

Local Heroes 21

See you in Paris!

Organisation

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CALL FOR MOBILIZATION AT THE MEETING OF THE HOUSING MINISTERS IN PARIS THE 26TH TO 28TH OF SEPTEMBER 2000

As the Right of housing for the most vulnerable populations is non-existent the possibility for all to live in a decent and healthy environment, (notably for the poor, the unemployed, the immigrants, the young, the elderly, singles and single parents, large families, disabled, minorities etc.).

Europe has 60 millions of people living in poverty, between 15 and 18 millions of people are poorly housed or living in slums, 3 millions are homeless and hundreds of millions of evictions take place every year while millions of houses are vacant. Meanwhile, the budgets for housing are steadily diminishing.

The governments of European countries have accelerated the deregulation of the markets and abandoned the policy to protect tenants and low income populations.

- The tenants are subjected to the law of the markets (which means deregulation of rents, loss of housing tenure)
- Racial and social discrimination are reinforced and encouraged the formation of urban ghettos, the recreation of towns and the maintenance of slums
- The NGOs without adequate means (both financial and human) find themselves handed over the management of the housing crisis.

These policies contradict the legal obligations contracted by the European states who have all signed the UN Declaration of Social and Economic Rights and other pacts with the European Parliament relative to the right of housing and the construction of a Social Europe.

The resistance to the free market globalism and capitalism is beginning to bear fruits. (Seattle, Millau)

In numerous countries there are popular organisations which fight evictions, propose the local management of the neighborhood with a human dimension, reappropriate vacant lots or empty houses, self-build and rehabilitate housing and fight rent increases.

These resistance movements of inhabitants act at the local or the national level but the consequences of the Europeanization and the globalization of markets of urban space stimulate to reinforce international mobilisation in this domain.

Ten years after the first meeting the European Housing Ministers will meet again in Paris 26th to 28th of September. The HUSING MOVEMENTS WILL BE THERE ALSO.

It is time that we speak up to demand the right to live decently in all the neighborhoods of the city including the center city thanks to new policies which the local and central governments should implement.



We will call for a European mobilization in order that the HOUSING ministers on the national and the European level accept to

- Put the right to housing in the European Charter and make it a criterion of consequence.
- Introduce legislation to prevent evictions without satisfactory rehousing and give tenants secure tenure
- Permit access to satisfactory housing for all social categories

• Mobilize the vacant housing for poor households by taxation and requisition

• Develop rental social housing in the urban centers in crisis

• Support innovative experiences of urban management or self-management of the urban inhabitants themselves.

Paris is one step to continue to build a European and Global network of the urban struggle which will meet in Mexico the 2nd to the 4th of October in the World Assembly of inhabitants and then in New York in May 2001 at the UN Conference Istanbul plus 5.

Contact: Habitat Forum, Berlin; DAL, France; Aitec, France; HIC, Europe

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Cities for All • Städte für alle



LOCAL HEROES 21

European Meeting of Urban Grassroot Movements – ufa-Fabrik Berlin, 6. July 2000, 3. Edition



NGO-Konferenz
in Limuru/Nairobi
1987, Gründung
des HABITAT

Wohnbereich nicht zu übersehen. „Die Wohnungsversorgung ist kein Feld der aktiven Politik der EU, dies obwohl die Zahl der Obdachlosen drei Millionen beträgt.“ In Workshop 3 kamen ebenfalls 50 internationale TeilnehmerInnen zusammen, um über „Local Power und Development“ zu diskutieren. Dabei spielten verschiedene Ebenen eine Rolle: Die Ebene der lokalen Gemeinschaften, die Ebene der Sozialen Bewegungen und die Ebene der Gemeinden. Beispielhaft berichteten VertreterInnen aus Indien, Südafrika, Zambia, Brasilien, Senegal und Mexiko über ihre Situation. Gemeinsam ist den AktivistInnen eines: Es muss öffentlicher Druck auf die Regierungsebene ausgeübt werden. Es geht darum, mit der politischen Ebene auf einer Augenhöhe umzugehen.

