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Jewish farm settlements, 1933-1934.

Producers Distributing Agency, Inc.

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December 6, 1933.

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver,
c/o "Every Friday,"
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Dr. Silver:

Your editorial in "Every Friday" last Friday filled my heart with gratitude, appreciation and renewed faith. Your fearless and direct approach on the Jewish question needs no comment from me. I simply seize this opportunity to ask for your cooperation in the movement which came into being spontaneously, namely, the Provisional Commission for the Establishment of Jewish Farm Settlements in America. I happen to be the Chairman of this Provisional Committee.

Since its inception, we succeeded in compiling considerable data on the economic and agricultural problems in general, with a special view concerning Jewish farm settlements. We are now calling a conference of delegates of Jewish organizations which is to take place at the Hotel Pennsylvania in New York City on the 23rd and 24th of this month.

The enclosed Summary of Schedules, Questions & Answers, and the circular for the conference called, are all self-explanatory. I just want to add that Professor M. L. Wilson, Director of the Subsistence Homesteads Division, of the U. S. Department of Interior, is taking quite an interest in our plans; also, Dr. Elwood Mead, Commissioner of Reclamation, who even promised to come to our conference. You will note in the Summary of Schedules that our plan for the first colony has already been approved by the U. S. Department of Labor and Miss Perkins.

Professor Rumley J. B. Davidson, Dean of the Agricultural College of Ames, Iowa, wrote me concerning the project as follows:

December 6, 1933.

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver,
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"It was indeed a pleasure to have your letter of November 29, enclosing the prospectus of the Monmouth County, New Jersey project. I have looked this over and it appears to me that you have made a very clear and definite outline of what might be accomplished in the project. I have been looking over a number of these for Professor Wilson and I have found none more definite. When I was in Washington a month ago, Professor Wilson told me you had been in and working on a project."

As Chairman of the above mentioned Commission, I appeal to you, dear Dr. Silver, to be with us during the 23rd and 24th of this month, at our convention. You, with your visualization of the Jewish problems, are indispensable to our new movement.

Hoping you will find it possible to grant our request, we are

Sincerely yours,

PROVISIONAL COMMISSION FOR ESTABLISH-
MENT OF JEWISH FARM SETTLEMENTS IN U.S.

Benj Brown - s.
Chairman.

BB/ES
Encls/3

December 8, 1933.

Mr. Benjamin Brown,
Producers Distributing Agency, Inc.,
106 Gansevoort Street,
New York, N.Y.

My dear Mr. Brown:

Permit me to acknowledge receipt of your kind letter of December 6th. I am very much interested and quite enthusiastic about the work which your Provisional Committee for the Establishment of Jewish Farm Settlements in America has undertaken. You are on the right track and I hope that you will prosecute the work with the utmost vigor.

I should like very much to attend your conference on the 23rd and 24th of this month. Unfortunately this happens to be during the week of Chanukah. We have planned very important Chanukah celebrations at The Temple and I must occupy my own pulpit on the morning of the 24th. It is therefore highly improbable that I will be able to get away. Should there be any change in my program, I will notify you.

With all good wishes and assuring you again of my deep interest in the plan, permit me to remain

Very cordially yours,

AHS:BK

Farm

Association for
Jewish Farm
Settlements

February 22, 1934.

The Provisional Commission for the Establishment of
Jewish Farm Settlements in the United States,
80 East 11th St.,
New York, N.Y.

Dear Friends:

Representatives of a group of Jewish artisans and laborers have been in to see me and discussed the possibility of organizing a cooperative farming community. They are substantial people some of whom have some small private capital which they are willing to invest in such a project. They mentioned the Monmouth County New Jersey project and would like to model their cooperative on it on a smaller scale.

I would deeply appreciate it if you would advise me in this matter. What are the possibilities of procuring aid from the Government? How large a unit should they begin with? Approximately how much would the individual have to invest in it? Would the Government stand ready to give them technical advice since very few of them have had any farming experience?

I have a copy of your summary of schedules and questions and answers which were sent to me some time ago. Any information which might help this group to clarify their own ideas and to guide them would be deeply appreciated.

With all good wishes, permit me to remain

Very sincerely yours,

AHS:BK

March 1, 1934.

Mr. P.L. Madow,
4521 West 35th St.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

My dear Mr. Madow:

I am enclosing herewith a letter which
I received from New York. I shall probably
hear from them in the near future again.

With best wishes, I remain

Very sincerely yours,

AHS:BK
Enc.

March 20, 1934.

Association for Jewish Farm Settlements,
80 East 11th St.,
New York, N.Y.

Gentlemen:

On February 22nd, Rabbi Silver wrote to you requesting some information regarding the possibility of organizing here a cooperative farming community patterned after the Monmouth County New Jersey project. As yet no answer has been received.

The group in whose behalf the letter was written is anxiously awaiting word from you before starting their project. An early reply would be greatly appreciated.

With all good wishes, I remain

Very sincerely yours,

BK

Sec'y to Rabbi Silver.

The Provisional Commission for the Establishment of Jewish Farm Settlements in the United States

80 East 11th Street, New York City

GRamercy 5-5063

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TO ALL JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES:

We take pleasure in inviting your organization to delegate representatives to the national convention which will be held on December 23 and 24, at the Hotel Pennsylvania, New York, under the auspices of the Provisional Commission for the Establishment of Jewish Farm Settlements in the United States.

