

# PLANNERS NETWORK

PN '97: Pomona, CA  
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January, 1997

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## Progressive Planners: Thinking Globally

by Tom Angotti

Supposedly "globalization" has become the beacon that lights the way to a new techie dreamworld without bothersome borders, laws, organized labor and local folk. Clinton loves it and Newt loves it. It's supposed to be the bridge to the 21st century, as inevitable as the sunrise. We're told that protest and planning is futile while in the grip of this monstrous invisible hand.

Many Planners Network members are daily involved in efforts to disprove such popular nostrums perpetrated by the mainstream. Progressive planners are working with communities that are standing in the way of the market-driven bulldozers and developing alternative futures that incorporate needs neglected by the market. We invited some of

these PN members to share with us their experiences and observations. From South Africa, Allan Mabin writes about the tension and conflict between the process of democratization and the process of globalization. Dario Vergara discusses the differing views of decentralization in Latin America, and shows how globalization imperatives can interfere with genuine decentralization of political and economic power. Richard Milgrom shows how a neighborhood in a small Canadian city at the periphery of global capital faced up to and challenged globalization trends. And Ayse Yonder examines how local organizing and networking among grassroots groups throughout the world can help change public policy and build a global network.

## Support Planners Network!

Planners Network is the only national voice for progressive planning that is focused on issues of racial, economic, and environmental justice. Without your financial support, it cannot continue.

Last year was quite a successful year for Planners Network, and 1997 promises more of the same. With special newsletter issues on Sustainable Communities, Transportation, and Public Housing all in the works, a conference planned for June in California, and renewed interest in organizing local chapters around the country, Planners Network will continue to grow and reach more people.

But these accomplishments don't come cheaply. Planners Network has always operated on a shoestring budget, depending solely on member contributions, volunteer

efforts and in-kind contributions. But the rising costs of printing and postage have left us with a 1996 operating deficit of \$5,000, and we're projecting a similar situation for 1997.

Our membership is our strongest asset, and your continued interest and involvement are important. While we intend to maintain our policy of providing subscriptions to members who cannot afford to contribute financially, we expect all members to give something. **We need your financial support to help us continue publication.** Check the date on your mailing label; that's the last time you contributed to PN. Review the suggested contributions listed on page 16, and please consider contributing an even greater amount to help us continue in our efforts to connect and mobilize progressive planners.

# Globalization Meets Reform in South African Cities

by Alan Mabini

The progressive political changes ushered in by the elections of 1994 have brought major urban policy changes in South Africa. The rhetoric of physically and socially integrating the dispersed and spatially divided cities is heard everywhere. New national programs in housing and urban infrastructure have been introduced and some of their results are visible.

But thus far, these new programs have had little impact on the broad structure of urban society and space. While it is still possible to be optimistic about their longer term results, the present changes in South African cities also reflect globalization processes familiar in other parts of the world. Globalization trends intermingle with local political changes to produce a mixed outlook for the future.

Underlying much of what is happening in urban South Africa is the stagnation -- and decline in some places -- of formal, regular employment. The substantial and protected industrial base is being eroded, in part by its own inefficiency, in the face of increasing global competition. Reorganization in other sectors has threatened employment growth there too. The long term major spheres of employment -- mining, transport, and even domestic paid work -- are all shrinking their workforces. And government, unlike the situation in other African countries, is inclined to do the same. At the same time incomes in management and the professions have probably never been higher. These sectors are still predominantly white, but they are shifting rapidly towards a greater black composition, with incipient consequences for the racial-social structure of the society. All of these changes have been in progress for over a decade, and greater exposure to the wider world has served to accelerate them.

These changes take place against the backdrop of immigration patterns whose impacts are difficult to predict. There is increasing migration from far-flung African regions such as Zaire to the relatively wealthy urban South Africa. Also, circular migration patterns linking rural and urban areas within South Africa persist. These trends are likely to have profound consequences for the aspirations and abilities of urban residents. Large proportions of recently urbanized populations must accept irregular and often illegal activity as the basis of their material survival, while the luxuries of modern life such as mobile phones, fast cars, CD players and exotic furniture are enjoyed by others living or working adjacent to grinding poverty.

Two particular aspects of urban change are notable: growing informalization and suburbanization.

In and near the townships made famous by their struggles against apartheid in the eighties, as well as in the centers of

many older towns and cities, people without regular employment increasingly get by on incomes from small scale and highly peripheral activities, like selling things on the sidewalk. Increasingly people without regular incomes resort to informal and inadequate forms of shelter. This is not at all a new phenomenon, but it has continued to expand and deepen the contrast between the informalizing areas and the formal, often wealthy, suburbs.

