepare for the arrival of the first ITO-sponsored Jewish immigrants at Galveston.9

Morris D. Waldman was dispatched from New York City to Galveston with letters of introduction from Schiff and Cyrus L. Sulzberger to Rabbi Henry Cohen of that city, to “organize an immigration office in connection with the movement which we are endeavoring to inaugurate for diverting a part of the Russian Jewish immigration through the gulf ports. . . .” By mid-January of 1907, Schiff was writing to Zangwill that he was in frequent communication with Sulzberger and that he was “deeply gratified the American ‘hinterland’ project is now fairly started.” He noted that agents were at Galveston, and reassured Zangwill that “when your first shipload arrives in Galveston everything will be found ready for the proper reception and distribution of the immigrants which it brings.” Like Zangwill, Schiff felt that “a good part of the success of the entire project depends upon the way those who arrive at first shall fare.” By the end of that month the JIIB had rented a building, ordered stationery, and was busy negotiating for a half-rate on the railroads. Meantime, to make conditions at Galveston even more comfortable for the arrival of large numbers of immigrants, Schiff and Sulzberger solicited the aid of Secretary of Commerce and Labor Oscar S. Straus in getting a bill through Congress authorizing the construction of an immigration station in that city.10

On a trip to Washington late in January, Schiff found the Secretary of Commerce and Labor strongly supportive of the Galveston movement and of the proposed immigration station. More encouraging was the support of President Theodore Roose-

* Schiff to Cyrus Sulzberger, December 5, 1906, and Schiff to Nathan, December 5, 1906, SP #692; Bressler to Waldman, January 14, 1907, Galveston Immigration Plan Papers, Box 3, American Jewish Historical Society Library, hereafter cited as GIPP; Schiff to Nathan, December 20, 1906, and Schiff to Nathan, January 3, 1907, SP #692.

10 Schiff to Rabbi Henry Cohen, January 8, 1907, and Sulzberger to Cohen, January 8, 1907, Henry Cohen Collection #2538, American Jewish Archives; Schiff to Zangwill, January 14, 1907, SP #692; Waldman to Cyrus Sulzberger, January 18, 1907, GIPP #3; Schiff to Nathan, January 23, 1907, SP #678; Waldman to Bressler, January 28, 1907, GIPP #3; Schiff to Zangwill, February 14, 1907, SP #692; Sulzberger to Straus, February 14, 1907, GIPP #1; Schiff to Straus, February 15, 1907, SP #692.
velt. As Schiff wrote to Paul Nathan of the Hilfsverein, "President Roosevelt was particularly happy that we are making this effort to open this new door to immigration to the United States instead of concentrating it in the north Atlantic ports as has been the case hitherto." This evidence of support from the federal government was important for the operation's prospects of success. The movement had received its initial encouragement from the Commissioner-General of Immigration. Now it had evidence of strong support from his superior, the Secretary of Commerce and Labor, and from the President himself. Given the great variety of laws governing immigration, and the latitude permitted in the interpretation and application of those laws, a friendly attitude on the part of the authorities could help to ensure the success of the Galveston movement, while a hostile authority could doom it. From the beginning Schiff insisted that the immigration laws should be scrupulously honored since "everything must be avoided which can possibly induce our officials to place obstacles in the way of the proposed immigration." Thus, Schiff reprimanded Nathan for assuring some immigrants that part of their traveling expenses would be paid if necessary. He was willing only that they should be assured that, if the situation required it, the JIIB would contribute to the expense of their transportation from Galveston to their ultimate destination.¹¹

Despite all of the preparations made in Galveston, however, months passed without the arrival of any immigrants there. Letters flowed between Galveston and New York, and between New York and London, but the ITO was, for many weeks, unable to supply the immigrants for whom the mechanism had been created. The difficulty was in the continued inability of the Jewish societies in Europe to cooperate. Relations between the ITO and the Hilfsverein had soured. Schiff wrote Sulzberger that he was "discouraged and disgusted" with the behavior of both Zangwill and Nathan in permitting their personal vanity to "damage so important a project" as the Galveston movement. He was, however, particularly irked with Zangwill's continued insistence that the ITO be given all credit for the program and that if that were not the case the

¹¹ Schiff to Nathan, February 25, 1907, SP #692; Schiff to Nathan, January 23, 1907, SP #678.
project "had better not be done at all." To Nathan, Schiff expressed doubt whether it was advisable to go on with the Galveston project. He was, he said, "greatly discouraged" for the success of the project because of the inability of Zangwill and Nathan to cooperate with one another. "Now the whole work has been made doubtful" because they continually placed their personal and organizational interests above "the general good," and he warned Nathan that he and Zangwill would have "to bear the responsibility if the Galveston plan fails. . . ." As weeks passed, and the ITO was unable to muster a significant number of emigrants at Bremen for the voyage to Galveston, Schiff became increasingly critical of Zangwill. The difficulty, as Schiff saw it, was that Zangwill irritated people with his brusque manner and drove into opposition the very persons whose cooperation was needed to make the project successful. Zangwill's own explanation for the delay was the redtape involved in getting passports, as well as the opposition of the ICA to the ITO's work in Russia, an opposition which was, in Zangwill's eyes, the result of ICA jealousy of the prestige which the ITO was receiving from its association with the Galveston movement.12

While Schiff was somewhat skeptical about Zangwill's charges against the ICA, he made earnest efforts to enlist ICA cooperation in the Galveston movement. To one ICA leader Schiff wrote:

It is inexplicable to me and my friends here how it can be possible that important altruistic societies such as the Jewish Colonization Association, the Hilfsverein, and the Jewish Territorial Organization should for a moment hesitate for any reason whatsoever to cooperate in a project which is destined to have so far reaching a beneficent influence upon the Jewish immigration from Russia into the United States. . . .

When the ICA declined to cooperate with the ITO and the Hilfsverein in the Galveston movement unless they were given exclusive control of the movement, Schiff unburdened himself candidly to Narcisse Leven of the ICA that he saw "absolutely no justification for this demand." When he had first conceived the Galveston movement it had been only the ITO and the Hilfsverein which he had found willing to join in the movement. He had a special object in recruiting the ITO, he told Leven, and that was to divert the ITO

12 Schiff to Sulzberger, May 2, 1907; Schiff to Nathan, May 2, 1907; and Schiff to Sulzberger, May 6, 1907, SP #692; Bressler to Waldman, May 17, 1907, GIPP #3.
from its territorialist objectives since he felt "that the creation of
larger autonomous centers...would be certain to lead in years to
come to difficulties which should be avoided." But the ITO was
admirably equipped to be utilized for the objectives of the Gal-
veston movement. Thus, if the ICA disagreed with the objectives
of the ITO, it ought willingly to join in cooperation in the Galves-
ten movement, since that movement was designed to thwart the
objectives of the ITO! The news from Zangwill that the ICA was
hostile to the Galveston work being undertaken by the ITO in
Russia, he wrote, had shocked him. Leaders of great movements
should be able to look beyond jealousy and suspicion and the
"shortcomings and peculiarities of others" in order to cooperate.
If the Galveston movement failed, he assured the ICA leader, "no
little share of the responsibility for this will be upon the trustees
of your association." Still, there is ample evidence that Schiff
reserved his greatest criticism for Zangwill, of whom he wrote that
"His hand is against everybody and, in consequence, everybody's
hand is against him."13

Meantime, however, the spirits of the American side had been
somewhat raised by news that the first group of immigrants would
arrive in late June or early July. The SS Cassel actually arrived on
July 1, 1907, and 54 ITO-sponsored Russo-Jewish immigrants
arrived. As reported to the leaders of the Galveston movement in
New York:

The steamer did not arrive until Monday morning, at 8:00 o'clock. The
steerage passengers were not started through their formalities until 10:00
o'clock. Inspector-in-Charge Holman was as kind as he could be. He gave
us a pen section for ourselves on the docks, and arranged to have our
people off among the first. We had all of our protégés in the building, by
noon. Each one had a bath, a good substantial dinner, an hour or two to
smoke their cigarettes and drink their tea à la Russe and write letters home
to their dear ones. They were a very tractable lot of people and were pro-
fuse in their expressions of delight and gratitude for the comfortable
reception we gave them. We did not overdo it. A little coloring was added
to the incidents of the day by the visit of the Mayor, who addressed the
group in a few well chosen words, which were translated by Rabbi Cohen.
The chief magistrate shook hands with each one of the individuals.