Local Heroes and Heroines

■ von Stefan Thimmel

Lebhafte Diskussionen fanden am Mittwoch beim Tag der Arbeitsgruppen bei „Städte für alle – Local Heroes 21“ statt. So trafen sich zum Beispiel im Workshop 1 unter dem Titel „Eine Stadt für alle – ohne Ausschluß und Diskriminierung“ über 50 VertreterInnen von Obdachlosen und Arbeitsloseninitiativen aus Frankreich, Berlin, Indien, Brasilien, Uruguay und weiteren Ländern, die sich mit Landrechten und Wohnungssproblemen auseinandersetzen. Diskutiert wurde dort z.B. das Dilemma, nicht alle Ausgeschlossenen in Projekte einbeziehen zu können. Als wichtigstes Problem wurden Rechte von

MigrantInnen und indigenen Bevölkerungsgruppen benannt. In vielen Städten repräsentieren diese Gruppen zunehmend die Mehrheit der Bevölkerung. Sind jedoch von politischer Mitbestimmung sowohl auf nationaler als auch auf kommunaler Ebene weitgehend ausgeschlossen. Wichtig ist für die „Local Heroes“ die Einförderung selbstverwalteter kommunaler Räume in denen Integration stattfinden kann. Das Ziel Integration selbst wurde allerdings in Frage gestellt. Es erscheint wenig sinnvoll, in die gleichen gesellschaftlichen Verhältnisse zurückzukehren, die Ausschluß produziert haben. Die französische Gruppe DAL berichtete dazu aus ihrer Perspektive der Selbstorganisation Obdachloser, die sich mit spektakulären Aktionen eine Stimme verschaffen.

Im Workshop „Housing is a Civil Right“ mit 40 TeilnehmerInnen aus Europa, Brasilien, Senegal, Mexico u.a. Ländern wurde über aktuelle Entwicklungen im Wohnsektor und beispielhafte Wohnungsbauprojekte diskutiert. Cesare Ottolini (Unione Inquilini, HIC-Focal Point Europe) stellte die Frage, welche Rolle die Europäische Union im Globalisierungsprozess spielt. „Orientiert sich Europa gegen die Globalisierung? Oder ist Europa eine Variable in der Globalisierung? Ich denke, das ist die falsche Alternative. Es geht um einen dritten eigenständigen Weg Europas.“ Ottolini erinnerte daran, dass trotz aller ökonomischer Liberalisierung die EU im Unterschied zur nordamerikanischen NAFTA noch Elemente eines Sozialstaats aufweist. Andererseits sind die zerstörerischen Wirkungen der Maastrichter Verträge auf die sozialen Standards auch im

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Local Heroes and Heroines United

A bientôt à Paris et en Mexique;

Nos verrios en Paris y Mexico,

See you in Paris and Mexico,

Ate' mais-nos vemos em Paris e Mexico;

Arrividerci a presto a Parigi ed in Messico,

Na nu guisse Paris ak Mexico,

Tot ziens in Paris en Mexico,

Do zobaczenia w Paryzu,

Bis bald in Paris und Mexico

Das zu erreichen, haben sich die Local Heroes vorgenommen. Das Treffen der EIJ-Wohnungsbau-Minister im September in Paris ist die nächste Gelegenheit dazu. Die Local Heroes werden auch dort präsent sein.



Local Heroes 21

Our comments on the first draft of the Berlin Declaration 4. July 2000

We would have thought that, if the conference organizers really would have wanted to help cities, they would have made a strong appeal to governments to implement the Habitat Agenda and to substantially increase funds for development cooperation in the urban field.

Paragraph "Most urgent actions"

1. Can urban policies be as effective for the poor as they are for the rich? If you talk about administration – who controls it?
2. Why not "eliminate poverty" by policies of redistribution and public work, quality education and health services which are equally available for all citizens?
3. But for which citizens? A rich peoples' economy or job opportunities for the poor? And what about social and cultural development?
4. Who defines "appropriate", and why not legalise the informal economy accounts for at least 50 percent of the economy?
5. Why global competitiveness and not global solidarity?
6. But how? Does it include the "problem-areas"?
7. Always sought after but never achieved – will the car industry accept this?
8. Why not discuss ecological racism: the export of garbage and toxic waste, polluted ground, water etc.
9. "Without discrimination": as for immigrants, Afro-Americans and latinos in the USA or the "untouchables" in India.
10. Why "Good Governance" and not "social justice"? By this we mean equal access to fundamental rights such as housing, schools, social services, clean air, water and sanitation.
11. Does "urban development" mean equitable redistribution of urban space or reappropriations and evictions?
12. Why not people-to-people networking?
13. Is the World Bank ready to forgive the debt of the "Third World"?