Suburbanization is most extreme to the north of Johannesburg, though it affects all South African cities. Long gone are the days when the South African suburbs were only areas of white residential affluence, with women at home in low density surroundings and men at work in city centers. Present Suburbanization means extraordinarily luxurious, vast marble-tiled shopping malls, smart row housing in complexes behind security walls, and heavy traffic all day long. The better-off of both genders move between multiple suburban places of work and consumption while ordinary workers must increasingly commute long distances from townships or older suburbs to jobs in the suburban office complex or mall. And the demise of rigid apartheid means that a growing, though still small, part of the suburban population not working as domestics is black.

The combined consequence of informalization and Suburbanization is a polarization in the use of space which matches the polarization of classes. Older urban environments have also been profoundly affected, with some signs of building abandonment in inner city areas and a degree of

tenementing (sharing and subletting) in some city neighborhoods. Thus, new forms of fragmentation and segregation of space are emerging.

Levels of violence in some areas of South African cities are as high as any in the world. It is not surprising that the worst excesses of violence are perpetrated within the poorest communities. In other areas people enjoy summer evenings at sidewalk cafes (apparently a phenomenon linked to globalization) as though peace reigned throughout the city.

A few years ago South African cities were characterized by predominantly single-class and single-use zones in space. Now we see powerful shifts towards far greater complexity and overlapping land uses. This has occurred in the cities where new boundaries have been drawn, and new, democratically elected forms of government have burst upon the scene. One reason for continued optimism, despite the depth of polarization, is the possibility that at least some new local governments may get their act together and take advantage of the new opportunities, even if only to mit-

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# Winnipeg: Local Resistance to Globalization

by Richard Milgrom

Small marginal cities are just as vulnerable to globalization as large metropolitan areas. But smaller, marginal centers may provide clearer illustrations of the benefits of community-based planning strategies, clearer than those buried in the complexities of major cities. A look at two projects in Winnipeg, Canada – Portage Place and North Logan – shows how community organizing can make a difference in shaping the impact of global trends in smaller cities.

Winnipeg is an isolated city of 650,000 in the Canadian prairies. Over the last 30 years, its population has remained fairly stable, growing at an average rate of less than 1% per year. Its economic base is quite weak. Although it originally benefited from the surrounding rich agricultural lands, agricultural functions are generally undervalued in current global economics. And while it originally capitalized on a bottleneck in the Canadian rail system as tracks were forced between rough terrain to the north and the US border to the south, this advantage was undermined as early as 1914 by the opening of the Panama Canal.

In the late 70s and early 80s, the federal, provincial and municipal governments developed programs intended to revitalize the downtown area. The Core Area Initiatives (CAI) undertook several large scale projects that relied on the assembly of vacant land, apparently with the hope that capital would flood in to fill the voids left in the urban fabric. One such initiative focused on

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igate some of the worst effects of processes presently at work. The extent to which the resources of the public sector are applied to this task will depend on the nature of organizing at the community level. But community organizing is still recovering from the enormous shock of democratization. Many previous community leaders are now in national or local government, organizations have had a hard time adapting to new circumstances, and the future is wide open.

Thus the formal end of apartheid has coincided with other

the north side of Portage Avenue, the major east-west street in the business district. As a shopping destination, Portage was suffering as suburban malls grew in popularity. Two major department stores anchored the south side of Portage Avenue and a relatively stable collection of small shops filled the few blocks between them. However, the north side was considered an eyesore, dominated by pinball arcades and short tenancy clearance outlets. Over several years, land was acquired by the city and buildings demolished without any concrete plans for redevelopment. Eventually, various concessions and incentives were used to convince an international developer to build a mall. Above-grade walkways connect the mall with the "anchor" department stores across the street, creating a variation on the conventional shopping center formula.

Portage Place, as the mall is known, attempts to compete with its suburban relatives by mimicking them. However, it does not provide the convenience of free parking or the proximity to suburban residential areas. Standardized mall interiors and homogeneous facades neutralize the uniqueness of its situation within the city and deny the extremes of the Winnipeg climate. It has contributed to the demise of city life, by eliminating pedestrian traffic on Winnipeg's major shopping

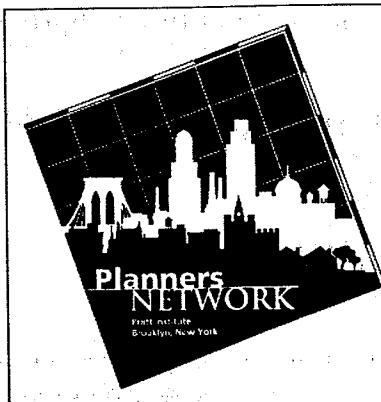
*Winnipeg / page 4*

changes affecting cities. Many of these changes are similar to the ones that globalization is delivering throughout the world. Planning responses as yet remain limited. Local economic development planning delivers a discourse of competitiveness, but thus far no jobs. And physical land use planning is in disarray.