13 Schiff to Narcisse Leven, June 5, 1907, SP #678; Schiff to Hallgarten, June 24,
1907, SP #692; Schiff to Leven, July 10, 1907, SP #678; Schiff to Sulzberger, July 15,
1907, SP #692.
The Galveston newspapers gave extensive coverage to the first operation of the JIIB, commenting on the "busy activity" until late hours of the night, the "babel of tongues," and the movement of the immigrants through the hands of the JIIB and onto the trains spiriting them away to their eventual destinations.14

The initial fifty-four ranged in age from 18 to 42, and represented trades as varied as locksmiths, bakers, bookkeepers, noodle and macaroni makers, bookbinders, electricians and shoemakers, as well as many others. They were dispatched by the JIIB to such states as Colorado, Iowa, Nebraska, Minnesota, Missouri, Illinois, Oklahoma, Texas, and Wisconsin; to sizable cities like Minneapolis, Kansas City, and Milwaukee, and to smaller ones like Davenport, Quincy, and Dubuque. At this time the decision was made, too, to provide services to Jewish immigrants arriving at Galveston who had not traveled under the sponsorship of the ITO. Immigrants who thus came of their own accord with a prefixed destination were not to be furnished with railroad tickets or money, but any who arrived without a destination, and were willing to place themselves under JIIB tutelage, "should be treated in the same manner as those who are sent through the ITO or Hilfsverein agency."

Thereafter, immigrants continued to arrive in various numbers at Galveston. The procedure never varied. As the Galveston Rabbi Henry Cohen described it:

The medical examination by the port marine surgeon, the interrogation by the immigration inspectors, and the examination of baggage by the custom house officers is followed by the removal of the immigrants and the baggage in large wagons from the docks to the Bureau headquarters—about half a mile. Then the distribution of mail long looked for by the aliens, the refreshing bath and the wholesome and generous meal; the facilities for writing home and for reading Yiddish papers published since the passengers’ embarkation; the questioning of the individuals and the filling out of the consignees record by the office management; the selection of locality according to the requisitions of the interior agent and the purchasing of railroads tickets; and then supper; the apportionment of food sufficient to last each immigrant for the whole up-country journey and a little longer; then the baggage wagons for the neighboring depot and the departure from the bureau of those who are to leave on the night trains; the checking of baggage to destinations and the leave-taking from one another after a

14Cohen to Waldman, July 11, 1907; Waldman to Bressler, July 3, 1907, GIPP #3; see, for example, Galveston News, July 2, 1907.
month's constant companionship—often pathetic; the comfortable placing of the travelers in the railroad coaches by the bureau's employees; then telegrams to the interior committees notifying them of the departure of their allotment so that the latter should be met at the station; the retiring of the remainder to bed (what a change from the steerage bunks!) to leave on the morrow or thereafter, according to circumstances—all this and more must be seen to be realized!  

The Galveston movement had barely been launched, however, before a severe financial recession developed in the United States, making it impossible for the JIIB to place anything but a handful of immigrants. The European end of the operation was now discouraged by the shutting of the door at Galveston by the JIIB, but there was no alternative. Disappointed, Schiff wrote Sulzberger in December that it was too bad that "just as we could see the assured success of the movement in sight, this setback should have come." To Zangwill he explained that he had "never seen such a sudden change from prosperity to general depression and discouragement." Only because Schiff felt that a handful of immigrants, at least, should continue to be sent through to keep the machinery in operation were any immigrants at all sent. Not until the end of 1908 did Schiff begin to regain hope that conditions would improve by March or April of 1909, sufficiently to restore operations to the maximum level.  

Despite the fact that only a token number of immigrants were being sent through the Galveston movement, Schiff continued to be called upon to make peace between the European Jewish societies and between the JIIB and Zangwill. At one point Schiff wrote Zangwill impatiently that "I am frank to say, I am getting somewhat tired of having constantly to seek the maintenance of peace between the ITO and ICA and the Hilfsverein." Between the JIIB and the ITO there was the question of what to do with immigrants who arrived at Galveston without ITO sponsorship. Zang-

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15 Waldman to Bressler, July 3, 1907, GIPP #3; Schiff to Bressler, July 3, 1907, SP #692.  
16 Rabbi Henry Cohen, "Galveston Immigration Movement, 1907 to 1910," pamphlet in SP #678; Schiff to Sulzberger, December 2, 1907, SP #692; Schiff to Zangwill, December 4, 1907, SP #678; Schiff to Bressler, June 15, 1908; Schiff to Zangwill, December 30, 1908, SP #692.
will quarreled with the JIIB decision to give assistance to non-ITO immigrants who were willing to put themselves under the sponsorship of the JIIB. Zangwill’s position was that, since the ITO made an effort to screen immigrants before sending them to Galveston, the JIIB ought not to give any assistance to non-ITO immigrants appearing there. To give such assistance would mean “that anyone who is refused by our bureaus has simply to turn up in Galveston to receive exactly the same treatment as the accepted,” Zangwill argued, and in that event how could the ITO “possibly either select or regulate the arrivals at Galveston?” If the JIIB did not take care to limit its preferential treatment to ITO cases, it would find itself “swept by an enormous flood,” Zangwill argued, and such a flood would destroy the Galveston movement, burying it under a tide of immigrants “overwhelming in quantity and not uniformly good in quality.” What apparently triggered this outburst from Zangwill was the expressed intention of the ICA to send immigrants independently to Galveston, a move against which Zangwill “protested vigorously” since he argued that the ITO could provide all of the immigrants that the JIIB could handle “and only chaos would ensue from the existence of two disconnected European bodies.” Of course, it was precisely that disconnection which Schiff had worked constantly to correct, without success, because of Zangwill’s opposition. As for the non-ITO immigrants, it was the position of Rabbi Cohen at Galveston that all Jewish immigrants arriving at Galveston should be assisted by the JIIB, whether ITO or non-ITO, since many of them had embarked for Galveston because of the JIIB/ITO publicity of that port and of the “hinterland” which was being spread throughout Russia. A compromise was reached at the October 20, 1908, meeting of the Galveston leaders, at which both Schiff and Zangwill were present, under which the JIIB at Galveston was authorized to grant loans of up to $2 for individuals and $5 for families who were non-ITO. However, in a memorandum submitted by Cyrus Sulzberger as the basis for future cooperation between the JIIB and the ITO, it was stated that:

Those intending to emigrate must... be made clearly to understand that if they are desirous of securing the advantages of the Galveston Bureau, they must submit themselves to the scrutiny of [ITO] representatives and receive their sanction which is to be evidenced by a ticket or certificate.
Bearers of such ticket or certificate will be cared for at Galveston—all others must look out for themselves. . . . 17

Then, just as conditions appeared to be improving in the United States, making it possible for the JIIB to resume accepting as many immigrants as the ITO could send, the European end of the operation faltered when the ITO ran afoul of the Russian authorities and was branded illegal. Schiff wrote Zangwill that he expected by the summer of 1909 that the JIIB would be able to absorb larger numbers of immigrants, and that he hoped, therefore, that “when the moment comes that the ITO will have become legalized in Russia, or failing that, which I would deeply regret, that arrangements can be made to place the Galveston work where it can most efficiently be looked after.” This, of course, would have meant a transfer of the Russian operation to the ICA, and would have been a confession of failure by the ITO. In the summer of 1909, the ITO was able to reestablish its legality, but despite the JIIB’s requests for additional immigrants, there was no response from the ITO, bringing from Schiff a gentle reminder to Zangwill of an earlier promise by the latter that if ever the ITO was unable to handle the task adequately it would call upon the ICA for assistance. 18

The summer of 1909 also brought an organizational change. Schiff had come to the conclusion that some more efficient means had to be found to coordinate the arrangements at Galveston, and so he formed a permanent Galveston committee. The membership was to consist of Schiff, Sulzberger, Professor Morris Loeb, David M. Bressler, and Morris D. Waldman, and was to “give regular attention to all questions which may present themselves in connection with the Galveston plan.” Schiff reiterated that he was “anxious to place myself and my means into accomplishing all that can be done to open the wide territory beyond the Mississippi to a large Jewish immigration.” A few weeks later Schiff announced

17 Schiff to Zangwill, December 8, 1907, SP #692; Schiff to Zangwill, May 28, 1908, SP #678; Zangwill to Cohen, December 13, 1907, Cohen Papers #2538; Cohen to Bressler, April 14, 1908, Miscellaneous Papers, Box 1071, American Jewish Archives; “Minutes of Meeting of October 20, 1908,” GIPP #3.

18 Schiff to Zangwill, March 11, 1909; Schiff to Bressler, July 6, 1909; and Schiff to Zangwill, July 7, 1909, SP #692.
to Zangwill the formation of the committee, which included, in addition to the above named, Reuben Arkush, president of the Industrial Removal Office, and Rabbi Henry Cohen of Galveston. In his letter to Zangwill Schiff established the terms under which he would regard the Galveston movement as a success. Unless the movement reached the point where it was placing an average of 200 a month, or 2,500 a year, meaning an inflow of approximately 25,000 in a decade, he would not, he told Zangwill, regard the movement as a success. These figures were, of course, considerably in excess of those then being furnished by the ITO. In late October, however, the ITO was authorized by the Galveston Committee to increase its monthly shipments to Galveston from 75 to 100.19

Even when the numbers arriving from the ITO increased, however, complaints began to be made by the JIIB concerning the quality of the immigrants received. The JIIB was receiving complaints from the inland communities about the unwillingness or inability of immigrants to work because they had no trade, and Schiff reemphasized to Zangwill the need for the ITO to send only such immigrants as were suitable to "take up actual work of some sort" in the United States. When, in December, the Galveston Committee authorized a further increase to 125 immigrants per month, Schiff chided Zangwill again that he had been told by Bressler "that quite a number of the immigrants are by no means what they should be and that if this continues it is certain to give a setback to the entire work." The greatest problem, however, continued to be the low number of ITO immigrants arriving at Galveston. Despite the continual raising by the Galveston Committee of the quota of immigrants it could handle through that port city, the numbers, far from increasing, continued to drop off. While the Galveston representatives of the Industrial Removal Office beat the bushes of the Midwest and West for "requisitions" of immigrants with considerable success, the immigrants thus requisitioned were not arriving at Galveston. Again, it was difficulties of the ITO with the Russian Government which were apparently at

19 Schiff to Sulzberger, July 12, 1909, SP #678; Schiff to Zangwill, August 9, 1909; Schiff to Zangwill, August 30, 1909, SP #692; "Minutes of Meeting of October 29, 1909, GIPP #3."
fault, but this did not ease the frustration of those at the American end. Considerable time and money had been expended to induce the inland communities to accept larger numbers of immigrants, and there was concern that “the future of the movement may be jeopardized if it should develop that after all our representations we have not the immigrants to send.” Once again Schiff suggested to Zangwill that it was time to ask for help from the ICA, since “if we are not in a position to feed the interior outlets which we have opened, they are likely to dry up.” Schiff understood the ITO’s difficulties with the Russian Government, he told Zangwill, but conditions were so favorable in the United States for absorbing the immigrants now that the work in Europe had to be carried on, with or without the ITO.20

Bureaucratic Dilemma

By mid-1910, however, the United States Government had replaced the Russians as the prime irritant to the Galveston movement. The arrival of a new Inspector-in-Charge, Alfred Hampton, at Galveston, early in 1910, quickly brought an end to the friendly relations which had existed between the JIIB and the immigration authorities in that city. On May 6, 1910, Hampton wrote to the Commissioner-General of Immigration concerning the Jewish Immigrants’ Information Bureau, “the alleged purpose of which is to divert Jewish immigrants from the Northern ports,” and told him that:

Upon assuming charge of this district recently I was surprised to learn that it had been the custom each month to admit at this port many destitute Jewish aliens, that is, Jewish aliens without money, and without friends or relatives in this country, upon assurances being given by the representatives of the aforesaid Jewish Immigrants’ Information Bureau that said aliens would be cared for during their temporary detention in this city, and provided with the necessary transportation, provisions, and funds to reach certain designated southwestern points, where upon arrival they would be given work.

20 Schiff to Zangwill, November 11, 1909; Schiff to Zangwill, December 2, 1909; Bressler to Schiff, December 13, 1909; and Schiff to Zangwill, December 17, 1909, SP #692; “Minutes of Meeting of December 20, 1909,” GIPP #3.
Hampton furnished his superior with such information as he had gathered concerning the European side of the operation, and concluded that an investigation was called for "in order to ascertain whether the Jewish Society is acting as agency of the steamship company in soliciting immigration and whether the steamship is secretly reducing rates, or whether the Jewish Society is ... soliciting immigration and supplying a portion of the passage money as a charity." Hampton expressed concern that the immigrants arriving under ITO sponsorship might "come under the class of assisted aliens, or paupers, or contract laborers, as the case may be." He asked for guidance from his superiors on the extent to which it wished him "to recognize the Jewish Immigrants' Information Bureau in its capacity of self-appointed guardian of Jewish alien arrivals in this country, without funds or money." In response to Hampton's inquiry and suspicions concerning the Galveston movement, the Bureau ordered an investigation to determine whether the promises of jobs made by the JIIB to the arriving immigrants were actually being carried out, while the Secretary of Commerce requested an investigation by the Justice Department.21

Meanwhile, in contrast to the policy of the authorities at Galveston during the first three years of the movement, Hampton began to exclude aliens who arrived at that port without adequate funds, despite guarantees furnished by the JIIB, triggering appeals and protests from the JIIB and from the Galveston Committee in New York. Schiff sought the assistance of Congressman William S. Bennett, of New York, in intervening with Secretary of Commerce and Labor Charles Nagel, explaining that:

We are ... now facing governmental methods at Galveston ... which, if persisted in, are certain to break up the movement through Galveston, and will result in throwing back upon New York and other northern ports the entire stream of immigration which we have been taking such pains to deflect and which the large American hinterland can digest to such better advantage than the East.