Draft: Protest note against Repression

For the attention of Mr. Klimmt, Federal Ministry of Housing and Traffic
Prof.Dr. Töpfer, All the Mayors presently in Berlin

Repression against the Welcome-Action of Local Heroes at 3rd July 2000 in front of ICC

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We, the assembly of "Local Heroes 21" express our concern about the police action against our well-meaning and totally peaceful gesture of 4th July, 2000.

Participants of Local Heroes 21 just wanted to inform the participants of Urban 21 about our complementary NGO-Event in ufa-Fabrik Berlin. In addition, we wanted to express some of our most urgent issues and demands. We handed out our conference-newspaper to the guests arriving at the ICC. Participants also displayed two banners, one with demands in brazilian language, another with the symbol of Italian Tenants' Union (UI).

Suddenly, the police put up a fence to define Urban 21 as a "no-go-area" for Local Heroes 21. They also violently detained one of our friends, Manuela Hoffmann, for identification. The police claimed she was responsible for organising an illegal demonstration.

We are surprised about the way the police of the capital of Germany and the organizer of an international conference behave towards the representatives of NGOs and urban popular movements from all over the world.

Exclusion and repression is not the way to solve the problems of our cities.

We demand:

- Support, instead of the criminalisation of the movements of the urban inhabitants.
- The suspension of legal proceedings against our friend, Ms Hoffmann.

Interview with Charna Furman, HIC Montevideo

What's your opinion about the URBAN 21 conference?

I don't believe in all what political personalities say. Often there are more words than facts. But after all the international conferences, especially after Habitat II, the subject of the cities is beginning to be an important theme for politicians.

I was specially interested in the final panel and I liked it very much. I think it's good, that political personalities start to speak about this subject. And we, the NGOs have to consider what they say, because they are facts and we can't change them totally. So we have to listen to them and we mustn't think, that all what they say is wrong. But we have to mediate it.

The final panel was moving. The voice of the NGOs, spoken by the HIC president Kirtee Shah from India, got a lot of applause from the whole audience. This seemed to me really fantastic. He said: Well, it's all really nice here, but what about the poor, the excluded? What can we do to ensure that what we are doing remains not only in words but become a reality?

What do you think about the Local Heroes meeting?

It's very interesting. It's important that the civil society, the academics and the professionals, which work directly together with people who need to improve their living conditions, meet each other.

At the Habitat II conference we were much more integrated. Here at URBAN 21 it seems that they don't pay attention to us. So there is no other way. I recognise therefore, that it was necessary to organise this parallel forum. But sometimes it makes it impossible for us to participate at interesting events there. But by all means I am very pleased that I was invited to the Local Heroes conference.

By Doris Deiglmayr



Fotos: Mike Jespersen

First draft of the Berlin Declaration on Urban Future: A critique

■ by Doris Deiglmayr

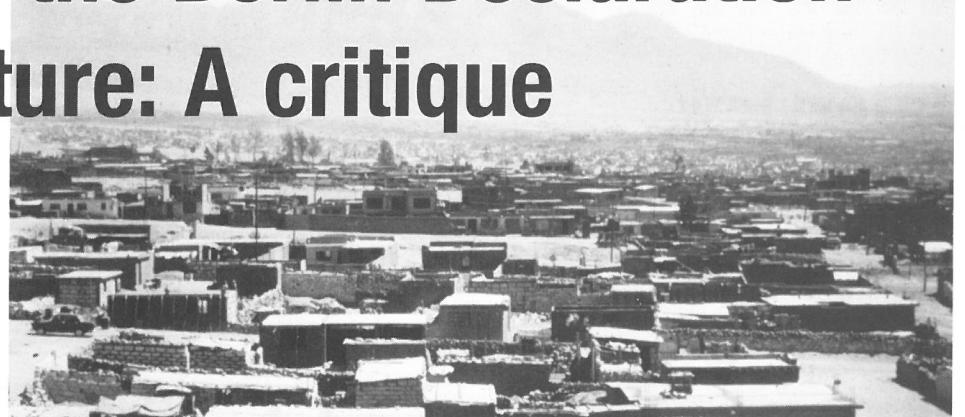
On Tuesday-afternoon the participants of Local Heroes received the first news about the proceeding of Urban 21. Peter Marcuse, professor for urban planning at the Columbia University, New York and participant of the Global Conference at the ICC, came as messenger to the grassroots-meeting in the ufa-Fabrik and brought the first draft of the Berlin declaration on the Urban Future.