Looking at the increasing social and economic polarization taking place in South African cities in the new democratic era, it is easy to feel uncertain about the urban future. The same uncertainty seems to stalk the global urban future. The next few years will show whether democracy in South Africa can continue to offer optimism to planners and organizers in other parts of the world.

*The ideas expressed here will be expanded in a chapter from a forthcoming book edited by Peter Marcuse and Ronald van Kempen.*

*PN'er Alan Mabin is a professor of planning at the University of Witwatersrand in South Africa, and runs a research program which focuses on institutional issues around planning and advises post-Apartheid governments on planning issues.*



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# Best Practices: Following up on Habitat II

by Ayse Yonder

Probably the most significant message of the United Nations Habitat II Conference was its recognition of local governments and civic organizations as key actors in dealing with poverty and habitat related problems. This message was, of course, no coincidence at a time of government cutbacks, and privatization of social services all over the world. Still, it has provided a favorable environment and some opportunity for international networking and capacity building among civil society organizations and grassroots groups (otherwise known as NGO's – non-governmental organizations).

The networking has continued since the conference. The proliferation of follow-up initiatives since last June is an indication of the determination of NGOs' to implement their gains at Habitat II. Most of these initiatives were started by NGOs (though mostly from the North) and supported by regional and international agencies. They are geared to documenting best practices, building partnerships, and facilitating networking and exchange

## Winnipeg / continued from page 3

street and, by internalizing the flow on the north side, has destroyed the stability of the smaller retail outlets on the south side. The mall is not doing well.

Another CAI initiated project sought to create employment opportunities for inner-city residents by providing a downtown, "high tech" industrial park in the North Logan area. The city hoped that new industries, particularly those from the emerging sectors of electronics and biotechnology, would be attracted to a central location. These ambitions, however, were not only about creating jobs for inner-city residents. The emphasis on attracting new industries showed a desire for growth, while targeting emerging technologies illustrated the desire to make new connections with the global economy (if not as a center of capital, at least as a site of production with strong links to the centers).

As with Portage Place, expropriation and assembly of the necessary land started without any assurance developers would be found for the sites. Unlike the shopping center, the North Logan area included an existing residential community, members of which were not consulted about their fate. Local residents mounted a "Save North Logan" campaign to protest the expropriation orders. The fortuitous election of a left of center provincial government provided the funding necessary to mount a community planning process of their own.

The community's campaign to save their homes focused on pointing out the biases of those city officials who deemed the residential neighborhood expendable. However, to avoid accusations that they, too, had biases about the neighborhood, they employed neutral consultants to carry out evaluations of the existing housing and services. The community also pointed to the mistaken assumptions of the planners who said that new jobs would be created for inner-city residents. The community's

among local government and civil society organizations. The best practices program established by the United Nations Center for Human Settlements (UNCHS) is probably the most comprehensive and well defined of such programs.

One must give credit to MegaCities, Inc. as the predecessor of current best practices programs, and for helping various international agencies formulate their own. For almost a decade, MegaCities has been acting as a clearinghouse to facilitate exchange and implementation of urban innovations among some of the largest cities throughout the world. It has developed and refined three sets of criteria for evaluating innovations (i.e., impact criteria, operational criteria, and value criteria, which might still be problematic for a conventional social scientist to operationalize) and set up a decentralized organizational structure for the gathering and implementation of urban innovations.

————— *Best Practices / page 5*

research indicated that the anticipated industries would require highly skilled labor and that very few positions would be accessible to an inner-city population that included many with low incomes and little post-secondary education. Their own plan for the area, the spirit of which was eventually adopted by the CAI, included a compromise development proposal that allowed for a smaller industrial area and a consolidated residential neighborhood (many of the houses were vacant). The plan attempted to accommodate both city-wide and local needs and has resulted in the location of some industrial jobs in the core area, and the stabilization of a deteriorating neighborhood.

What lessons can we learn from Portage Place and North Logan? Portage Place has not improved the image of Portage Avenue but shifted the problem from one side of the street to the other. Nor has it added anything that was not already available at numerous other locations in the city. It has, in fact, reduced the diversity of the urban environment.

Had the North Logan industrial park proceeded as planned it is unlikely that it would have attracted the industries that were targeted (they have not been attracted to any other Winnipeg industrial parks). A community would have been destroyed in the process and the lives of residents unnecessarily disrupted. The community-based planning process resulted in a compromise that created job opportunities for the local residents and improved the neighborhood. As a result a new industry located in the core area, meeting one of the city's objectives.

Perhaps the critical lesson is that the best incentive for growth is to improve the quality of life for those who already live in cities.