As you know, a decided back-to-the-land movement has made itself manifest during the past few years among the Jewish masses of this country. This movement has been given particular impetus by the changing economic conditions, which have brought into existence a large number of technologically unemployed Jewish workers and which have severely affected the fate of the Jewish middle class. Being faced with a dismal, if not hopeless, future in the cities, groups of Jews have already organized themselves into farm settlements in several parts of the United States.

It is the conviction of the Provisional Commission that by taking hold of this spontaneous back-to-the-land movement, by giving it definite shape and direction, providing it with the necessary resources, a vital contribution will be made toward the solution of the difficult economic problems confronting the Jews of America.

The Provisional Commission, which was founded last winter upon the initiative of a group of national Jewish organizations and a number of agricultural experts, has during the past year devoted itself to a survey of the whole problem of Jewish farming. The Commission has evolved definite constructive plans for the establishment of Jewish farm settlements along cooperative principles, envisaging the utilization of large scale industrialized farming methods and the most modern agricultural machinery, in accordance with the latest tendencies in American farming. The Commission has also been conducting negotiations with the authorities in Washington, with a view to securing their endorsement and support for the Jewish back-to-the-land movement.

The plans worked out by the Provisional Commission will be presented for consideration at the national convention, which is being called in order to lay the foundations for a permanent organization, controlled and directed by the organized representative forces of American Jewry, which will conduct the great work of settling Jews on the land in America.

We are confident that you realize the historic importance of this work and that you will respond by sending delegates to our national convention without delay. Every national organization is entitled to representation by three delegates, every local organization by two. Kindly return the enclosed card with the names and addresses of your delegates as soon as possible.

Very truly yours,

DR. CHAIM ZHITLOWSKY—Honorary Chairman, Provisional Commission
BENJAMIN BROWN—Chairman, Provisional Commission
P. GINGOLD
PROF. S. JOFFE, } Secretaries, Provisional Commission
J. LEVIN
JOSEPH BASKIN—General Secretary, Workmen's Circle
EPHRAIM AUERBACH
N. CHANIN—Secretary, Jewish Socialist Verband
PROF. CHAIM CHERNOWITZ
S. DINGOL—Managing Editor "The Day"
D. DUBINSKY—Pres., International Ladies Garment Workers Union
WILLIAM EDLIN
MRS. ELMER ECKHOUSE
MORRIS FEINSTONE—Secretary, United Hebrew Trades
DR. L. FOGELMAN—President, Jewish Writers Club
JACOB FISHMAN—Managing Editor, "Jewish Morning Journal"
PHILIP GELIEBTER—Educ. Director, Workmen's Circle
B. Z. GOLDBERG—Associate Editor "The Day"
RUBIN GUSKIN—Manager, Hebrew Actors Union
CHAIM GREENBERG—Editor "Yiddisher Kempfer"
ELIZABETH HASANOVITZ
PERETZ HIRSHBEIN

DR. B. HOFFMAN (ZIVION)—Editor "Gerechtigkeit"
MAX L. HOLLANDER—Grand Sec'y, Indep. Order Brith Abraham
S. JUDSON—Associate Editor, "Jewish Morning Journal"
S. LIEBMAN
ELIAS LIEBERMAN—Vice-President, Workmen's Circle
LOUIS LIPSKY—Member of Exec. Committee World Zionist Org.
MORRIS MARGULIES, Secretary, Zionist Organization of America
DR. S. MARGOSHES—Editor "The Day"
PROF. S. PEARLMAN
J. W. PINCUS
DAVID PINSKI—President, Jewish National Workers' Alliance
JOSEPH SCHLOSSBERG—General Sec'y, Amalgamated Clothing Workers' Union
LOUIS SEGAL—Secretary, Jewish National Workers' Alliance
A. SOLOVIEV
HERMAN SPEIER—Executive Secretary, United Roumanian Jews
RABBI TAUB
Z. TYGEL—Executive Director, Federation Polish Jews
JACOB WEINBERG—President, Workmen's Circle
D. WERTHEIM—Secretary, Poale Zion - Zieri Zion
PETER WIERNICK—Editor, "Jewish Morning Journal"
LEO WOLFSOHN—President, United Roumanian Jews

די פראוויזארישע קאמיסיע פאר אידישע לאנדווירטשאפטלאכע ישובים אין אמעריקע

טעלעפאן: גרעמערס 5063-5

80 איסט 11טע גאס, נ. י.

א רוף צו אלע אידישע ארגאניזאציעס אין די פאראייניקטע שטאטן!

טייערע פריינט!

מיר ווענדן זיך צו אייך מיט א דרינגנדן רוף, איר זאלט ערוויילן דעלעגאטן צו דער קאנווענשאן פאר „אידישע לאנד-ווירטשאפטלאכע ישובים אין אמעריקע“, וואס ווערט פאררופן אויף דעם 23סטן און 24סטן דעצעמבער, 1933, אין האטל פענסילווייניע, ניו יארק. יעדע צענטראלע אידישע ארגאניזאציע זאל זיין פארטרעטן דורך דריי דעלעגאטן און יעדע לאנד-קאמיוניטע דורך צוויי.

