

# Corp. interests make lie of Habitat

by Donald Gutstein

With the opening of Habitat - the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements - less than four months away, everyone seems more confused than ever.

How many delegates and visitors will be coming for the two week conference? Where will they all stay? Is there any truth to the rumours of confrontation and violence? Just what is the conference about anyway?

Most of the confusion is attributable to one simple cause - there is an enormous gulf between what the conference is really about, and the "line" being peddled by the numerous Habitat officials.

Millions of taxpayers' dollars are being spent to convince us of the importance of Habitat. Elaborate and costly participation and demonstration programs have been set up.

A torrent of "information" is channeled to us through the mass media.

One particularly obnoxious advertisement put out by the city of Vancouver told us that "Habitat is going to be more than just a conference. It will be a global teaching and sharing experience for the benefit of all mankind."

That statement is nothing more than sheer fantasy. Other claims made by the Habitat organizers are distortions of the truth or outright fictions.

In fact, Habitat is a conference for the planners, politicians, developers and other business interests - the ones who got us in to the world's housing mess in the first place.

Will they examine real solutions to the stupendous human settlement problems facing the world?

These solutions - the only ones that will work - require radical action; for example, by taking away the power wielded by those corporate interests and giving it to the people who need housing.

As you guessed, anything that has the faintest whiff of innovation is being scrupulously weeded out of the conference's agenda.

The biggest con job is being perpetrated on the public in relation to the **Habitat Forum** at Jericho. It is billed as the unofficial conference for Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's).

At Jericho, the former air force base is being transformed into "a spectacular setting" for the alternate conference by a group of individuals who are either "on welfare, drawing unemployment insurance, are handicapped, old age pensioners or artists," according to project director Al Clapp.

Approximately 100 workers take home about \$125 per week paid out of Federal Funds totalling over one million dollars. Obviously they are not working at Jericho to get rich. Probably many of them feel a sense of commitment to the Jericho site - they want to save the buildings.

They may also have believed the line fed to them by the Habitat Forum organizers.

## What is an ACSOH?

Just who is running the Habitat Forum project? On-site boss is former BCTV news producer Al Clapp, who had coordinated the Greenpeace anti-whaling expedition sendoff from Jericho last year.

Clapp, in turn, works for a



"The \$650 thousand disposable shelter. Habitat is for the people who got us into this mess in the first place."

group known as ACSOH - the Association in Canada Serving Organizations for Human Settlements.

Last week, ACSOH held its annual general meeting. Not one of the Jericho workers was invited to attend. In fact, most of them did not know about the meeting.

Members of the general public who showed up at the door were turned away. They were told the meeting was private, for members only.

Well, just who are the members of ACSOH?

According to the official line, "ACSOH is comprised of representatives of Vancouver's 230

community action groups, all of which are deeply involved in urban problems."

Let's see then who these representatives of Vancouver's 230 community action groups elected to the ACSOH board of directors, at their meeting for members only.

First, there's Terry Tanner, who represents the Downtown Business Association. The DBA is an association of most downtown department stores, real estate companies, banks and corporate law firms that form the nucleus of the all-powerful downtown business lobby.

For years the DBA letterhead depicted the skyline of downtown Vancouver with the motto: "the most valuable square mile of real estate west of Toronto."

Tanner himself owns an architectural firm and lives on Angus Drive in Shaughnessy.

Then there's Graham Valde who represents the Greater Vancouver Visitors and Convention Bureau. That's almost the same group as the Vancouver Board of Trade!

The function of the GVVCB is to promote tourism. It is dominated by CP Air Lines, the big downtown hotels and the recreation corporations.

The Downtown Business Association and the Visitors and Convention Bureau are community action groups?

How about, then, another

ACSOH director, Gerald Thompson, who represents the Building Owners and Managers Association.

Thompson could argue that he represents an action group. He's got a piece of the real estate action. Virtually every major developer, bank and real estate company in Canada belongs to BOMA.

Then there's the ubiquitous Walter Hardwick, former TEAM city alderman, professor of geography at UBC, recently appointed deputy minister of education in the Social Credit government.