*PN'er Richard Milgrom is a student at York University.*

# Decentralization in Latin America: Neoliberalism or Democracy?

by *Dario Vergara*

Over the last two decades, many of Latin America's highly centralized governments have promoted decentralization. They often say they are doing it to strengthen democracy and promote the integration of social, economic and environmental policies.

Although there is a general consensus on the need for decentralization, there are at least two different strategic models in use. One is concerned with efficiency and new forms of local service delivery. The other is concerned with democracy, participation, and reducing the distance between government and governed.

There is frequently little connection between these two perspectives. And they usually fail to include civil society as an actor in the process.

## DECENTRALIZATION LAWS AND REFORMS

Political and administrative decentralization are not to be found in the history of Latin American governments. Since indepen-

dence from Spain, the state has been highly centralized. Decentralization runs against the historical trend as reflected in the modern constitutions of Latin American governments.

In recent years, the decentralization process has advanced not because of internal political dynamics but the new global context, in which the restructuring of the world economy calls for a new role for dependent countries. Many countries have promulgated new laws or drastically changed existing laws governing local and regional governments.

In Chile, this tendency began during the dictatorship and was advanced in 1992, when municipal governments were freely elected. In Bolivia, municipal reform was initiated in 1985 with the election of local authorities and local taxation and spending authority. In Venezuela, governors and mayors were first elected in 1989, and in 1991 some central government functions were transferred to states and municipalities. In Brazil, legislation in

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The UNCHS Best Practices and Local Leadership Program (BLP) is organized around similar principles. It has evolved from the initial Best Practices Initiative as part of the preparatory process and a major exhibit at Habitat II into a partnership program. The BLP now has a decentralized organizational structure, is run by a board of partners and leaves documentation, analysis, outreach and dissemination of best practices to regional and thematic resource centers or partners. Its reporting format and criteria are currently being upgraded and gender sensitized. Its product is a CD-ROM set, and a virtual center on the Internet (<http://www.bestpractices.org>) -- a paying service and a networking tool.

What might be the benefits of an international information and exchange program to local level and grassroots organizations?

The first response that comes to mind is political legitimacy. International visibility and recognition is crucial for legitimizing the activities of NGO's in countries where any local organizing is viewed as opposition to the government. Second, networking among grassroots and civic organizations, whether at the local, regional or international level, is an opportunity to disseminate, exchange and replicate system-challenging strategies and alternative solutions that would otherwise end up as isolated experiences.

The strengthening and democratizing of social interaction at the micro-level is a key element in the process of social change. Moreover, unlike the top-down single-shot technology transfer approach, peer learning and exchange leads to sustainable adaptation which leads to new problem solving strategies and a long

term relationship among organizations. One would like to believe that small, local level successes may also lead to institutional change when incorporated into public policy. However, incorporation of a local innovation into public policy without significant changes in the political and economic context would by definition imply co-optation of the idea itself and transformation of its nature, rather than vice versa. It is the strength of grassroots organizations that leads to replication of local successes rather than the adoption of such initiatives as public policy. The upcoming Microcredit Summit meeting in Washington DC in February 1997 is a new partnership experience that is worth following closely. It is an attempt to replicate a local level initiative -- i.e. to extend microcredit to ten million poor people by the year 2000 -- through consensus among unlikely partners, ranging from the World Bank to grassroots organizations to educational institutions and financial corporations

The purpose of all best practices programs is to disseminate experience as information that can be transformed into action. Clearly, information dissemination by itself can easily end up as a quasi-academic exercise. Information provides only a spark that needs the right environment to start any action. The success of best practices initiatives depend on the effectiveness of outreach, capacity building and organizing efforts at the local level. Organizing at the local level leads to replication of alternative solutions and prevents co-optation of best practices.

*PN'er Ayse Yonder is a professor of planning at Pratt Institute.*

## Planners Network '97

# Sharing Stories, Shaping Strategies, and Building Communities

**June 26-29, 1997 • California State Polytechnic University, Pomona**

Two to three hundred members and associates from across the country are expected to attend this year's Planners Network meeting to share stories of successful citizen action on the local and state levels and to discuss the outlines of a new national urban agenda. Pomona, California, and its problems are typical of many medium-sized, non-central cities. Pomona and the surrounding region -- Los Angeles county and its 88 cities, Orange County, and the sprawling inland counties of San Bernardino and Riverside -- offer rich examples of urban and metropolitan issues and solutions. The 1997 Conference is distinguished by the participation of regional activists from the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF), a nationwide network of broad-based community organizations.

### CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

**Tours:** Thursday's tours will highlight issues and sites in the Los Angeles region that don't appear in postcards or tourist brochures. Tours will include the areas of:

- Hollywood
- The Alameda Corridor
- Los Angeles (Watts; Southeast/South Central, and the Garment District)

**Workshops:** In Friday workshops, small groups of conference participants will meet with members of local groups on specific issues/problems. The local groups will have chosen a piece of their issue/problem for an activity that will:

- help the organization deal with the issue/problem
- offer a learning experience for conferees;
- provide an opportunity for collaboration between conferees and organization members.