די לעצטע יארן מערקן זיך אין אמעריקע סימנים פון א שטארקן ווילן מצד די אידישע מאסן איבערצוגיין צו ערד-ארבעט. אין פארשידענע קלענערע און גרעסערע שטעט האבן זיך אויסגעבילדעט גרופעס, וואס זיינען גרייט צו גיין אויפן לאנד, און פארבינדן זייער ווייטערדיקע עקזיסטענץ מיט אגריקולטור. א צאל גרופעס זיינען שוין טאקע אריבער פון ווארט צו טאט.

דערביי האנדלט זיך נישט וועגן איינצלנע אידישע פארמער, נאר וועגן באזעצן גאנצע גרופעס אידן אין קאלאניעס, אויף מער אדער ווייניקער קאאפעראטיווע יסודות, כדי זיי זאלן קענען געניסן פון די מעלות פון א גרויסער ווירטשאפט, ביי וועלכער עס קענען אנגעווענדעט ווערן און אויסגענוצט ווערן די נייסטע וויסנשאפטלאכע מעטאדן פון ערד-ארבעט, מער עקא-נאמישע פארמען פון ארבעט, א. ד. ג.

די קאנווענשאן ווערט פאררופן פון דער „פראוויזארישער קאמיסיע פאר אידישע לאנדווירטשאפטלאכע ישובים אין אמעריקע“, וואס איז ערוויילט געווארן פארקן ווינטער אויף דער איניציאטיווע פון א ריי נאציאנאלע אידישע ארגאניזאציעס און פון א צאל עקספערטן און וויסנשאפטסלייט, וואס האבן א דירעקטע שייכות מיט אידישער ערד-ארבעט אין אמעריקע. די דאזיקע קאמיסיע האט אין פארלוף פון דער צייט שטודירט די פראבלעם פון אידישע ערד-ארבעט און ספעציעל זיך אפ-געגעבן מיט אויספארשן די מעגלאכקייטן פון לאנדווירטשאפטלאכע קאלאניעס. די קאמיסיע האט זיך אויך געשטעלט אין פארבינדונג מיט וויכטיקע אינסטאנצן אין וואשינגטאן אויסצוגעפינען ווי ווייט די נאציאנאלע רעגירונג וועט זיין פאראינטער-רעסירט און העלפן דער אידישער אגרארישער און אגראריש-אינדוסטריעלער באזעגונג אין אמעריקע. אויפן סמך פון די געזאמלטע מאטעריאלן און פלענער, וואס די קאמיסיע פארמאגט אין איר באזיץ, ווערט איצט פאררופן די קאנווענשאן.

געערטע פריינט! די איצטיקע עקאנאמישע לאגע פון די אידן אין אמעריקע פאדערט פון אונז אלעמען אן ערנסטע באציאונג; די גרויסע ארבעטסלאזיקייט און פרנסה'לאזיקייט פון די אידישע מאסן, וועלכע איז א רעזולטאט נישט נאר פון דעם לעצטן קריזיס, נאר אויך פון דער באזונדערער אידישער עקאנאמישער סטרוקטור, פאדערט פון דער גאנצער אידישער געזעלשאפטלאכקייט צו זוכן וועגן, ווי געזינטער און פעסטער צו מאכן די עקאנאמישע אידישע פאזיציעס אין אמעריקע. מיר זיינען איבערצייגט, אז אידישע ערד-ארבעט אויף די פארמגעשריטנסטע יסודות וועט זיכער קענען פיל העלפן לייון אט די פראבלעם.

מיר האפן דעריבער, אז איר וועט זיכער קומען באטייליקן זיך אין דער גרויסער ארבעט צו לייגן א פעסטן פונדאמענט פאר אידישער קאלאניזאציע אין אמעריקע אנגעפירט און קאנטראלירט פון דער גאנצער ארגאניזירטער אידישער געזעלשאפט-לאכקייט בא אונז אין לאנד.

מיר בעטן אייך זייער צוצושיקן אונז גלייך אויף דעם בייגעלייגטן קארטל די נעמען און אדרעסן פון אייערע דעלעגאטן.

