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# New Life On Galilee Hilltop

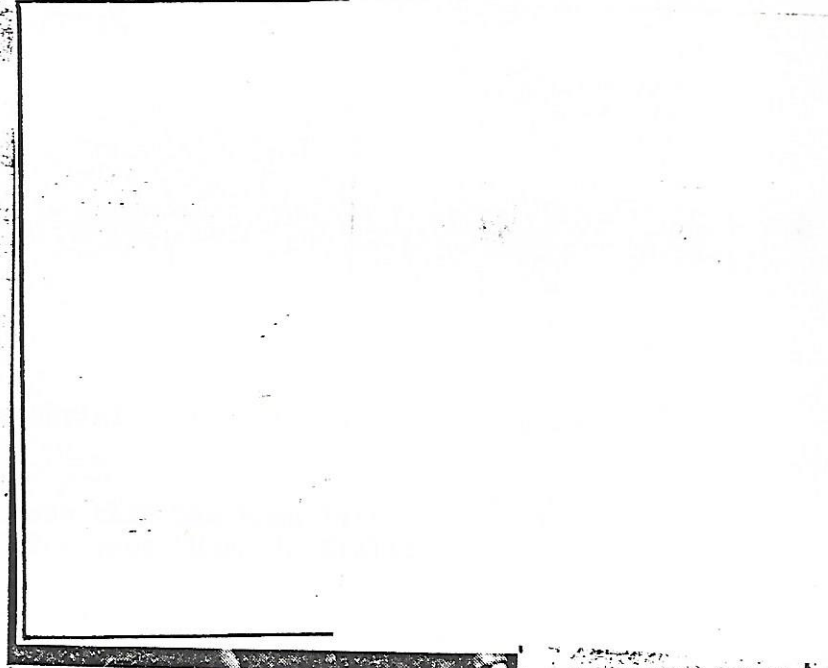
By DAVID LANDAU

HAR HALUTZ, Galilee — "Creatio ex nihilo" (creation out of the void) or, in Hebrew, *yesh me ayin*, is a phrase that is bandied about too readily in the context of pioneering and development projects in Israel. But standing on the windswept hilltop of Har Halutz, north of Carmiel, surveying the rolling Galilee hills with their scrubby vegetation and rocky slopes, one finds oneself driven to these phrases. In the case of Har Halutz, *Yesh me ayin* is precisely appropriate.

The summit of Har Halutz was once no different from a half a dozen other hilltops in view: inhospitable, inaccessible, yet sights of wild beauty. Now, a cluster of mobile homes perch upon it, and workmen swarm over it all day, hammering, painting, laying pipes and attaching cables.

Within six weeks, the scene will change back to the pastoral peace and pure air of the Galilee — disturbed only by the noise of children playing and quiet adult conversation that is when the first 20 families are due to move in — 13 from the United States, seven from Israel — the nucleus of a new township, a Galilee *mitzpeh* (hilltop Jewish settlement) with a difference.

Har Halutz will be home for young people committed to Reform Judaism, who hope to practice their faith and life-style while building a community —



neither kibbutz nor moshav, but a free-enterprise village in this breathtaking, biblical setting.

The Reform movement has two kibbutzim in the Negev, Yahel and Lotan; this is its first venture in the Galilee. The ambitious plan is for about 175 families eventually, living in modest ranch-style homes, built to their own needs and specifications. Most of these people will be academically trained and will earn their living in factories and offices throughout the Galilee. Some will be involved in a nearby tourism facility which the settlement will own and run.

As in all new settlement projects, the Jewish National Fund played a key role in preparing the ground for the settlement itself — literally moving mountains. According to Yehuda Gazit, JNF's Galilee director, it took more than 100 tons of explosives to blast the way for the five-kilometer road linking Har Halutz with Carmiel below. JNF flattened sites for homes and public buildings and laid out car

parks and paths.

Tractor and bulldozer operators found themselves under the constant supervision of Har Halutz secretary Hal Applebaum and his fellow settlers. They want to preserve as much of the natural surroundings and vegetation as possible and set out their temporary mobile homes as esthetically as possible.

They rejected the asbestos mobile homes that are usually supplied for new settlements insisting on more expensive and his fellow settlers. They want to preserve as much of the natural surroundings and vegetation as possible and set out their temporary mobile homes as esthetically as possible.

Haim and Hal say there are 25 more families back in the States, actively preparing to join the initial group at Har Halutz. The recruiting outlook is promising.

For information call or write: Oded Lewensohn, UAHC Aliyah Shaliach 838 Fifth Avenue, New York, 10021, the phone number is (212) 249-0100.

The Shaliach for Har Chaluz will hold a meeting, in Texas, for people interested in this pioneering project. One meeting will take place in Houston, on Saturday the 28th at 8:30 pm and the other in Dallas on Sunday the 29th at 12:00 noon. For additional information concernig this meeting please call: Kathy Koslansky, Israel Aliyah Center in Houston, (713) 667-6558