We will draw on local institutions (educational and community-based) for sites.

**Panel sessions:** Saturday will be devoted to panels, roundtables, and paper presentations organized in four tracks to discuss how ideas from the conference relate to particular issue areas. The tracks include: Economic development, Housing and community development, Health, and Environment.

**Plenary Sessions:** Four plenary sessions will include speakers and open discussion.

### CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

If you would like to participate as a facilitator or presenter in a panel, roundtable or paper presentation, let us know by March 1. We are organizing sessions now. Contact Ruth Yabes, 909-869-4429

### QUESTIONS?

**Email:** PNconf@csupomona.edu

**Contacts:** Chuck Hotchkiss--cmhotchkiss@csupomona.edu, 909-869-2687

Gwen Urey--gurey@csupomona.edu, 909-869-2725

Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Cal Poly Pomona, 3801 West Temple Avenue, Pomona, CA 91768.

**Planners Network '97**

**Sharing Stories, Shaping Strategies, and Building Communities**

June 26-29, 1997 • California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

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Phone (days): \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Registration Fee**

(full registration includes all conference events and some meals)

General: \$100 per person before April 15, \$120 per person after April 15 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Student/Unemployed: \$50 per person before April 15, \$60 after April 15 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

One day registration: \$45 per person per day \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Thursday Tours: \$15 per person for one Thursday tour \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Child Care: Number \_\_\_\_\_ and ages of children \_\_\_\_\_

(Child care is free, but must be requested with registration)

Full payment must accompany registration. Please make checks payable to Cal Poly Pomona. Send to:  
**Dept. of Urban and Regional Planning, Cal Poly Pomona • 3801 West Temple Ave. • Pomona, CA 91768**

Cancellation fees: Fifty percent of registration fees will be refunded if requested before June 12; no refunds after June 12

**Room Reservations**

**Dormitories:** There are a limited number of single and double dormitory rooms available on campus at Cal Poly Pomona, within walking distance of the University Union, where most meetings will be held:

**Single occupancy** Total persons: \_\_\_\_\_ Arrival date: \_\_\_\_\_ Departure date: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of nights: \_\_\_\_\_  
 @ \$24.50 per room per night, amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Double occupancy** Total persons: \_\_\_\_\_ Arrival date: \_\_\_\_\_ Departure date: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of nights: \_\_\_\_\_  
 @ \$34.50 per room per night, amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Kellogg West:** Hotel rooms at the Kellogg West conference center are within walking distance of the University Union. Overflow arrangements are available through Shilo Inn at the same rates as Kellogg West. Kellogg West and Shilo Inn have complimentary vans that can be used to transport attendees between the two facilities.

**Single occupancy** Total persons: \_\_\_\_\_ Arrival date: \_\_\_\_\_ Departure date: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of nights: \_\_\_\_\_  
 @ \$56 per room per night, amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Double occupancy** Total persons: \_\_\_\_\_ Arrival date: \_\_\_\_\_ Departure date: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of nights: \_\_\_\_\_  
 @ \$65 per room per night, amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_



## Latin America / continued from page 5

1988 strengthened the political, administrative and financial autonomy of municipalities.

The most significant reforms have been the following:

- New regional and municipal governments
- New functions for local governments, especially investment planning, service delivery and administration
- Budgetary reforms with a substantial increase in budgets for regional and municipal governments

### THE MODELS

For some, decentralization is needed to maintain political stability. Aware of the fragility of society and threats to their rule, political elites promote decentralization as a means of re-legitimizing the state.

Others interpret decentralization from a neoliberal perspective, as a way of reducing the size and role of the state and its capacity to coerce capital. This kind of decentralization is also seen as a solution to the problem of large bureaucracies and the inefficiency of centralized institutions. It would create the conditions for the free movement of resources among regions within countries. Thus, decentralization is associated with privatization and de-politicizing the relations between citizens and the state.

Yet others see decentralization as a way to broaden democracy. It is a response to the state's inability to satisfy popular needs and involve citizens in government. In this sense, decentralization is conceived as a search for institutional mechanisms that permit greater citizen involvement, a means of strengthening the relationship between state and civil society, and a way to solve problems at the grass roots. From this perspective, decentralization is an instrument for the democratization of the state and an essential factor in its modernization.

While decentralization and democracy are closely related, they are not one and the same. In Chile during the 1980s, there was decentralized administrative and political reform, but within an authoritarian political context. This experience raises several important questions. Can there be true decentralization while power remains concentrated at the central level? And at the local level, can there be true democracy when informal mechanisms that reproduce political and social exclusion remain despite reforms?