מיט בעסטן גרוס,

- | | |
|--|---|
| ד. חיים זשיטלאווסקי, ערן-פארויצער, פראוויזארישע קאמיסיע | פראפ. חיים טשערנאווויץ—רב צעיר |
| ב. בראון—פארויצער, פראוויזארישע קאמיסיע | ז. טיגל—עקז. דירעקטאר, פארבאנד פון פוילישע אידן |
| פ. גינגאלד | ש. יודסאן—מיט-רעדאקטאר „מארגן זשורנאל“ |
| פראפ. י. יפה | על. כאזאנאווויץ |
| י. לעווין | נ. כאנין—עקז. אידישער סאציאליסטישער פארבאנד |
| י. באסקין—גענ. סעק., ארבעטער רינג | ז. ליבמאן |
| א. אויערבאך | ע. ליבערמאן—וויצע-פרעזידענט, ארבעטער רינג |
| ב. צ. גאלדבערג—מיט-רעדאקטאר פון „טאג“ | לואיס ליפסקי—מיטגליד ענגערער אקצ. קאמ. ציוניסטישער ארג. |
| ר. גוסקין—פארוואלטער, אידישע אקטיארן יוניאן | ד. ש. מארגנשעס, רעדאקטאר פון „טאג“ |
| פ. געליבטער—בילדונגס דירעקטאר, ארבעטער רינג | מאריס מארגוליס—עקז. ציוניסטישע ארג. פון אמעריקע |
| חיים גרינבערג—רעדאקטאר, „אידישן קעמפער“ | א. סאלאוויאו |
| ד. דויבנסקי—פרעז. אינטערנעשאנאל ליידיס גארמענט ווארקערס יוניאן | ל. סיגאל—עקז. איד. נאצ. ארבעטער פארבאנד |
| ש. דינגאל—פארוואלטונגס-רעדאקטאר פון „טאג“ | ה. צאנז—עקז. סעק. פארווינקטע רומענישע אידן |
| מאקס ל. האלאנדער—גרענד סעקרעטאר אינד. ארדער ברית אברהם | וו. עדלין |
| ד. ב. האפמאן (צביון)—רעדאקטאר „גערעכטיקייט“ | מ.ס. עלמער עקהויז |
| פריץ הירשביין | דוד פינסקי—פרעז. איד. נאצ. ארבעטער פארבאנד |
| לעא וואלפסאן—פרעז. פארווינקטע רומענישע אידן | י. פינקוס |
| י. וויינבערג—פרעז. ארבעטער רינג | פראפ. ס. פערלמאן |
| ד. ווערטהיים—עקז. פועלי ציון - צעירי ציון | ד. ל. פאנעלמאן—פרעז. י. ל. פריץ שרייבער פאראויז |
| פריץ וויערניק—רעדאקטאר „מארגן זשורנאל“ | מ. פיינסטאן—עקז. אידישע געווערקשאפטן |
| ראבאי טאוב | י. פישמאן—פארוואלטונגס-רעדאקטאר „מארגן זשורנאל“ |
| | י. שלאסבערג—גענ. סעק. אמאלגאמירטע קלאטהינג ווארקערס |
| | און אמעריקע. |

Monmouth County, New Jersey Project

SUMMARY OF SCHEDULES

Schedule I.

This is a project for establishing a cooperative community of 200 Jewish families in the Needle Work Trades on a 1200 acre tract of land situated near Hightstown, Monmouth County, N.J. The site, which is already under option, is in the open country (now a purely agricultural area) and thus out of the metropolitan and suburban population zone but yet within ready accessibility to the New York and Philadelphia Clothing Markets. In addition to individually-owned subsistence homesteads of about one acre each, the project will comprise a community owned and operated dairy farm, truck farm, general store, central water and sewerage disposal plant and a small clothing factory. From funds other than Federal loan requested a school and recreation center will be provided. Families will be selected from New York, Philadelphia and New Jersey Cities. Project is 52 miles from New York, 42 miles from Philadelphia, 15 from Trenton, and 30 from Newark. The project is in the general workingmen's garden home class but contemplates more extensive farming operations than the usual project in that class and it will also depend upon a new industry to be established rather than upon industries already existing in nearby centers. All agricultural production however will be primarily for use of the families; the source of income will be the clothing factory.

Schedule II.

The purpose of the project is to demonstrate the feasibility of permanently combining subsistence farming with a highly seasonal industry, which readily lends itself to decentralization; to make self sustaining 200 skilled workers and their families who are now partially or totally unemployed and for whom the prospects of future reemployment are very limited because of recent technological advances in the industry, and to demonstrate the practicability of community owned agricultural and industrial production and marketing enterprises. The project will also serve to demonstrate the extents to which the Jewish people can succeed in farming when combined with industry. The tradition now is that Jews do not make successful farmers. The unemployment situation in the Needle Trades is acute. Even in good times there is much summer seasonal unemployment, and a survey conservatively estimated that even should 1929 peak production return, 10,000 heads of families in the trade would remain unemployed because of improved machine processes.

Schedule III.

The site chosen is in an established and proven trucking area, free from present or probable real estate subdividing. There is no industry of consequence in the immediate vicinity. While no study of the economic and social trends of the general area have as yet been made, discovery of tendencies adverse to the project is not anticipated.

Schedule IV.

Site is gently rolling, with good soil, mostly in cultivation and requiring no drainage or clearing but some fertilization. Rain fall and growing season are fully satisfactory. Truck, fruit and general farm crops do well. An ample supply of good water can be obtained from wells 200 feet deep. No minerals are known to be present. There are about 200 acres of woodland within the tract which will be used for a community woodlot but not for construction. The soils have been examined and approved by a soils expert of the New Jersey Agricultural Station.

Project is located $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Hightstown, a village

Schedule V.

of 3012 population. Options on 1216 acres involving 8 ownerships have already been secured, and an additional 40 acre tract is being negotiated for to round out the property into a solid tract bounded on all sides by roads. Average price of the land about \$80.00. Eight farm houses, barns and other out-buildings are included, most of which can be used for the project. Title will be guaranteed by a recognized title company.

Schedule VI.

Either existing schools, to which transportation is provided by school bus, will be used, or arrangements will be made with public authorities to erect one in the community. Existing nearby village trade centers, churches and recreation institutions will be utilized; but a community general store is planned as part of project, and various Hebrew Welfare and recreation associations will cooperate in establishing centers on the project. Sewerage disposal and water supply will be provided by central plants, although further study is being given these questions. Electricity is already available, no gas will be at hand. Project is on a good tar and gravel road; 3 miles from the main New York - Philadelphia Highway, on which 16 through buses per day operate; and $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the Pennsylvania Railroad at Hightstown and 9 miles from the main line at Princeton Junction.