The immediate issue was the exclusion of some thirty immigrants who had arrived on the SS Hanover on June 23rd. Acting Secre-

21 Hampton to the Commissioner-General, May 6, 1910; Keefe to Hampton, June 13, 1910; Secretary of Commerce to the Attorney General, June 16, 1910, Record Group 85, File 52779/29, National Archives, hereafter cited as RG 85-52779/29 NA.
tary of Commerce and Labor Benjamin S. Cable defended the department’s position to Congressman Bennett:

These aliens were excluded by the board mainly on the ground that they were likely to become public charges. This appears to be a proper ground in some of the cases, but there is another good reason for exclusion, namely, that all of them 'have been induced or solicited to migrate to this country by offers or promise of employment.' . . . The records show, and it seems to be an established fact, that the Jewish Immigrants’ Information Bureau advertise and distribute literature in Russia, and by this means and through their agents or correspondents there, advise Russian Hebrews to go to Galveston rather than New York, that they do not have to show any money at Galveston; that many Jews have gone to Galveston and that the Jewish Society would take care of them and provide them with work in Galveston or elsewhere. . . . Our investigation shows that while work has been secured for the aliens admitted to the Jewish Bureau in the past, it is of a temporary nature and they are frequently changing, also that they are sometimes out of work.

Cable indicated that he did not believe the practice should suddenly be instituted of excluding such people, in view of the fact that such cases had been admitted for a long period of time before this, "but there is no reason why the law should not, within a short time, be administered at Galveston as at other ports. . . ." From Galveston, Inspector Hampton similarly argued that the impression had to be corrected that Galveston was more lax in its enforcement of immigration laws than the other ports. Quite clearly the sympathetic attitude on the part of the authorities, which Schiff had all along understood to be important for the success of the Galveston experiment, was no longer to be forthcoming if the views of Cable and Hampton were to prevail.22

Through the summer and on into the fall of 1910, the Galveston Committee attacked the Cable-Hampton position on the legality of the actions of the Galveston movement. The movement, through its representatives and immigration lawyers, was compelled once again to argue that the immigration from Russia was not solicited or stimulated, but rather came as a result of the "intolerable conditions" which existed in Russia. To the extent

22 Schiff to Felix Warburg, June 28, 1910, Felix Warburg Papers #161, American Jewish Archives; Cable to Bennett, July 14, 1910; Hampton to the Commissioner-General, July 16, 1910, RG 85-52779/29 NA.
that the immigrants were “solicited” or “induced,” it was for the purpose of deflecting them to Galveston in preference to the crowded eastern ports. Immigration was not being increased, they asserted, but rather deflected; the immigration to Galveston had not increased the immigration to the United States “by one person,” since the arrivals at Galveston were at the expense of the eastern ports. Finding jobs for the immigrants was not a violation of the law, and, moreover, had been “recognized and tacitly approved” by the government at the time the Galveston movement had been inaugurated. Nor was there any violation of the law in assisting the immigrants through private charity once they arrived, so long as they did not become public charges. Providing additional arguments in behalf of the Galveston movement were Simon Wolf, Washington-based lawyer, chairman of the Board of Delegates of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and resident member of the Independent Order B’nai B’rith, as well as immigration lawyer Max J. Kohler and New York Supreme Court Justice Nathan Bijur.23

Obtaining little satisfaction in altering the Cable-Hampton position through the force of their arguments, the Galveston Committee began in August to move in the direction of political pressure. On August 22, 1910, Schiff dispatched a long letter to Cable in which he traced the motivation and history of the Galveston movement, including its initial inspiration from the Bureau of Immigration itself. He defended the movement against all the charges that had been made against it within the Department of Commerce and Labor. In such an enterprise, he argued, the movement “had every right to expect the good will of the authorities, and until recently this appears not to have been withheld.” But recently, however, “and for no satisfactory reason,” the Department of Commerce and Labor had begun to cast “needless difficulties in the way of the admission of those who arrive at Galveston,” and if that policy were persisted in, the movement would break down. If such a breakdown did occur, he warned Cable, the Taft administration

23 “Statement of Facts Submitted by David M. Bressler, Esq., Honorary Secretary ‘Jewish Immigrants’ Information Bureau,’ July 21st, 1910, on Rehearing of Galveston Appeals,” RG 85-52779/29 NA; Simon Wolf to Bressler, August 3, 1910, GIPP #1; Schiff to Kohler, August 15, 1910, Max J. Kohler Papers, Box 4, American Jewish Historical Society Library.
would be "held responsible by a considerable section of the American people, and because of this I am sending a copy of this communication to the President for such consideration, if any, as he may himself desire to give to this not unimportant subject." He also asked that his letter be placed before Cable's superior, Secretary of Commerce and Labor Charles Nagel, when he returned from his vacation. That this letter was intended primarily for the President rather than for Cable is clear from Schiff's account of this episode to Zangwill in which he wrote that "I have just addressed the President—for the letter I have written to Assistant Secretary Cable . . . is meant to a greater degree for the President than for the Department of Commerce and Labor." 24

Cable's reply gave the movement no satisfaction, since the Assistant Secretary simply pointed out that if his position was incorrect, "the courts would probably set me right upon proper application," thus encouraging Schiff and the Galveston Committee to take the matter to court. Schiff's position, however, was that litigation would be fatal to the movement, since the spectacle of drawn-out judicial proceedings would destroy the confidence of the emigrants from Russia. The success of the movement had just come into sight, Schiff told Charles D. Norton, secretary to President William Howard Taft, when Cable had stepped in and "wantonly" crushed it. The only means by which confidence could be restored, he told Norton, was the "retirement" of Cable from his office. Linking this problem with the difficulties which the Jewish community was also experiencing with the President over his unkept campaign pledge to secure the right of American Jews to travel to Russia on American passports, like other American citizens, Schiff wrote Norton that:

We have in other respects experienced keen disappointment because of the nonfulfillment thus far of platform pledges and personal promises made during the last Presidential campaign, and if I now write so unreservedly, it is partly because I do not wish to see the President, whose loyal supporter I have been ever since he was nominated, placed into a false position or lose the goodwill of the important section of the American people for whom I venture to speak in this.