From the point of view of public administration, decentralization may be needed for greater administrative efficiency. Managers argue that the concentration and fragmentation of public administration has become expensive, inefficient, and bureaucratic. New public needs are not being met. A central administration divided into competing sectors often blocks and denies programs and projects close to the grassroots that are seen by the public as opportunities for social progress.

In reality, decentralization in Latin America does not serve the needs of people and does not insure social equity. During the period when many countries were transferring spending authority to local governments, poverty increased. In many cases lack

of coordination between local and national programs created inefficiencies that deepened inequalities among municipalities.

For these reasons, decentralization in Latin America is an incomplete process. To achieve the goals of decentralization people must see it as a legitimate process. For this to happen, there must be concrete results. Decentralization must help guarantee better living standards, improve public services, professionalize management, and eradicate clientelism. Otherwise it will not gain the confidence of citizens.

### RESISTANCE TO DECENTRALIZATION

To improve decentralized political action, the obstacles to genuine decentralization must be removed. Decentralization implies not only changing the structure and functions of municipal government, but also transforming central government. Resistance must be overcome in several quarters. There is resistance from agencies and personnel of central government that have no confidence in the management abilities of local governments, or fear the process will yield to local special interests. There is resistance from traditional political actors at the local level whose power was always supported by the central government and who see decentralization as a threat to their political power. When local government becomes closer to people at the grassroots, new actors appear on the political scene who may oppose citizen participation in local service management. Municipal officials may also resist decentralization because they see it as a threat to their management style, with all its inefficiencies and inadequacies, and to their monopoly on the decisionmaking process.

Finally, there is resistance by local actors whose identity and political potential is focused on the central government, or on a network of special interests. They feel that decentralization fragments their corporate unity (as often occurs with teachers' organizations), disperses conflict, multiplies the number of voices, and makes the achievement of demands more difficult and complex.

All of these examples of resistance are present to different degrees within the Latin American decentralization process. They demonstrate how, despite the differing circumstances within each country, decentralization in Latin America is basically a new name for a very old set of political issues relating to governability, equity and democracy in our countries. Decentralization is a common name used to identify completely different approaches to public action. Depending on how it is interpreted, it can determine who will take part in the decision-making process and who will benefit from it.

*PN'er Dario Vergara is a graduate student in City and Regional Planning at Pratt Institute. His comments here draw on a March 1995 draft article by Alfredo Rodriguez, "The contents of decentralization: Concept, objectives, pros and cons, and challenges"*



# Bulletin Board

## PN'ER UPDATES

- PN'er **Harvey Jacobs** writes: "I continue to focus most of my research effort on the rise and influence of the wise use/private property rights movement in the U.S. My recent article "Whose Rights, Whose Regulations? Land Theory, Land Policy, and the Ambiguous Future of the New Private Property Rights Movement in the U.S.," appears in the Fall 1996 issue of *Environmental Planning Quarterly*, the journal of the environmental division of APA. I would be glad to send copies to anyone interested." Harvey can be reached by mail at the Dept. of Urban and Regional Planning, 925 Bascom Mall/Old Music Hall, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI 53706-1395, or email at [hmjacobs@macc.wisc.edu](mailto:hmjacobs@macc.wisc.edu).
- PN'er **Stephen Barton** writes: "I am currently President of the City of Berkeley Chapter of SEIU Local 535, which represents about 320 professional and semi-professional employees of the City of Berkeley including planners, management analysts, librarians, nurses, building inspectors, senior services aides and many others. I am impressed by the usefulness of planner skills in running a union. All my experience with research and analysis, advocacy, community/membership outreach and participation processes has been very helpful. We are involved in efforts at creating increased worker participation in management of service delivery in the City, and again, planners public participation skills are very useful to the process. Our union may also have input into the thinking of the newly elected progressive City Council majority, which we helped elect after the previous majority voted to end the City's "no layoffs" policy. I would like very much to hear from other unionized planners, whether they are active or not, about their experiences. I would like to try to put together an article for PN about this, and possibly get something on planners and unions into California Planner, Planning, or some other APA outlet." Contact Stephen at [STB1@ci.berkeley.ca.us](mailto:STB1@ci.berkeley.ca.us); Planning & Development Department, 2118 Milvia St., Ste. 300, Berkeley, CA 94704.
- "Building Public-Private Partnerships to Develop Affordable Housing," (216 pgs.) edited by PN'er **Fred Cooper**, was published in mid-1996 and is available at no charge from HUD Community Connection. It is a guidebook that summarizes the experience of the Enterprise Foundation and three other national intermediaries working with local partners on housing capacity building, finance and development issues in 50 locations around the country. Contact HUD at 800-998-9999 and ask for publication #HUD-1583-CPD.