Schedule VII.

Project is subject to no known regional or county plans, permits, franchises, zoning regulations, or sanitary, or other codes. However, suitable restrictive regulations will be adopted for the project, with the approval of the division of Subsistence Homesteads.

Schedule VIII.

Project will be subject only to the following taxing jurisdictions: State, county, township, school district. Applicant estimates that general property taxes on the average homestead will be about \$20.00 per year. The tax burden, both on the individual homesteader and on the community property are being given further study.

Schedule IX.

Mr. Brown, who lives in the immediate vicinity of the site states that all local interests and agencies will be favorable, although he has refrained from making extensive local inquiry pending assembly of the land. Application states that there are already 100 Jewish farmers in the vicinity of the project and that relations with other racial and national groups of the area have always been very friendly. Applicant is certain no complications on this question will arise.

Among the various Hebrew Welfare organizations, trade unions, and fraternal associations, full approval is reported by applicant to have been given. Some employers, informally approached have promised their cooperation to help the project succeed; steps are being taken to enlist the cooperation of others.

The general principles governing the labor policies in the proposed factory have been worked out in consultation with, and with the full approval of, the United States Department of Labor.

Applicant states that the State Agricultural Experiment Station has promised full cooperation in planning the project.

Schedule X.

Prospective homesteaders will be carefully selected, on bases, standards and methods approved by the division, from unemployed or Jewish Needleworker's of New York City, New Jersey Cities, and Philadelphia. Selection will be made by trained investigators through the Provisional Commission for Establishment of Jewish Settlements. Applicants for homesteads will be required to put \$500.00 into the project for livestock, implements, machinery and working capital. Where these funds are lacking, the Provisional Commission will make a loan of that amount.

Schedule XI.

The only land improvement necessary for crops will be

Schedule XI.
(Cont'd.)

a moderate amount of fertilization. Houses will be 4 room frame bungalows (living room, 2 bedrooms, kitchen-dining room and bath), with concrete cellar. Design will vary sufficiently to avoid monotony, and will be subject to approval by the Division. Houses will be wired for electricity and have modern plumbing and hot-air heat. The community will be planned and landscaped by competent architects and planners. As a rule there will be no other homestead buildings other than the house community buildings to be built as part of the project and will be planned in consultation with qualified authorities and will include dairy farm, factory, general store, central water and sewerage systems and poultry house. Practically no new roads or streets will be needed, since the individual acre homesteads will front on existing roads.

It is planned to use pre-fabricated houses both to cut costs and avoid complications with the building trades unions. Houses will be assembled thru contracts with local builders using union labor, although as much use of the homesteaders labor as practicable will be made.

Schedule XII.

Each individual homestead will provide some of the vegetables needed for family use; the community dairy, poultry plant and truck garden will provide the remainder of the necessary supply needed. All agricultural production will be primarily for subsistence purposes; production for sale is not planned. Distribution of the community produced agricultural products will be by sale to the homesteaders through the community store. Community agricultural operations are deemed more practical and economical than individual operation under the conditions. The area is not a dairy section and is not known as a poultry district.

The present local milk supply would be totally inadequate and of uncertain purity and quality.

Cash income will be secured through work in the factory for the eastern clothing markets. Experienced managers will handle this activity. Applicant states that the families, on a very conservative estimate, should earn not less than an average of \$15.00 cash wages per week (average for 52 weeks). Applicant states that preliminary inquiry indicates no difficulty in obtaining contracts for the output of the plant. The slack period in the clothing trades is in summer so that there would be no serious conflict with farm and garden operations.

Schedule XIII.

Applicant states that relief should not be required since (1) The homesteaders will not move out until the factory is ready to operate and thus provide cash wages, (2) The general store will advance credit for supplies. (3) If these prove inadequate, loans or other assistance will be obtained from the Provisional Commission and other Hebrew Welfare Agencies.

Schedule XIV.

The local cooperate set-up will be whatever the Division suggests, with a board representing the various Hebrew organizations interested in the project, selection to be satisfactory to the Division. The Division will have representation also: and applicant suggests that a member of the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station should also be on the Board. Applicant suggests that the Board be in full control of all community enterprises, operating them through paid managers and personnel, most or all of whom will be members of the community. Applicant

proposes that the homesteaders have a minority representation on the Board, their representation to be increased later as development of the community warrants.

The members of the cooperate, thru a committee of their own choosing, will select a competent accountant to audit the books of the enterprises and report to them. They will also obtain the services of an agricultural advisor. Social and educational leadership and guidance will be arranged for with various Jewish and other welfare and educational agencies. Homesteaders will make payments monthly, and will acquire their homesteads on a two years lease trial period with option to buy. An association of the homesteaders is contemplated which will exercise various community functions and serve in an advisory capacity to the Board.

Schedule XV.