He started his statement to the Global Conference with a harsh critique to the report of Urban 21, which was prepared by a special commission of the Urban 21-participants and is available for 49,- marks. The report is "relatively academic" and "a mix of wishful thinking, full of abstract and meaningless ideas", criticises Marcuse citing a statement of John Friedman. Crucial words like "power", "justice", "redistribution", "conflict", "eviction", "north-south gap", "winners and losers", "guestworker" etc. were not mentioned in the text. "And of course the word 'capitalism' doesn't appear".

It is the same case with the Berlin Declaration. The first draft of the declaration bristles with cautious statements, which avoid to take a clear position. The paper starts with a consideration of actual realities like the explosive growth of cities in the developing world, increasing poverty in cities, the ageing population in some cities, the great diversity in which we are living etc. It

continues taking into account trends like globalisation, the information technology revolution, the interconnection of cities and speaks about more evenly distributed power, increasingly democratic governance of cities and new partnerships between public sector, private sector and civil society. After affirming some principles like sustainable development, good governance, subsidiarity, interdependence and human solidarity, and mentioning "certain common aspirations" of all human beings like freedom from poverty, adequate housing, ecological harmony, sufficient income etc. the draft of the Berlin Declaration recommends some urgent actions.

At this point, the declaration shows the indecision of Urban 21-participants. The majority of the recommendations glitter with cautious and ambiguous formulations: "Cities should strive to alleviate poverty", they "should strive to promote local economic development", and "where appropriate, consider accepting and integrating the informal economy and settlements".



The recommendations include the development of an appropriate public transport, the achieving of a balance between natural and built environment, government of cities without discrimination, promotion of education etc. But through all of them shines one single idea: the global competitiveness. And therefore, the synthesis of the declaration, according to Peter Marcuse is: "Cities must adapt to the global market".

Spotlights

Planning for Real

Tuesday afternoon Tony Gibson from the Neighbourhood Initiatives Foundation gave a very lively introduction to the participatory planning method "Planning for Real". It was a good presentation, that got the audience involved in the process. We placed cards that read: "village green", "motor-bike safety training", "buildings of shared use" etc. on a home made 3D model. Due to lack of time, we did not get through the process of filtering out and sorting them out in terms of "now", "soon" or "later", but we did get a general idea of the method. By the end of the session, we could say that we learned about one more method that we can integrate into planning and community involvement.

Kaushambi Shah, student of architecture, Bombay, India:

"It is a very open conference, it is open to all kind of views, that is a very good thing. The most interesting thing for me is that there is a new way of looking at how to help people for things like housing – you are not designing with your own view, your are actually participating and having intimate contact with the people and are then trying to find solutions. In India, this is not the way things happen there, maybe on a small scale – but it is a new idea."

Carsten Hermann, student of architecture, Berlin-Weissensee

"I find it very interesting to see all these different opinions you normally don't come to know in such a large variety"

Local Heroes 21 are Alternatives to Institutional Thinking

Interview

with Ms Somsook Boonyabancha, ACHR
– Prasad Reddy

Ms Somsook Boonyabancha, General Secretary of the Asian Coalition of Human Rights (ACHR), represented ACHR at the Urban 21 Conference yesterday, and was here today to dialog with the Local Heroes. She also works for a national organisation in Thailand, Urban Community Development Office that organises the Urban Community Development Fund providing loans for community activities. She speaks below of her impressions about Urban 21, the housing situation in Asia and the significance of Local Heroes. She authored and distributed a paper titled "A New Vision for Housing Rights in Asia" during the Conference.

Prasad: What is your interest in being here at the Local Heroes 21 Conference?

Boonyabancha: I think it is interesting to know how alternative groups are thinking. In our society we have the formal system and the informal system. Local Heroes 21 represent the informal system which in some way is simple, easier and to the point: no need for too much form, nice language, but rather hit the point and so on.

P: So, you want to have more the alternative view of things.

B: Yes, it is quite important in our society. As we know, the formal system does not work very much, especially in the developing countries. So, we also have to find a lot more, the alternative processes, alternative ways of doing things which does not stick too much to the form. Rather, stick to the truth, and to the reality.

P: You were a delegate at the Urban 21 Conference. Many Habitat activists yesterday criticised the Urban 21 Conference as „elitist“ and too expensive for the common people and they were excluded from the process. How do you then fit your participation there into your search for alternative ways of thinking?

