

Squat Tempelhof!

Public mass occupation of the former Tempelhof Airport on 20th June, 2009

On October 31, 2008, Tempelhof Airport in Berlin was closed, leaving an open space of around 400 hectares (525 football fields) in the middle of the city. Something that sounded good at first, could instead be catastrophic for residents of the surrounding area. The Berlin Senate plans to build luxury apartments and room for the so-called creative industries on the land. Until their plans are realized, the whole land will remain fenced in and be increasingly heavily guarded.

We have experienced such measures before. The Senate planned the large-scale development of the banks of the river Spree, attempting to attract investment and cooperations with media partners, in so doing changing dramatically the structure of the city. A widespread movement managed to prevent some of the building projects and created a public debate about the ongoing neo-liberal restructuring of the city. Various initiatives and actions continue to fight against this form of redevelopment.

The plans for Tempelhof Airport are an important part of the Senate's redevelopment strategy. Investors are being wooed and invited to put forward their town planning and development proposals, through which accessible space in the city is being privatised and made more exclusive. This brings about more comfortable living and working conditions for those who can afford it. However, for everyone else it means only increased rent, requiring many to leave the environment in which they feel they belong. The division of the city is not a phenomenon particular only to Berlin; all over the world cities and regions battle against each other to show their most attractive face to potential international investors. This situation is no accident of fate, but rather is intricately bound up with the capitalist economic and social order.

In the case of Tempelhof we are at the beginning of such a process. We want to intercede at this early stage and set an example, to show that we will not accept the neo-liberal transformation of our city. We have many ideas about how the land could be put to uncommercial uses that reflect the needs of the local community. We want to decide over the new usage of the land for ourselves!

Therefore we would like to invite one and all to the

Occupation of the Tempelhof open space

on 20.06.2009

There will be many of us, united in anger that we have not been given the chance to influence what happens in our immediate surroundings. We demand that the Senate removes the fences! If they do not, we will resort to civil disobedience to take the land. Our methods are as multi-faceted as the members of our movement. We are the family from next door, the Neukölln crew, the autonomous, the punk, the illegalised, the unemployed, people with dogs, international activists, the fun fanatics and so on... There are countless ideas for uncommercial usage of the land: cheap living places, trailer parks, theatres, intercultural gardens and parks, barbecue areas, cultural centres, skate parks, adventure parks, museums, agricultural use...

Be creative! Go wild! Take the free space!

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