24 Schiff to Cable, August 22, 1910, SP #678; Schiff to Zangwill, August 23, 1910, SP #692.
To Simon Wolf, Schiff wrote that, "if the Galveston Movement is broken down, someone is going to be punished for it—not the man lower down, but the man higher up." To another correspondent he argued that "we may have to employ earnest measures in order to make our friends in the administration understand that we are not to be trifled with and that platform pledges and campaign promises must stand for something more than for campaign consumption only, and must be made good."25

The pressure on the top level of the Taft administration was obviously having its effect. From the President's secretary came word that he had "gone over Mr. Schiff's letters with the President, who is in full sympathy with what Mr. Schiff is trying to do," and as a result the administration was arranging for a conference between representatives of the Galveston Committee and the Secretary of Commerce and Labor. Meanwhile, President Taft visited the immigration station at Ellis Island, New York City, on October 18th, and made remarks which were taken as a hopeful sign by Schiff. In his talk there, Taft expressed support for the deflection of immigration away from the eastern port cities and into the interior, leading Schiff to feel encouraged in the belief that the President had the Galveston movement in mind. Perhaps Secretary of Commerce and Labor Nagel interpreted the President's comments in the same way, for his correspondence with the President's secretary grew conciliatory in the latter part of the month. Nagel confessed that he could see no provision of the immigration law that was being violated "strictly speaking" by the Galveston movement, even though he still had the impression that "as a whole it does result in the kind of immigration which it is for the Bureau to scrutinize closely and perhaps to discourage."26

In December the oft-postponed meeting finally was held when Schiff, Kohler, Bressler, and Abram I. Elkus sat down with Nagel,

25 Schiff to Norton, August 29, 1910, SP #692; Schiff to Wolf, August 30, 1910, copy in GIPP #1; Schiff to Kraus, September 1, 1910, SP #692; see also Naomi Cohen, "The Abrogation of the Russo-American Treaty of 1832," Jewish Social Studies, XXV (January, 1963), 3-41.

26 Norton to Kohler, September 9, 1910, Kohler Papers #3; Kohler became a member of the Galveston Committee on September 23, 1910, see "Memo," September 23, 1910, GIPP #3; Schiff to Kohler, October 19, 1910, SP #692; Kohler to Schiff, October 22, 1910, Kohler Papers #4; Nagel to Norton, October 27, 1910, RG 85-52779/29 NA.
Cable, and Attorney General George Wickersham for a meeting which lasted for two hours. As Schiff described the meeting to Zangwill a month later:

Mr. Kohler made the very able opening argument while I did the summing up. I gave them the full history of the development of the Galveston movement and I ended by saying that we had endeavored in every way to keep within the law and believed that we had done so; that we had expected encouragement on the part of the government in the undertaking, which was at once humane and patriotic; that we had the assurance of the President that he was in sympathy with our work, and that it would have his support in every way in which it could lawfully be done; that we felt not we but the Department of Commerce and the immigration authorities were on the defense, and finally that if present methods were to be continued, of which we ought in justice to be frankly advised, we would close up our Bureau at Galveston and leave the responsibility for this to the present federal administration, which I thought in the face of the statement of the President in his message to Congress, that everything should be done to better distribute immigration, was a pretty heavy responsibility to take. When I had finished, Secretary Nagel made at first a show of being very much offended because of the aggressive manner in which I had spoken. The Attorney General took me aside and said to me, ‘Mr. Schiff, try not to make them antagonistic here; I will help you if I can.’ And finally Mr. Nagel calmed down and gave us the assurance that it was his desire to do what could be done under the law to help our work.

According to Kohler’s recollection of that meeting years later:

Annoyed at the technicalities which were being gone into before the two Cabinet Officers, [Schiff] suddenly jumped up and said, shaking his finger at Secretary Nagel, ‘You act as if my organization and I were on trial! You, Mr. Secretary, and your department are on trial, and the country will rue it if this undertaking—so conducive to promoting the best interests of our country, as well as humanity—is throttled by your Department’s unreasonable obstacles!’

Almost coincidental with the meeting, Washington policy was put to the test when, in mid-December, Galveston authorities excluded Jewish immigrants on the grounds of “inability to speak English, insufficient funds for transportation to points where they might work, no friends or relatives to assist.” The JJIB reported that it had been “utterly disregarded” by the authorities in Galveston in making their decision. The question now was whether the authorities in Washington would sustain these exclusions, or show evi-
evidence of a new cooperative policy toward the JIIB as a result of the political pressure brought to bear by the Galveston Committee. The latter was the case. On December 23rd, Secretary Nagel wrote to the President's secretary that the meeting with Schiff and his counsel had been held in obedience to his instructions and that it had been decided to give "just as much consideration as can be given to Mr. Schiff's enterprise." Nagel enclosed a memorandum giving his general views on the Galveston movement, which was to guide immigration policy during the balance of the Taft administration. Nagel's memorandum stated that:

The inquiries which have been made both at the hearing had on the 14th day of December and in other ways do not bear out the conclusion that this immigration is assisted, or induced, or solicited in the proper sense of the law. We have the unqualified assurance that these immigrants are not encouraged to come to this country, but that they are merely advised to go to Galveston instead of New York after their decision to come to this country is formed. Such activity is in keeping with the policy of the Department, and so long as the agency that has interested itself in this immigration restricts its efforts to the purposes just indicated there appears to be no objection. . . . My conclusion is that these aliens ought to be admitted, and that so long as the system is followed substantially as has been represented and conditions otherwise remain the same future cases may be passed upon in accordance with this rule. . . . The conclusion is arrived at after conference with the Assistant Secretary who has given careful thought to the matter and who is in accord with the decision.

As for the excluded immigrants of mid-December, Nagel admitted thirteen of them at once, and the remainder were admitted later. The President's secretary responded that the President "approved your friendly attitude toward the Jewish Immigration Society in its efforts to direct immigration from New York to Texas, as well as your suggestion of legal limitations upon their activities abroad." Any future pressure on the Galveston movement would have to be applied with reference to the operations of the ITO and the Hilfsverein in Europe, and not to the JIIB in Galveston. An investigation by the State Department, however, failed to unearth any hard evidence of violations of the law at the European end, either.27

27Schiff to Zangwill, January 11, 1911; Kohler to Mortimer Schiff, October 14, 1925; JIIB to Schiff, December 15, 1910, SP #692; Nagel to President Taft, December 23, 1910, with enclosures; Norton to Nagel, January 15, 1911, RG 85-52779/29 NA.
Further Difficulties

Three years of the Galveston movement had produced scant results. Scarcely begun, the movement had been crippled by the recession in the United States. That ended, the ITO had run afoul of the Russian Government, disrupting the European end of the operation. Then, in 1910, the movement had suffered from the attitude of the authorities in the United States. Now, in 1911, the leaders of the movement were encouraged that the Secretary of Commerce and Labor was endeavoring to be fair and reasonable, and that his memorandum would “give notice to the immigration authorities in Galveston not to be too hasty in excluding immigrants.” Schiff now felt for the first time that “we have turned the corner and that henceforth immigrants at Galveston will not be turned back except for physical illness or other incapacity to become wage earners.” No longer would the amount of money brought with them by the immigrants be a factor in deciding whether or not to admit them. Now Schiff exhorted Zangwill to “accelerate the movement” of Jewish immigrants into Galveston since the “small parcels” which had been coming were hardly sufficient to maintain the machinery of the operation there. But, while the Galveston movement encountered little difficulty from the authorities through the remainder of the Taft administration, 1911 and 1912, the great frustration of the movement was once again the inability of the ITO to furnish immigrants in sufficient numbers and of adequate quality to satisfy the “requisitions” which were being obtained from inland communities. In September Schiff again raised the possibility of cooperation with the ICA if the ITO was unable to handle the task adequately, or of replacing the ITO with the ICA. In November he wrote Zangwill that “things must take a different turn with you if we are to continue the Galveston movement under the auspices of the ITO.” The American side was dissatisfied with both the numbers and the quality of the immigrants arriving at Galveston, and Schiff warned that “it can only result in harm if we go on in this way much longer.” While agreement was reached to continue the affiliation with the ITO, at least through 1912, the poor quality of the immigrants, of which Schiff had for some time been complaining, began gradually to manifest itself in increased deportations. While his correspondence makes it clear that he had for some time been con-
cerned about the quality of people the ITO had been sending, Schiff now began to lash out at the authorities over the high number of deportations that were taking place from Galveston in early 1912.  