B: (smiling...) Yeah, well, all my life is "alternative". I have been working with the alternative process, not too much of a formal process: I am working for a fund which helps in the urban poor development process in our country. It is a new kind of organisation. We have also set up the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights. It is a coalition of regional people. That is an alternative process, because we are people who fight to get things done. So, all my life has been involved with different kinds of alternative organisations. I think, perhaps, in that position I have been invited to the Urban 21 also. The formal system realised the limitation of what they have been doing and they like to see how the other alternative systems of learning could help break the limitations of the system. There are also some positive people in the formal system, with whom we

should have a link. There is no black and white way of doing things.

P: You suggested in your paper distributed at the Local Heroes Conference that we have to find a new way of fighting for housing rights. What do you mean?

B: Most of the Housing Rights campaign in the world is too much concentrated on the legal rights-how to make it legal, framing laws favoring the poor, the UN declarations, international treaties that countries should ratify and so on. In my view, legal rights is just one aspect. If we want to achieve Housing Rights, there are other ways of doing that too. In a society, the relationship of the people and the state are so varied and complex that, new, legal provisions would not mean anything. People do not know that they have the power, that they can fight for it themselves and so on. I think the legal rights must be the outcome of the change in the relationship between the poor who do not have rights and the system.

poor people to have access to the housing that they are entitled to have. Another thing is that eviction is not done too much by the state. Of course, they do it through the courts and so on. But it happens more because of economic motivation. The landlords, wanting to develop their land evict the people because then, the development opportunity is greater. This economic opportunity motivates eviction more than anything else today, unlike in the past, when, for instance, the military forced the people to evict.

P: Can you, in short, say how the Urban 21 Conference help your region-Thailand or, in general, Asia?

B: I think, in general, the direction of Urban 21 is good. It is quite important to look at the city as more integrated unit and how the city has its own identity and to explore ways of making it more liveable. All these concepts that your Chancellor and all others at the Plenary expressed were all excellent concepts. But, we have to find a way of implementing them. This is a key issue now—the "programme of implementation". We say that we want the city to be equal, to be good for all sections of society and so on. But, the question is: how do we achieve that? A meeting of this kind should not become a big session of preaching. It is not enough to show that we are really nice people with good attitude. We have to look more seriously into implementation. Because we have not been looking enough into the institutionalisation of change process by people. People have too much positive attitude and think, by having good attitude, they already become good people. Attitude is not enough. We have to see the political structures, and see how different systems allow the disadvantaged to have a place in society. Because the existing, international institutions are not delivering the goods and yet, most of the money goes into international institutions without producing change. Therefore, it is important to influence such institutions.

P: In your paper, you suggested the involvement of professionals and academics in the efforts at improving peoples' participation. In what form?

B: I made many suggestions. But, I think, "the people" is the main thing. The people themselves may not have enough information. I think the force of change would come only through the strengthening process of the people and the knowledge, the information which the professionals and people put together would initiate a broader process in society. Otherwise, the people alone may not understand the situation of the society – the relation between the formal and informal sector. The professionals could bridge this gap.

P: Can Local Heroes 21 help in some way?

B: I think the alternative processes like Local Heroes 21 should be more well equipped. We should avoid just becoming some oppositional voice-just saying "no" to something and some people. We need, rather, to understand the elements of change. We should be able to point out the right process forward, if we think that Urban 21 is not on the right way. We need to develop an alternative strategy which can lead to change. We need to be more thought out and more analytical and understand the situation more. We still have to keep opposing the governments, but we need to do it in a higher, better quality so that people will listen. We need to explore more deeply the political process and find the right points of intervention. We should make our intervention count. An intervention that informs policy making and change process.

P: Thank you very much and good luck.

Urban Future 21: Welche Städte neu erfinden?



Auszug aus einem Artikel von John Friedmann.

John Friedmann, seit über 30 Jahren eine der kritischen Stimmen der Stadtplanung und Stadtentwicklung, bezieht in seinem Artikel „Urban Future 21: Welche Städte neu erfinden?“* eine Position zum Urban 21 Report Reinventing the City. Er antwortet auf die seiner Ansicht nach maßgeblichen sieben Thesen des selbsternannten Weltreports, wobei er einschränkt, dass „Reinventing the City“ weniger ein Bericht über politische Maßnahmen ist, als ein Versuch, einen ideologischen Rahmen für urbane Entwicklung auf globaler Basis zu erstellen. Seine Stellungnahmen zu zwei der Thesen von Reinventing the City sind hier wiedergegeben:

„Die Autoren von Reinventing the City behaupten, daß zum Ende des gegenwärtigen Jahrhunderts: 1) nahezu die ganze Welt in einem einzigen globalen Netzwerk zusammenleben wird, angetrieben durch weltweiten Wettbewerb; (...) 4) erfolgreiche Städte des 21. Jahrhunderts sich an der Erfahrung derjenigen Städte, die sich im späten 20. Jahrhundert erfolgreich entwickelt haben, orientieren können; (...)“

ohne Widerstand für ein weiteres Jahrhundert fortsetzen, auch wird nicht die Möglichkeit in Betracht gezogen, dass entgegengesetzte Kräfte ins Spiel kommen: interurbane Kooperationen, die erfolgreich die Verminderung der Macht globaler corporations einschränken; das Erstarken des Nationalstaates im Interesse des Umweltschutzes; die globale Vernetzung von Gewerkschaften und sozialen Bewegungen; oder ein völlig anderes Szenario: Urbaner Kollaps, Umweltkatastrophen, an verschiedenen Orten gleichzeitig ausbrechende Bürgerkriege mit Völkermord und ähnliche Gräuel. (...)

Zu These 4:

Dies ist eine weitere geläufige Platte: „Beste Praktiken“ (best practices). Sollen diejenigen, die uns folgen, von unseren Erfolgen lernen! Welches sind die Modellstädte der Vergangenheit? Zwei fallen uns auf Anhieb ein: Curitiba (Brasilien) und Singapur. Diese Modelle werden seit mindestens einem Jahrzehnt gepriesen, aber bislang habe ich noch keine Beispiele für Curitiba II oder Singapur II entdeckt. Warum ist dies der Fall, trotz aller publicity, die diese Städte begleitet hat? Der simple Grund dafür ist, dass keine zwei Städte identisch sind. Wenn man sich eine Stadt genauer ansieht, und das muss man in der Tat tun, wenn man ein Politikrezept verschreiben möchte, findet man schnell heraus, dass zum Beispiel das öffentliche Transportsystem der Stadt, in der ich heute lebe – Melbourne – weder mit Curitiba verglichen werden kann, noch mit der vielzitierten Stadt Toronto. Und das nicht, weil die Transportplaner in Melbourne diese Modelle nicht kennen, sondern weil diese Modelle für die einzigartigen Umstände von Melbourne im Jahr 2000 nicht gelten. Es scheint die Vorstellung zu bestehen, dass man „Lösungen“ aus ihrem spezifischen Kontext isolieren kann, etwa wie in den Naturwissenschaften, um dann in einer Art Transplantationsprozess die Stadt Melbourne ein bisschen mehr wie Toronto zu machen. Es gibt nur wenige Fälle, in denen ein solches Transplantat tatsächlich „anwächst“. (...)

Am Ende überwiegt der Eindruck, dass der Report Reinventing the City – Urban 21 den Untertitel „Das Ende des europäischen Denkens“ tragen sollte. Es ist ein Bericht einer fixen Idee, der annimmt, dass die Welt auf ein einziges Modell der Stadtentwicklung zusteuert. Es ist ein Bericht, der nicht in der Lage ist, alternative Szenarien in Erwägung zu ziehen und daher einfach annimmt, der gegenwärtige Trend werde sich die nächsten hundert Jahre fortsetzen; letztlich zieht er der Analyse die Verortung vor. Es ist äußerst bedauerlich, dass ein so wenig Sinn enthaltender Bericht, den „Grundton“ für die bevorstehende URBAN 21 Konferenz in Berlin angeben soll.

*In Auszügen entnommen dem Reader zum Weltbericht „Und die Welt wird zur Scheibe...“ Herausgegeben von der Arbeitsgruppe „Enquete“ der Berliner Mieter Gemeinschaft e.V.

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■ Spotlights

Ozod Mukhamedsanov, Uzbekistan

■ by Stefan Thimmel

Ozod is the director of the Central Asian Office of LEEP (Law and Environment EURASIA Partnership). The ecologist works since four years in this organisation which facilitates the work between NGOs and the Uzbekistan government.



For example, they are preparing laws about ecological legislation in the Central Asian country, which is independent now for nine years. In his second function, he is coordinator for three of 13 regions in the country for the NGO Network "Gorod Masdorov" (City of the Masters). The Uzbekian NGOs are working in different fields: water, education, youth, disabled people, biodiversity, desertification, women's issues, health, reintegration of former soldiers (war in Afghanistan) etc.