## JOBS

- **New Orleans / Professor.** The College of Urban and Public Affairs seeks candidates for a nine-month, tenure-track faculty position at the assistant or associate professor level. Candidates should be capable of graduate teaching and research in urban and regional planning, urban affairs, or public administration; a Ph.D. in one of these, or a related field, is required. For more info, contact Professor Robert Washington, Chair, Faculty Search Committee, College of Urban and Public Affairs, University of New Orleans, New Orleans, LA 70148. Telephone: 504-280-7102 or 504-280-6278. Fax: 504-280-6277; email: [ROWUR@UNO.EDU](mailto:ROWUR@UNO.EDU).

## CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

- The National Community Reinvestment Coalition will hold its 6th Annual National Conference, entitled "Beyond CRA: Being Relevant in the New Lending Environment," **March 11-15**, in Washington, DC. For more info. contact NCRC, 733 15th St., NW, Suite 540, Washington, DC 20005; 202-628-8866.
- The National Congress for Community Economic Development and the National Community Development Association will co-sponsor "National Community Economic Development Day: Signs of Progress, Signs of Success," on **March 26**. For information, contact NCCED, 11 Dupont Circle, Ste. 325, Washington, DC 20036; 202-234-5009.
- "Restoring Vision," an exhibit about the impact of progressive urban planning on neighborhoods and communities in New York City, will be on display at the Rubelle & Norman Shafler Gallery at Pratt Institute in brooklyn, NY, **March 19 - April 9**, and at Pratt Manhattan **April 16 - 26**. Call 718-636-3517 for details and more information. Planners Network participated in the organizing of this exhibit.
- The American Planning Association's annual Conference, entitled "Contrasts and Transitions," will be held **April 5-9** in San Diego, California. For more information contact the APA at 202-872-0611; [jsoule@planning.org](mailto:jsoule@planning.org); <http://www.planning.org>
- The National Business Incubation Association will hold its 11th National Conference on Business Incubation, entitled "Sharpening our Entrepreneurial Focus," **May 4-7** in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. For more information call 614-593-4331 or e-mail [jrollins@nbia.org](mailto:jrollins@nbia.org)
- The Housing and the Built Environment Committee of the International Sociological Association will host "Housing in the 21st Century: Looking Forward," **June 11-14**, in Alexandria, Virginia. For more information call 540-231-6416 or e-mail [edwards@vt.edu](mailto:edwards@vt.edu); <http://www.arch.vt.edu/rc43.html>

## PN Steering Committee Meets

The Planners Network Steering Committee Met in January. Items discussed included PN '97, the newsletter, finances, and organizational structure.

Progress on planning for the 1997 conference is proceeding (see pages 6-7), and organizers anticipate a good turnout and a large number of exciting workshops.

The newsletter has undergone a transformation from a resource guide to a more topical publication, with more feature articles written by PN'ers, to mostly positive response. An editorial plan, with topics for each of the next six issues, was presented and approved.

Planners Network ended 1996 with approximately a \$5,000 operating deficit, due largely to a decline in contributions. The decision was made to continue offering membership in exchange for voluntary contributions, but to make more of an effort to strongly urge members to contribute (see pg. 1). It was also decided that PN would incorporate as a 501(c)(3) non-profit and pursue other sources of funding, such as foundation grants.

Do you have photographs from any PN conferences – Washington '94, East St. Louis '95, Brooklyn '96? We need pictures for a publicity brochure. Please contact Jordan Yin if you can help, at: jy36@cornell.edu; 607-266-8470; Dept. of City and Regional Planning, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14850.

If you're interested in finding out about other PN'ers near you, or in starting a local chapter, contact Winton at 718-636-3461; wintonp@ix.netcom.com

## PN in Cyberspace!

The Planners Network Web page can be found at <http://www.pratt.edu/picced/resource/pn>, or by following the "Resources" thread from the PICCED home page at <http://www.pratt.edu/picced>. Suggestions for improvements to the site, as well as articles written by members to post, are welcome. Contact Winton at [wintonp@ix.netcom.com](mailto:wintonp@ix.netcom.com).

We've also set up a listserv for PN members with e-mail to carry on discussions, share resources, post job listings, etc. To subscribe, send e-mail to:

[pn-net-request@pratt.edu](mailto:pn-net-request@pratt.edu)

with the subject heading:

**subscribe your-e-mail-address**

(substituting your e-mail address in the appropriate place, of course.) You'll receive instructions in response.

## Call for Articles

We invite PNers to contribute to the following special issues in 1997:

- Will Clinton Give the Last Rites to Urban Policy?
- Sustainable Communities: Empty Slogan or Progressive Program?
- Transportation Planning: Challenging Auto Dependency

Articles should be no more than 1,000 words; contact us for deadlines and more information via phone at 718-636-3461, or e-mail at [wintonp@ix.netcom.com](mailto:wintonp@ix.netcom.com)

– The Editors

## New York PN Forums

The New York Planners Network continues its series of monthly forums. The forums are held on Friday nights, 5:30 - 8:00 p.m., at Pratt Manhattan, the Puck Building, 295 Lafayette St., corner of Houston.