Complaints were also flowing in to the JIIB concerning the quality of the steerage accommodations on the North German Lloyd steamers, and the callous treatment to which the immigrants were submitted while on board, conditions which, if allowed to persist, were certain to discourage immigrants from entering the United States via Galveston. Schiff wrote Zangwill of the complaints and asked that pressure be brought in Bremen to improve the situation, but without effect. Numbers continued to be unsatisfactory, and for Jacob Schiff, whose financial contribution was being drained away by salaries, rents, and other expenses, the meager number of immigrants flowing from Europe was a constant frustration. In mid-1912 he wrote Zangwill that “we must have more immigrants of a proper sort if the movement is to be kept alive instead of gradually fizzling out.” The ITO was averaging only about ninety persons per month, and they should be sending twice that number. Late in the year, Dr. David Jochelmann, the director of the ITO emigration work in Russia, made a tour to observe the Galveston work in the United States. Afterwards, Jochelmann reported to the Galveston Committee that a new problem had arisen to plague the Russian end of the operation—a lack of money. With sufficient funds, he told the committee, an adequate number of immigrants could be sent, but the fund upon which the emigration work had been drawing was nearly exhausted. At the same meeting of the Galveston Committee it was decided to engage a “guide” to accompany the immigrants on the North German Lloyd ships and to ensure that they received proper treatment.

28 Schiff to Zangwill, January 11, 1911; in January Nagel addressed the convention of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, after which Schiff asked him point blank whether he considered the work of the JIIB to be illegal, to which the Secretary replied that he did not, Schiff to Zangwill, January 23, 1911; Schiff to Bressler, September 27, 1911; Schiff to Zangwill, November 21, 1911; Schiff to Zangwill, January 2, 1912, SP #692; Schiff to Cohen, January 22, 1912, Cohen Papers #2538.

29 Schiff to Cohen, August 30, 1912, Cohen Papers #2538; Schiff to Zangwill, February 2, 1912; Schiff to Zangwill, May 7, 1912, SP #692; “Minutes of the Meeting of November 30, 1912,” GIPP #3.
The Galveston Committee was much encouraged by the report of David M. Bressler, honorary secretary of the committee, who had accompanied Jochelmann on his inspection tour. According to Bressler’s brief account of the trip, they had interviewed at least six hundred of the immigrants in midwestern and southwestern cities and found “with the exception of not more than ten,” that all of them were gainfully employed and earning respectable wages, while quite a number were engaged in small business and were earning even more. Quite a number of the immigrants were found to own their own homes, and some even other real estate as well, while practically all of them had bank accounts. They found numerous complaints among the immigrants—which with the facilities at Bremen, with their treatment aboard the North German Lloyd steamers, with the long trip between Bremen and Galveston, and with the quality of the assistance provided them, in some cities, by the Jewish community. As a result of these complaints, most of the immigrants who had sent for their families had brought them in through the eastern ports rather than through Galveston. Still, Bressler had found that, despite these complaints, there was universal approval of the concept of the Galveston movement and a belief that its purpose could be the more readily realized if the hardships of the journey between Bremen and Galveston could be minimized. Bressler concluded that the work of the Galveston movement had been “highly successful” and he found no evidence that any considerable number of the immigrants settled via Galveston had subsequently moved east to the Atlantic port cities. Thus encouraged, Schiff wrote Zangwill that there was still $350,000 remaining of the original half-million he had promised to the Galveston movement, and that the JIIB was now prepared to settle a minimum of 250 immigrants monthly.30

While Schiff sought to get conditions in Bremen and on the North German Lloyd steamers improved, Zangwill sought further funds with which to continue the emigration work in Russia. Zangwill had, by this time, been diverted somewhat by a territorial scheme centered in Angola, but he continued to assure Schiff that he was “putting Galveston before the Angola or other work,

30 “Brief statement with regard to trip,” by David M. Bressler, in GIPP #3; Schiff to Zangwill, December 3, 1912, SP #678.
because I do not like to see a thing dropped half-way.” Still, the difficulty in raising money, combined with his interest in the Angolan scheme, seemed to make Zangwill more receptive to the idea of turning the Galveston work over to the ICA. He told Schiff that “the absorption of the Galveston work by another body would leave me freer for my African, so you need not consider the ITO, though as long as you desire, it is ready to work heart and soul with you.” Schiff, of course, had long been frustrated by the ITO’s inability to supply immigrants in the quantity and quality needed at Galveston, and by Zangwill’s unwillingness to cooperate in the operation with the ICA from fear of being stamped as a failure in handling the operation alone. At this hint that Zangwill might, at least, be willing to give up the operation to the ICA, Schiff acted with unseemly haste to rid himself, at last, of the ITO. Schiff had already heard from Franz Philippson of the ICA that that group was willing to take over the Russian portion of the Galveston movement, and so at a meeting of the Galveston Committee, Schiff sought and received authority to “address the ICA formally and officially setting forth the ITO’s inability longer to continue its operation in the Galveston work, and requesting them formally to undertake . . . the work about to be discontinued by the ITO.” Schiff was authorized to write Zangwill asking that the ITO continue the work until the ICA was able to take it over. To Zangwill, Schiff wrote that it was apparent that the ITO was unable to secure the financial support that it needed to continue the operation, and since time was of the essence, and since Zangwill, himself, was not opposed to the absorption of the Galveston work by another society, he was writing to the ICA to try to make arrangements with it for the continuance of the work. Not surprisingly, Zangwill was upset at Schiff’s haste in seizing upon a letter which he had written merely to bring Schiff up to date on the situation, to abandon the ITO abruptly for the ICA.

It was as if Schiff had long been waiting for just such an expression from Zangwill of his willingness to transfer the work to an-

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31 Schiff to Nathan, December 5, 1912, SP #692; Zangwill to Schiff, December 26, 1912; Zangwill to Schiff, January 18, 1913; “Minutes of the Meeting of February 12, 1913; Schiff to Zangwill, February 13, 1913, GIPP #3; Bernard Marinbach, “The Galveston Movement,” unpublished dissertation, The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1977, p. 231.
other society on friendly terms, to rid the movement of him. To Philippson of the ICA, Schiff wrote that it was a source of great satisfaction for him that the ICA was ready to take over the European end of the Galveston movement. “Strictly between ourselves,” he told Philippson, “it has long been our wish here that the ICA should do so, but Zangwill has all through opposed so violently the proposal that the ITO should give up even a part of this work that it was not practicable to include the ICA in the project.” However, the situation had now changed, and Zangwill was prepared to withdraw and to permit the ICA gradually to take the operation over. The prospects were good, finally, that the Galveston movement could be taken out of Zangwill’s hands and placed in those of the ICA, but, Schiff cautioned the ICA leader, “as you probably already know, it is impossible to deal with Zangwill, and I therefore beg you in the interest of the cause...to make the thing as palatable as possible for him and particularly to avoid injuring his pride, because otherwise the transference will not be easy.” The ICA, however, did manage to injure Zangwill’s sensitive pride, making the process of transference unpalatable for him. An ICA investigation of the ITO’s Russian operation concluded that the ITO had been extremely wasteful in its use of funds there, and that the ICA could have accomplished the same scale of work for nearly one-fourth of the ITO expenditure. The ITO and the ICA continued to negotiate for some basis of cooperation during the period of transference, but the Russian branch of the ICA vetoed any association with the ITO, arguing that: 1) the ITO was illegal in Russia and forced to do its work there “under a disguise”; in such a situation the officially recognized ICA should not endanger its position in Russia by cooperating with an outlaw; 2) the ICA could do the job better if it did not cooperate with the ITO; and 3) the ICA had, up to that point, kept aloof from the “ism’s” which divided the Jewish community; to enter now into an arrangement with the territorialists in the Galveston movement would excite the Zionists and others to “passionate polemics which will do no one any good.” As a result, the disposition of many of the ICA leaders to cooperate with the ITO in the Galveston movement along the lines outlined by Schiff foundered on the opposition of the Russian committee, and the ICA was forced to reject Schiff’s plan. Once again Schiff was forced back into harness with Zangwill and the ITO, despite his obvious lack of enthusiasm for his partner.
The difficulties of the ITO, however, indicated that the end of the Galveston movement was approaching, and Schiff began to look ahead to the 10,000 figure as a possible terminal point, a figure which he estimated, in October, 1913, could be reached within a year.32