The average total cost per homestead including the pro-rata cost of all community service facilities, including livestock, machinery and equipment, lands and enterprises is estimated to be \$3,000. Of this amount \$500.00 will be contributed by the homesteader in cash or by way of a loan from the Provisional Commission, making the Federal participation \$2500. The house will cost \$1800; the acre of land \$80.00. Whether each homesteader should be charged a full pro-rata share of the cost of all community properties is being given further study.

Schedule XVI.

The total cost of the project, including all community facilities and the factory with its equipment is estimated at \$600,000. Of this \$100,000 will be furnished either by the homesteaders (\$500. each) or by the Provisional Commission for Jewish Farm Settlements in America. This will be used for livestock, machinery, and working capital. Federal 30 year loan of \$500,000 is requested for the purchase of the land and buildings.

Applicants reasoned judgment is that 200 families is the minimum required to make a sound economic unit.

Schedule XVII.

The project has already been endorsed by the Provisional Commission and by its constituent agencies. The present Provisional Commission is composed of liberal Jewish leaders of recognized national standing in a number of different fields. Among the Agencies represented are Jewish welfare associations, such as the Jewish National Workers Alliance (20,000 members) the Workman's Circle (88,000 members) and the United Hebrew Trades (150,000 members).

The project has also been endorsed by Secretary Perkins and Dr. Isador Lubin of the United States Department of Labor. Other endorsements will be secured if desired.

(To be passed upon at the Convention)

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

The name of the proposed colony is A-S-S-I-F-A

Question: What does this name stand for?

Answer: In Hebrew it means assembly, gathering, and in English it is an abbreviation of Association, self-sustaining industrial farm.

Question: Where is this colony to be located?

Answer: Near Hightstown, New Jersey; 52 miles from New York; 42 miles from Philadelphia; about 20 miles from New Brunswick.

Question: How many members will this colony have?

Answer: 200 members, each one representing a family, the composite of which will be about 1000 people.

Question: What will the members do for a living?

Answer: Some will work in the fields as farmers; others will work in the dairy, producing milk; some will work in the hennery; others will be engaged as clerks in the cooperative store; some will work in the cooperative laundry; some will be teaching in the public school; others will do hauling and trucking; some will work in the office as bookkeepers, and quite a number will be engaged in the cooperative clothing factory.

Question: What kind of a factory will this be?

Answer: A garment factory, but it is not decided as yet, the particular kind of garments which will be manufactured there.

Question: When will it be decided?

Answer: After we will be through with our registration. We will then decide, from the registration blanks, the number and the kind of garment workers we will have to supply work for, and we will organize our factory production accordingly.

Question: Who will supply the work for the factory?

Answer: The Board of Directors of the colony will engage a business manager who will try to obtain work for the members of the colony from different manufacturers, distributing houses or department stores.

Question: How will the members be paid for their work?

Answer: The same as they would be paid in any other factory for similar work in the vicinity, under union provisions.

Question: In what way will a member of such colony be better off in working in the colony factory than if he pursued his work in the City?

Answer:

1. Each member will occupy his own house with a garden plot on which he will be able to raise his own vegetables, produce, etc.
2. He will derive the benefit of being supplied with work - in a cooperative work, instead of trying to find work individually.
3. He will obtain his milk, eggs, truck produce, etc., from the cooperatively managed farm at less cost than he would pay for the same produce in the City.
4. He will buy his groceries and other supplies in the cooperative community store which will also cost him less.
5. He will be able to avail himself of cultural and recreational facilities, as well as educational provisions for his children, which, under ordinary conditions, are not obtained by City workers.

Question: How can one become a member of such a colony?

Answer:

1. One must fill out an application form.
2. He must be prepared to invest \$500.00, and upon investigation by a Committee of the applicant's physical and mental status and other features, such as his ability to cooperate with

others and in general, be a desirable neighbor, etc., he may be admitted.

Question: What is the \$500.00 for; does it pay for the house, or what?

Answer: It is estimated that the cost of the entire colony, including the houses, the land, the factory, the general store, the dairy, the hennery, the water supply system, machinery, etc., will cost about \$600,000.00, or, about \$3000.00 per member. The \$500.00 will be a down payment on the amount of \$3000.00 which each member will eventually pay into the colony. In other words, after paying in \$500.00, each member will still owe the colony \$2500.00, which he will pay out in installments at the rate of about \$100.00 per year, besides interest and taxes which in all will amount to about \$20.00 per month.

Question: Where will the member get that money to pay?

Answer: From the wages that he will receive for work in the cooperative factory, dairy, hennery, farm work in the fields, as a clerk, as a teacher or as a worker in the community laundry, etc. In plain words, each one will receive wages for the work he will do and in turn, he will pay to the cooperative store for the produce he will buy; likewise he will pay his installments for his house and garden plot at the rate of about \$20.00 per month. As soon as he will have paid up the cost of the house and garden plot, he will then receive a clear title to it as his own personal property.

Question: If one should want to leave the colony, will he get his \$500.00 back and will he be able to sell his equity in the house and garden plot?

Answer:

For the first two years, each one will be considered as a candidate member only and the \$500.00 paid by him will be considered as a deposit, to be held in trust by the colony board, and the \$20.00 per month which such candidate member will pay for the house and garden plot, will be considered as rent. Therefore, if, during the first two years, such a candidate member will decide to leave the colony, he will be entitled to receive his \$500.00 back in full, providing he will owe no rent or other bills to the cooperative, but after two years, each candidate member will become a full-fledged member, and thus become an equal partner in this cooperative enterprise. If he should then decide to leave the cooperative colony, he will receive back from the colony whatever his share may be worth to some new applicant at that time. Of course such a new applicant will have to be acceptable to the community before any old member will be able to sell him his share or equity.