**Friday, February 21**

Community Economic Development & Neighborhoods in NYC: Strategies for Change

**Friday, March 14**

Multicultural Voices in Planning: Preaching to the Choir or Covering New Ground?

**Friday, April 11**

Planning for Sustainable Cities:  
Taming the Auto

**Friday, May 16**

Planning for a Less Violent City

Call Winton at 718-636-3461 for more information.

# PLEASE WRITE!

The surest sign of an effective network is as much participation as possible. As we strive to fill *Planners Network* each month with information and resources, we can only do so much without your help.

**Send us your:**

Resource listings • Job Postings  
Article ideas (or articles, even) • Suggestions, comments, critiques of the newsletter.

## The Planners Network

The Planners Network is an association of professionals, activists, academics, and students involved in physical, social, economic, and environmental planning in urban and rural areas, who promote fundamental change in our political and economic systems.

We believe that planning should be a tool for allocating resources and developing the environment to eliminate the great inequalities of wealth and power in our society, rather than to maintain and justify the status quo. This includes opposition to racial, economic and environmental injustice, and discrimination by gender and sexual orientation. We believe that planning should be used to assure adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, jobs, safe working conditions, and a healthful environment. We advocate public responsibility for meeting these needs, because the private market has proven incapable of doing so.

The Planners Network Newsletter is published six times a year as the principal means of communication among Network members. Annual financial contributions are voluntary, but we need funds for operating expenses. The Steering Committee has recommended the following amounts as minimums for Network members: \$15 for those with incomes under \$25,000, students and unemployed; \$25 for those between \$25,000 and \$50,000; and \$45 for those over \$50,000. Organizations may subscribe for \$30.

Enclosed is my check payable to

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Send to:  
Planners Network/Pratt GCPE  
379 DeKalb Ave.  
Brooklyn, NY 11205

## Planners Network Steering Committee

**Ann Forsyth**, Co-Chair  
Amherst, MA, 413/545-6634  
e-mail: forsyth@larp.umass.edu

**Ken Reardon**, Co-Chair  
Urbana, IL, 217/244-3384  
e-mail: kmjr@ux1.cso.uiuc.edu

**Tom Angotti**, Co-Chair, Executive Editor  
Brooklyn, NY, 718/636-3486  
e-mail: tangotti@pratt.edu

**Emily Achtenberg**  
Boston, MA, 617/524-3982  
ejpa@aol.com

**Luis Aponte-Parés**  
Boston, MA, 617/287-7286  
e-mail: aponte\_pares@umb.edu

**Teresa Córdova**  
Albuquerque, NM, 505/277-7535  
e-mail: tcordova@vesta.unm.edu

**Dana R. Driskell**  
Bronx, NY, 718/220-8505

**Chester Hartman**  
Wash., DC, 202/387-9887  
prac@aol.com

**Peter Marcuse**  
New York, NY, 212/854-3322  
e-mail: pm35@columbia.edu

**Barbara Rahder**  
Toronto, Ontario, 416/736-5252  
e-mail: es050033@orion.yorku.ca

**Peg Seip**  
New York, NY, 212/260-0250

**Andrée Tremoulet**  
Pittsfield, MA, 413/499-9368

**Robert Yabes**  
Los Angeles, CA, 213/237-0134

**Jordan Yin**  
Ithaca, NY, 607/273-7617  
e-mail: jy36@cornell.edu

Newsletter Editor: **Winton Pitcoff**  
Brooklyn, NY, 718/636-3461  
e-mail: wintonp@ix.netcom.com

Planners Network/Pratt GCPE  
200 Willoughby Ave.  
Brooklyn, NY 11205

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## Moving?

Please make sure to let PN know if you're moving. It saves us money and helps ensure that you don't miss an issue!

### *Inside this issue:*

#### **Special Issue: Focus on Globalization**

*Pgs. 1-5*

#### **Pn'er updates**

*Pg. 9*

#### **PN '97 Information and Registration Materials**

*Pgs. 6-7*

## **NEXT ISSUE**

ARRIVAL DEADLINE FOR *PLANNERS NETWORK* #122 COPY:

**MONDAY, MARCH 3, 1997.**

All materials should be sent to:

**Planners Network  
379 DeKalb Ave., 2nd Floor.  
Brooklyn, NY 11205  
718/636-3461; fax: 718/636-3709**

As always, our thanks to those who can type their notes. It reduces our chances of misreading what you write. Feature articles of 500-1,500 words are always welcome; a diskette is greatly appreciated.