Hardwick is on the board of ACSOH representing UBC, that well-known centre of community action.

Let's quickly run through the rest. There's Paul Coombes of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada.

Robert Saunders is president of Smith Brothers and Wilson, one of Canada's major construction companies.

Peter Ross is a vice-president with Foster, Young, Ross, Anthony, the big advertising agency.

Two more community action groups?

Finally, the eighth and ninth members of the board are TEAM alderman Michael Harcourt, and Lydia Sayle, executive secretary of the UN Association. These two seem to

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## 'LG-FM purges top three dee-jays

by Paul Mann

Radio station CKLG-FM's top three dee-jays, J.B. Shane, Bob Ness and John Tanner, were fired this week in a sudden purge that sent shockwaves throughout Vancouver's music community.

The announcers, who have between them a total of 30 years broadcasting experience, were told they did not fit in with the station's new programming policy.

LG-FM station chief Don Hamilton said: "On September 1st of this year all of the FM programs in Canada have to be phased in and operational. We are starting the process of implementing the new changes this week. In so doing we were going to have to change some personnel and we decided to do it all at once rather than over a period of time."

"I don't want to say anything negative about the three individuals concerned, I don't want to suggest that they've done anything wrong. We're going to go in a different direction to where they were going, we're into a whole new scene of music, a whole new approach."

The firings came almost a year to the week since LG-FM staffers went on strike to back up contractual negotiations under the Canadian Union of Public Employees, a strike in which Ness and Tanner were active. The strike was unsuccessful and the local later de-certified.

Since then almost all the personnel connected with the strike have been cut loose from the station except for two persons who were promoted out of the union and into management positions.

Hamilton denied that this week's firings were the final phase in a discriminatory action.

"There's no connection with the strike" he said. "We wiped the slate clean on May 1st. I know it is difficult for some



Don Hamilton: "I don't want to say anything negative about the three individuals involved."

people to believe but there have been no recriminations."

All three dee-jays expressed shock but not surprise at the dismissals.

J.B. Shane said there would probably be a question of

seeking financial compensation from CKLG-FM for the loss of their livelihoods.

He added: "They have no groundings for canning us other than their own prejudice and fear. We didn't brown nose anybody at the station and it has

been known to management that we have been opposed to the kind of programming they've been doing."

"John Tanner, Bob Ness and myself have more knowledge of the FM business, not to say music, than anybody else at the station and we've done our jobs as best we could and that has included opposing Morris's (Bob Morris, program director at LG-FM), programming in the past. The other people are 'Yes' people and that kind of attitude speaks for itself."

He added that he also felt, despite Hamilton's comments, that retribution over union activity had most certainly been a factor in the firings.

From a personal viewpoint he said: "I don't like the way broadcasting has gone in the past couple of years, I think the management considered me a remnant of flower power while I look upon myself as someone who has gone through all that and was more interested in getting people to think and get them to enjoy using their minds."

He added "Possibly in the long run it'll be good for me to get out of a stagnant atmosphere. Canadian radio is in the dark ages, has been, and looks like it's going to continue that way."

## VRB man quits over harassment

Patch Parsons, a job-finder with the Vancouver Resources Board has resigned his position in protest against "excessive and brutal harassment regarding:

(his) duties; his personal beliefs, which in no way interfered with his performance; his attitudes and support of his clients' values; extensive use of fear tactics and alleged dishonest statements by the Area Mana-

ger concerning remarks attributed to Harry Rankin.

Parsons (30) was ordered to remove a Buddah ornament from his office desk, as well as a poster representing the extended "middle-finger" symbol. He was also accused of smoking marijuana with an "up-tight" client and told not to burn incense in his office.

Parsons claims he is being harassed to change his "attitude

and his life-style in order to conform with the white shirt and tie image" although he has been performing his job competently for an entire year.

Parsons is an ex-welfare client and claims that this experience and his lifestyle are particularly suited to finding jobs for, and relating to the special needs of his clients, who generally have a history of difficulty in locating and holding jobs.