Question:

Will one be able to do with his house and his garden plot as he chooses?

Answer:

Within certain reason, yes, but everything will be subjected to the following restrictions.

1. He will not be able to erect any additional buildings on his plot without a written consent from the Colony Board.
2. He will not be able to put up a road-stand or store for selling vegetables or any other merchandise to pedestrians or neighbors, or do anything else in his house or on his plot which may be considered by the colony board as a public nuisance.

Question: Who will elect the Colony Board?

Answer: The full-fledged members of the colony, but as no-one will be considered a full-fledged member before he will have lived in the colony two years, the management of the colony will therefore be entrusted to a Board of Trustees during the first two years, which will be considered the formative period. Such Board of Trustees will be selected from recognized Jewish national organizations and civic bodies of high standing. In the first stages of development, such a Board of Trustees will be appointed by a triumvirate of representatives from the government's Subsistence Homesteads Division, the National Commission for Jewish Farm Settlements in America, and from a Committee elected by the proposed colony. It is contemplated ~~by~~ that such an arrangement will last only as long as the colony will be substantially indebted to the government or otherwise, after which time the colony will carry on its own affairs by a Board entirely of its own.

Question: When will this colony be fully organized and established?

Answer: The land is already bought (1250 acres); our engineers and architects are now preparing plans and specifications for the houses and other buildings. We expect to give out contracts for this work in about 60 days and it is our belief that everything will be ready for occupancy within about 6 months after that.

Question: What will the members do in the meantime?

Answer: Those who are capable of doing carpentry work, plumbing, masonry, electrical work or painting, will be given a chance to take contracts for such work. Others who can do trucking or field work will be engaged accordingly. Others who may be willing,

may do ordinary labor work. There will also be work for a couple of watchmen, 2 or 3 office workers, etc., and the rest will, while the colony is being built, still occupy their old positions if they have any, or wait until the colony factory and the houses will be completed.

Question: Who is promoting all this - is it a company; some real estate firm; private builder or business man, doing it for a profit; or what?

Answer: This enterprise was ~~sponsored~~ sponsored by a Provisional Commission for Jewish Farm Settlements in America, and thanks to Director M. L. Wilson and his Associates of the Subsistence Homesteads Division of the Recovery Administration under Secretary Ickes, it was made possible for our Committee to undertake the establishment of what we plan to be a model cooperative colony, where all benefits are to be equally and equitably enjoyed by every member of the colony, in strict accordance with the work and services to be performed by each.

There are no outside enterprises or promoters for private gain of any kind and there shall be none in the future.

Chairman of the Provisional
Commission for Jewish Farm
Settlements in America.

נעזעלשאפט פאר אידישע לאנדווירטשאפטלאכע ישובים

Association for Jewish Farm Settlements

80 EAST 11th STREET

Room 618

NEW YORK CITY

GRamercy 5-5063

אדמיניסטראטיווע
קאמיסיע

March 23rd, 1934

Rabbi Dr. Abba Hillel Silver
The Temple
East 105th Street at Ansel Road
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Dr. Silver:

I hope you will excuse the long delay in answering your letter. Our office was practically not organized until a few days ago, when I took over the position of executive secretary of the Association. Upon going thru the files I found your letter of the 23rd of February. Our chairman, Mr. Benjamin Brown, has been asked to get in touch with you about this matter and you will no doubt hear from him soon.

When I was connected with the American Ort four years ago, I had the pleasure of meeting you in Cleveland, and I am very happy to note that you are so interested in this new movement among the Jews of America. The interest in our plans to rehabilitate the thousands of Jewish families who find themselves at a loss after the crisis is countrywide. Requests for information keep pouring in from everywhere.

I shall be very glad to submit to you all the material in connection with our projects, as soon as I shall have orientated myself in my new position and will have gathered together all the loose ends.

With very best personal regards, I am

Very truly yours,
ASSOCIATION FOR JEWISH FARM SETTLEMENTS

G. Zybert, Secretary

GZ:HC

נאציאנאלע
עקזעקוטיווע

ש. בורשטיין
ה. גאלדקראנץ
מ. דזש. גולד
ר. גוסקין
א. גלאנץ
חיים גרינבערג
ס. דינגאל
מ. ל. האלאנדער
דר. ב. האפמאן
פ. הירשביין
א. וואלערשטיין
ל. וואלפסאן
דר. ח. זשימלאווסקי
דר. י. טענענבוים
ג. כאנין
ש. ליבמאן
דר. ש. מארגאשעס
ש. נוגער
פ. סיגאל
מ. סילווער
ה. ספיוער
וו. עדלין
ה. עהרענרייך
מרס. א. עראנס
ד. פינסקי
דר. ל. פאגעלמאן
מ. פישער
מ. קאהען
מרס. מ. קאהען
מ. קאווען
ל. קאראל
י. קימבארטאווסקי
י. רובינשטיין
י. שלאסבערג

פ. גינגאלד
יעקב לעווין
ציומווילוקער
סעקרעטאריאט

JERSEY HOMESTEADS, Inc.