Now a new problem reared its head at Galveston. Deportations for physical and health reasons were on the increase, especially for hernia. Schiff wrote Zangwill that he could not see why, "with the insistence of our immigration authorities to exclude those afflicted with hernia, those still continue to be sent on in such large numbers." The ITO had been repeatedly warned not to send such immigrants, but the warnings were not being heeded, he charged. While the hernia problem was almost certainly a legitimate objection on the part of the authorities at Galveston, as evidenced by Schiff's own comments to Zangwill, the scrupulousness with which the physical examinations were carried out and interpreted by the authorities there was almost certainly influenced by the reassertion of Inspector Hampton's misgivings concerning the legality of the JIIB operation, now that the Taft administration had been replaced by that of Woodrow Wilson. A letter from Hampton, reciting for his superiors again his concern about the operation, set off a flurry of renewed interest within the Bureau of Immigration in determining the legality of the Galveston operation. Interestingly, when Assistant Commissioner-General F. H. Lamed, a holdover from the Taft years, was asked by the new Commissioner-General for an opinion on the Galveston movement, he did not cite the Nagel memorandum, which had been the basis of the Bureau's policy toward the movement in 1911 and 1912. Instead, Lamed cited the opinion of the former Assistant Secretary of Commerce and Labor, Benjamin Cable, in opposition to the Galveston movement. Cable's position, reported Lamed, was "that the immigration of Jews through Galveston under the auspices of the Jewish Society there was a violation of the immigration laws," and he added that "I believe the officials of the Bureau have always concurred in Mr. Cable's views with respect to this matter." At

32 Schiff to Philippson, February 13, 1913, SP #692; both Bressler and Schiff felt that the ICA estimate was too low; see Bressler to Warburg, May 20, 1913, GIPP #3; Schiff to Zangwill, May 13, 1913, SP #692; M. Sarschawsky and D. Feinberg to JIIB, August 13, 1913, Warburg Papers #165; Schiff to Zangwill, October 27, 1913, SP #692.
Hampton's suggestion, a detailed report was requested from the medical examiner at Galveston, and an investigation was ordered of the activities of the ITO in Russia.33

The report of the surgeon at Galveston revealed a high incidence of health and physical defects at that port. During the first nine months of 1913, 5,998 immigrants had arrived at Galveston, of whom 2,462 (41%) were Jews, and 3,536 (59%) non-Jews. A total of 5.2% of all arriving aliens had been found to be "possessed of defects of a serious character, truly a remarkable and disturbing proportion." Jews, in this respect, were substantially more numerous than non-Jews. Jews were found to be especially distinguished under the categories of hernia, poor physique, and very defective vision. Examinations at Galveston were no more thorough or demanding than elsewhere, the doctor argued, and he concluded that "Taken as a whole, I regret to say, the immigration coming in at this port is not so desirable as to physical qualities as it easily might and certainly should be." As for the report of the investigation in Europe, it again offered no support for Hampton's allegations concerning the Galveston operation. The investigator, W. W. Husband, found no evidence that the ITO was either encouraging immigration or contributing to the expenses of the emigrants.34

In confronting the new problems at Galveston, Schiff recognized that the situation was less promising for effectual protest than in 1910. President Wilson had signed into law an act creating separate departments of Commerce and Labor. The Bureau of Immigration had been placed under the Department of Labor, under Secretary William B. Wilson, a former labor official and a restrictionist where immigration was concerned. Thus, the situation at Galveston was only an example of what was happening in various degrees at the other ports as well. However, the situation at Galveston worsened, and while the leaders of the Galveston movement did not question the fact that the doctor at Galveston was "a thoroughly conscientious official," there was also no doubt that he was "unduly severe in his examinations," and that he magnified

33 Schiff to Zangwill, October 27, 1913, SP #692; Hampton to the Commissioner-General, August 21, 1913; Larned to the Commissioner-General, September 8, 1913; the Commissioner-General to Hampton, September 12, 1913, RG 85-52779/29 NA.
34 L. P. H. Bahrenburg to Hampton, October 6, 1913; W. W. Husband to the Commissioner-General of Immigration, October 29, 1913, RG 85-52779/29 NA.
“minor ailments to the point of unfairness,” with the result that the “percentage of exclusions at Galveston” became “the highest from any port in the U.S.,” and it was easy to understand why the Galveston route was losing its popularity among immigrants from Russia.\textsuperscript{35}

The combative attitude of 1910 was no longer present in the Galveston Committee in 1914 when it faced this new governmental challenge. Schiff had already, the previous year, tentatively projected the end of the movement for the 10,000th immigrant, expected to reach Galveston in late 1914. Now, at a meeting of the Galveston Committee in January of 1914, Schiff suggested that the time had perhaps come to discontinue the work of the JIIB. At that meeting Schiff was convinced by the other members that it would be a mistake to do so, but three months later, at yet another meeting of the Committee, Schiff made a convincing argument for discontinuing the movement. After seven years of existence, “five of which might be called the active years,” the Galveston movement had expended $235,000 in distributing between eight and nine thousand immigrants through Galveston. During this period of time, however, the volume of immigration through Galveston had not increased appreciably, and at no time during this period “had the yearly numbers coming to Galveston exceeded 3\% of the total Jewish immigration for one year ....” The Committee concluded that two factors were principally responsible for the limited success of the movement: 1) the inadequate steamship facilities between Europe and Galveston; and 2) the unduly severe enforcement of the immigration laws and regulations at Galveston. Despite attempts to correct the first of these factors, there had been no improvement in the steamship service between Bremen and Galveston. As to the second factor, it had been convincingly demonstrated that not only were exclusions and deportations at Galveston significantly higher than at the northern ports, but enforcement was becoming progressively more severe and more rigorous as time went by. For the calendar year 1913 the percentage of Jewish exclusions at Galveston was nearly five per cent, and in the first quarter of 1914 it had climbed to nearly

\textsuperscript{35} Schiff to Zangwill, November 24, 1913, SP #692; Bressler to Schiff, March 31, 1914, GIPP #1.
6%. There were also a number of cases of immigrants entering through other ports successfully after they had been excluded at Galveston. Schiff's view was that these two factors "constituted an insurmountable handicap to the realization of the purpose for which the movement was started," and he suggested that the time had come to discontinue the Galveston movement. The decision was made to discontinue the movement after September 30, 1914, except that assistance would continue to be extended to the wives and children of JIIB removals, in meritorious cases, until the end of the year.36

In reporting the results of the April 9th meeting to Zangwill, Schiff blamed the medical examinations at Galveston, but also pointed out that the ITO representatives in Russia and in Bremen appeared to be "unable to prevent a considerable number of immigrants who do not come up to the standards set by our immigration laws and government regulations to embark for Galveston," nor had the Galveston movement been successful in improving conditions on the North German Lloyd steamships. Thus, Schiff privately expressed three reasons for the failure of the movement—the inability of the ITO to perform its function properly being the third reason, and the one not publicly expressed because of Zangwill's sensitivities. Zangwill, ever concerned that the ITO's image should not be tainted by any suggestion of failure in its work, replied that "the winding up will not occur before we have sent our one-hundredth party, so I do not think it should be presented to the public as a failure. On the contrary, we celebrate the dispatch of our one-hundredth party declaring the route open."