For Ozod it is very important to meet all this people from over 30 countries in Local Heroes Conference. Because the NGO movement in his country has no experience with networking, it is very interesting for him to meet social activists from Mexico, Brasil, South Africa etc. "Networking is so important for living" he said. And also the political culture, which he is noticing here is very important for him. Important and new. "For me it was the first time to see this form of political protest (referring to the protest action of Local Heroes in front of the ICC on Tuesday morning). We have to learn how to bring the pressure from the streets to the government." And he added: "I have seen Kofi Annan and he took a copy of the Local Heroes News paper. Maybe he will read it."



„Wir sind die Experten“

Eigene Aktivität statt Quartiersmanagement

■ von Timon Wehnert

Hängematten e.V. ist eine Stadtteilgruppe in Berlin-Friedrichshain. Die Mitstreiter der Selbsthilfeinitiative decken ein ungewöhnlich großes Spektrum ab: Ostler und Westler im Alter von 20 bis 73 Jahren, Handwerker, Akademiker und Ungelernte ziehen am selben Strang im Engagement für ihren Kiez: Die Lebenssituation der sozial Schwachen – Niedriglohnempfänger, Sozialhilfezieher, Arbeitslosen – soll von diesen selbst verbessert werden. Die Arbeit des Vereins steht dabei auf zwei Säulen: Einerseits der politischen / meinungsbildenden Arbeit, etwa bei der Organisation von Diskussionsrunden und Kongressen. Andererseits werden der sozialen Degradation konkrete Projekte entgegen gesetzt: Soziale Beratung, offene Treffs, aber vor allem ein kulturelles Angebot, bei dem die sozial Ausgrenzten wieder Motivation für neue Aktivitäten schöpfen und eine eigene Sprache finden sollen.

Die Heimat von Hängematten e.V., der Kiez um den Boxhagener Platz in Berlin, hat in den letzten Jahren dramatische Wandlungen erfahren: Nach der Wende 1989/90 gab es einen starken Wegzug der besserverdienenden Bewohner. In den letzten Jahren ziehen vermehrt Studenten (vorwiegend aus Westdeutschland) in den Kiez. Zusätzlich führt die Ver teuerung des Wohnraums, die mit der Modernisierung des Altbaubestandes einhergeht, zu einer Verdrängung der

Einkommensschwachen. Zur Zeit zählt Friedrichshain jedoch zu den ärmsten Bezirken Berlins. In dieser Konstellation erscheint es zunächst verwunderlich, dass sich Hängematten e.V. gegen das vom Senat eingesetzte Quartiersmanagement zur Wehr setzt. Ist es doch das erklärte Ziel des Quartiersmanagements, einer „Ver slumung“ entgegen zu wirken und gerade Arbeitslose und Sozialhilfeempfänger für eigene Initiativen zu motivieren.

In einem Workshop der Local Heroes 21 Konferenz brachte Dr. Constanze Kube von Hängematten e.V. sechs Kritikpunkte am Konzept des Quartiersmanagements zur Sprache:

1. Grundlage des Konzeptes ist eine Kausalitätsumkehr: Letztlich werden den Armen, die nach der Abwanderung der Besserverdienenden im Viertel zurückgeblieben sind, die entstandenen sozialen Probleme zur Last gelegt.
2. Dem Ansatz des Qualitätsmanagements scheint



ein Menschenbild zugrunde zu liegen, das Armut als Krankheit auffasst.

3. Mit Hilfe von Sozialhilfemitteln, die eigentlich zur Verbesserung der persönlichen Lebenssituation der Betroffenen gedacht sind, wird Stadtteilsanierung betrieben.
4. Das Konzept, Besserverdienende zum Zuzug in den Kiez zu bewegen, kommt einer versteckten Verdrängungspolitik gleich, bei der sozial Schwache vertrieben werden.
5. Das Quartiersmanagement ist ein undemokratisches Verfahren.
6. Durch die Vergabe an eine Firma findet eine Privatisierung öffentlicher Aufgaben statt.

Als Alternative fordert Hängematten e.V. eine verstärkte Förderung bereits bestehender Bürgerinitiativen. Constanze Kube: „Für unsere eigenen Befindlichkeiten und für unsere eigene Armut sind wir die Experten“



No solutions but ways forward

Interview with Marcelo Waschl, Misereor, about his impression on Urban 21

■ by Birgit Laue

Yesterday morning there were several empty talks by ministers etc. Kofi Annan was the only one who integrated the suffering of the countries of the South into his speech. In the afternoon, there was a forum in which the report has been presented, but with two exceptions, there wasn't any critical thinking about poverty. If you talk about one world, you should talk about one city as well. There are local particularities, but on a certain level the same problems exist. In future, we have to look especially at small and medium sized towns and cities, because they will eventually have more problems. And we also have to talk about political action and problems of distribution. Urban 21 tries to present solutions, but there can't be solutions. We can only find ways. This is what is happening at the Local Heroes conference.