HIGHTSTOWN, NEW JERSEY

Telephone: HIGHTSTOWN 310

March 24, 1934.

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver
The Temple
East 105th Street at Ansel Road
Cleveland, Ohio.

My dear Dr. Silver:

Your letter of February 22nd together with reply of February 26th from the Association for Jewish Farm Settlements, has been forwarded to this office.

Mr. Benjamin Brown, President of our Corporation, has been interested in cooperative agricultural movements for many years and is considered an authority of note upon many aspects of this work. Mr. Brown is author of the nationally known "Utah Plan" of cooperative marketing and he was called in by the Soviet Government as a consultant in the establishing of the Jewish Colony in the Bero-Bidjan.

In our particular project he has given most freely of his time and experience and I might say in passing, that the decision of the Government to set up this experimental project at Hightstown was made largely on Mr. Brown's assurance to Dr. Wilson that he would maintain his interest and activity in it, at least until the Colony was set up and brought into successful operation.

I feel that if there is anybody that can be of assistance and guidance to the group of Jewish artisans and laborers on whose behalf you write, Mr. Brown can do it.

It happens that Mr. Brown will have some business in the far West sometime between the 15th and 20th of April and he could so arrange his itinerary as to spend one day in Cleveland on his way out.

JERSEY HOMESTEADS, Inc.

HIGHTSTOWN, NEW JERSEY

Telephone: HIGHTSTOWN 310

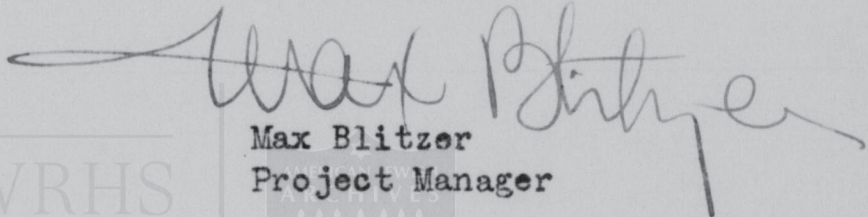
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Dr. Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver

March 22, 1934.

If the group you mention is interested in having Mr. Brown set aside a day for a conference with them, I am sure he would be glad to do so and I shall try to arrange it if you so request.

Sincerely yours,



Max Blitzer
Project Manager

MB:B



March 27, 1934.

Mr. Louis Briskin,
3724 E. 163rd St.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

My dear Mr. Briskin:

This is to advise you that Rabbi Silver has heard from the Association for Jewish Farm Settlements in New York and that he would like to talk the matter over with you. Rabbi Silver will be very glad to see you in his study any morning this week at 11 o'clock.

Very sincerely yours,

AHS:BK

Sec'y to Rabbi Silver.

April 4, 1934.

Mr. Max Blitzer, Project Manager,
Jersey Homesteads, Inc.,
Highstown, New Jersey.

My dear Mr. Blitzer:

Let me thank you for your kind letter of March 24. The group here interested in a Jewish Farm Settlement is happy to know that Mr. Brown will find it possible to stop over in Cleveland for a day on his way out West. Please let me know just what day Mr. Brown can be in Cleveland. The local group would like to meet with him at noon or in the afternoon and then arrange a larger meeting for him in the evening at which time they would like him to deliver an address on the subject of the Jewish Farm Settlement.

The group would also like to know what expense would be involved in his coming. Their financial resources of course are extremely limited.

With all good wishes, permit me to remain

Very sincerely yours,

AHS:BK

Ph Meadow
4521 W 35 St
Cleveland Ohio
4-3-34

[illegible]

April 10, 1934.

Mr. Philip Madow,
4521 West 35th St.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

My dear Mr. Madow:

Let me thank you for your thoughtfulness
in writing to me. I am very appreciative.

With best wishes, permit me to remain

Very sincerely yours,

AHS:BK

April 11, 1934.

Mr. Louis Briskin,
3724 E. 163rd St.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

My dear Mr. Briskin:

Enclosed herewith is letter received
from Mr. Blitzer of Jersey Homesteads, Inc.

Very sincerely yours,

AHS:BK
Enc.

Sec'y to Rabbi Silver.

(COPY)

JERSEY HOMESTEADS, Inc.
Highstown, New Jersey

Telephone: Highstown 310

April 9, 1934.

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver,
The Temple,
East 105th Street at Ansel Road,
Cleveland, O.

My dear Dr. Silver:

Answering your letter of April 4th, Mr. Brown informed me that he will be in Cleveland on Saturday, April 21st and asked me to place his time at the disposal of your Committee for the entire day.

Mr. Brown will register in at the Hotel Statler on the morning of the 21st, and representatives of your Committee can reach him there any time after 10 A.M. on that date. You are at liberty to arrange any program covering the time from 10: A.M. Saturday until noon-time of the following day.

There will be no charge for this, of course, since Mr. Brown is glad to assist in any way possible in the promotion of any project designed to promote the decentralization of Jewish population from the large centers to rural or semi-rural communities.

Sincerely yours,

Max Blitzer
Project Manager

P.S. Full name, Benjamin Brown, and he will be so registered at the hotel.

Ph Meadow

45 21 W 35 2A

WRHS



James Buchanan
3724 E. 163rd