When Zangwill learned that the Galveston Committee was preparing a statement on the discontinuance of the movement, he expressed concern. The Russian Emigration Committee of the ITO, he told Schiff, was "still very uneasy lest they should be given over to their enemies as a failure after all their years of strenuous work." He repeated his suggestion that the movement should be celebrated as a success after its one-hundredth party, with the announcement that the Galveston port of entry no longer needed "artificial guidance." This concern by Zangwill with the image of the ITO that

36 "Minutes of Meeting of January 12, 1914"; "Minutes of Meeting of April 9, 1914," GIPP #3.
would be conveyed by any public statement in the United States on the discontinuance of the Galveston movement led to controversy between the ITO and the Galveston Committee over the wording and timing of any such statement.  

Various schemes were advanced during the summer of 1914 for continuing the deflection of immigration away from the eastern ports without the JIIB, but all such discussions were rendered academic by the outbreak of war in Europe late that summer. On November 2, 1914, Schiff addressed identical letters to his colleagues on the Galveston Committee, in which he wrote:

Now that the Galveston Committee has closed its work, I want to express to the members of the committee my deep appreciation of the cooperation and valuable advice I have received from you as...my colleagues on the committee in the effort on our part to solve an important problem of great and lasting value both to the immigrant, as well as to our own country. In this I believe we have a right to feel that we have, in a measure, succeeded, for aside from the fact that we have settled almost 10,000 immigrants in the vast hinterland of the United States, every one of whom is likely to form more or less a center of attraction for others to follow, we have acquired experience which is certain to be most useful in further efforts which must come to deflect immigration into and through the overcrowded cities of the north Atlantic coast to ports where it can be more practically distributed over the sections of the United States, where the immigrant is actually needed and where his well-being can be better assured than in the large centers of the eastern part of the United States.

From this it is clear that Schiff contemplated further efforts to deflect immigration after the war ended. His death in 1920, however, and restrictive immigration legislation of the 1920's put an end to the deflection movement.

An Assessment

Thus, the movement was wound up by the end of 1914, with

37 Schiff to Zangwill, April 14, 1914; Zangwill to Schiff, April 24, 1914, and May 1, 1914; Zangwill to Schiff, May 22, 1914, SP #2364; Schiff to Solomon, June 8, 1914; Solomon to Schiff, June 5, 1914, GIPP #1.

38 See, for example, Bressler to Schiff, July 29, 1914; Schiff to Bressler, August 4, 1914, GIPP #1; Schiff to Cyrus Sulzberger, November 2, 1914, SP #678; for one of the letters; Zangwill to Arthur Meyerowitz, October 21, 1920, SP #692.
disappointment that it had succeeded in placing only approximately 10,000 Jewish immigrants through Galveston in nearly eight years of activity—far from the goals sought for the movement—but with some satisfaction that a beginning had been made in exploiting the “hinterland” for Jewish immigration, and a feeling that valuable experience had been gained. Ironically, the outbreak of the war would certainly have interrupted the Galveston movement during the war years, even if it had not been for the other reasons that made its discontinuance seem advisable. In the United States, the length of the trip from Bremen to Galveston and the high rate of exclusions and deportations at Galveston were given as the principal reasons for the discontinuance of the movement, with Schiff publicly giving priority to the latter, while David Bressler emphasized the former. Still, these two reasons certainly do not adequately account for the demise of the movement. There is good reason for seeking further cause for Schiff’s disenchantment with the movement he had created in his disillusionment with Israel Zangwill and the ITO. Schiff’s continual displeasure with the inability of the ITO to deliver immigrants in the quantity and quality required to make the Galveston movement a success is evident from the correspondence in the Schiff papers and elsewhere. Schiff’s frustration with Zangwill and the ITO manifested itself in numerous attempts to bring the ICA into the Galveston movement—attempts which were frustrated by both the ICA and the ITO, but which Schiff understood as being, at bottom, caused by Zangwill’s inability to work with others.

Schiff’s frustration with the unwillingness or inability of the Jewish societies in Europe to close ranks and work with him without regard to the “ism’s” and jealousies which divided them, in a project which Schiff clearly conceived as the solution to the problems of Russian Jewry, was continually in evidence. Add to this his frustration at the unwillingness of European financial sources, like the Rothschilds, to support the European side of the movement to the extent that it could be properly operated. The Galveston movement had already been reduced to a limp by 1912, which circumstance had caused Schiff again to try to work out a transfer of the European side of the movement from the ITO to the ICA in such a way as not to damage the sensitivities of the ITO, but without success. Even before the beginnings of the stringent application of health and physical standards at Galveston,
Schiff and the others in the movement were critical of the ITO for the poor quality of the immigrants arriving at Galveston. The high rate of exclusions and deportations that began in 1913 was only official confirmation of what Schiff had been complaining to Zangwill about for months previously. There seems little doubt that Schiff held Zangwill, himself, at fault for most of the movement’s difficulties, but that he felt constrained from saying so publicly.

While the Galveston movement did not begin to live up to the expectations Schiff had for it in the beginning, it did attain modest success. At an expenditure of approximately $250,000, the 10,000 Jewish immigrants settled through Galveston became the “nuclei” which Schiff had sought for larger Jewish communities later. This was less than half the 25,000 that Schiff had planned on (but at an expenditure of half what he had contemplated), and it did not set off the great movement of Russian Jews to the inland United States for which he had hoped. Nor was the movement successful in defusing agitation for restrictive immigration laws, as he had hoped, for restrictive laws began to be passed in 1921. Still, for the 10,000 concerned—and for their families, friends, and other Jews drawn by their presence there—their deflection into the interior rather than into the eastern port cities was highly significant. In September of 1906, as Schiff was formulating the Galveston movement, he wrote to Cyrus Sulzberger: “When this reaches you, Yom Kippur is behind us and may all our sins and errors have been forgiven and the power vouchsafed us to discharge the serious duties which on no generation and no class of our co-religionists have been laid so heavily and at the same time so properly, as upon the American Jews.” It was this sense of responsibility that led Schiff to work for eight years, at great personal expense, to attempt to deflect Russo-Jewish immigration away from the eastern seaport cities in order that the United States might be preserved as a land of refuge for his oppressed coreligionists.39

39The breakdown of expenses of the Galveston Movement can be found in “Financial Statement of receipts and disbursements on account of the Galveston Committee, New York City, January of 1907 to October 14, 1914,” in SP #444; Schiff to Sulzberger, September 27, 1906, SP #2364.