Hopefully, at the NGO forum tonight there will be enough space for proposals and demands. But it is important that the concrete action proposals are monitored. A UN sub-commission should be formed to monitor the follow-up. The time has come to act and cities that don't act in a democratic way should be rejected and the whole world should know about it.

„Urbanisme et Democratie“

Eine wachsame Stadtteilgruppe für selbstbestimmte Wohnumwelt und soziale Integration im 14. Arrondissement von Paris

Seit 1993 vereint die Stadtteilgruppe Urbanisme et Democratie Bewohner/innen, Künstler/innen, Händler/innen und sonstige Liebhaber/innen des 14. Arrondissements. Ziel ist die Beteiligung der Bürger an Entscheidungen, die ihre Wohnumwelt verändern, die Wahrung der Lebensqualität und der Erhalt der sozialen, ökonomischen und kulturellen Diversität.

Verschiedene Arbeitsgruppen stehen allen Bewohner(inne)n offen und bieten regelmäßig Gelegenheit, sich zu einem Thema der lokalen Wohnumwelt auszutauschen: Bebauungsplan, Grünanlagen, Konservierung von geschichtsträchtigen Gebäuden des Stadtteils, Umwelt und Verkehr, Schaffung von „Stadtteilhäusern“ für die Ausübung der soziokulturellen Aktivitäten der zahlreichen Gruppen und Vereine.

Die Stadtteilgruppe hat einen Stand auf dem Wochenmarkt, wo Informationstafeln zu aktuel-

len Problemen ausgestellt werden, das monatlich erscheinende Bulletin verteilt wird, Unterschriftensammlungen stattfinden und Feste angekündigt werden.

Parallel dazu organisieren die Mitglieder regelmäßige Treffen zum Kennenlernen und Austauschen von Ideen und Informationen.

Ein geselliger Rahmen bietet die Grundlage des Netzwerkes: Kostenloses Freilichtkino, Nachbarschaftssessen im Freien und Stadtteilfeste zu allen Jahreszeiten.

Alle Veranstaltungen sind kostenlos und werden aus den Mitgliedsbeiträgen und Spenden finanziert (140 Mitglieder, Jahresbeitrag 50 FF/14 DM).

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The only successful case in the housing movement of Poland

After the change of the political system in 1989 in Poland to a democratic, free market country there rose up several problems between landlords and tenants. The only victorious case in which a tenant-organisation succeeded in fighting for their interests is described by Zygmundt R. Kich from Kraków in the following way:

"The 'Defence Committee of All the Residents of the (city of) Zabrze Steelworks' was founded when two years ago the 1818 flats owned by the bankrupted Zabrze Steelworks were sold to a private buyer for 48 PLN a square meter! (the price is ridiculous, I remind the newly built flats costs from 2000 PLN/sq. m to 4000 PLN, and even more). The buyer immediately offered the existing residents their dwellings, yet for 500 - 700 PLN a meter. The Committee, composed of the former Steelworks' employees and pensioners and headed by Mrs. Adach, who seems to be a very energetic and brave woman, began desperate struggle in defence of their homes. They met and urged numerous authorities, officials, VIPs and MPs, organised multiple demonstrations, and finally succeeded: Poland's Parliament passed a bill that tells the buyers of such estates (i.e. formerly owned by the state-run enterprises) to sell back the houses at the same price if requested by the residents. The act was empowered on June the 1st earlier this year. The latest news is that thousand requests have been submitted to the said buyer, and now Mrs. Adach wants to arrange something like a round table meeting with the buyer, the Committee and the local authorities so to pass first the blocks to the municipality and then let the residents to buy their flats".

Local Agenda 21: Incentives for Action: Practicable Examples

Agenda in Action-It is alive: According to the motto "learning from experiences and good examples" in this brand new publication in english there are chosen 16 different projects to suggest a way to a sustainable and humane future. Among the projects are examples, that show new consumption patterns and lifestyle, we mention sustainable economic production as well as the specific needs and wishes of children and teenagers, of migrants and women. Last but not least we present opportunities for civil participation.

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