

(1974) has argued that urban planning in Manila failed precisely because it has ignored, or even worked against, the housing needs of the *masa* [masses] and, thereby, never offered a viable alternative to squatting. The policy of relocating squatters to sites some 30 to 40 km outside the city and placing them in extremely overcrowded bunkhouses, or often even simply dumping them proved to be not only inhumane but ineffective as well. The people who had once been attracted by the chances and opportunities in the metropolis were attracted again.

The stick of PD 772 was combined with the promise of carrots: For the first time, the state went to appreciable expenses in the housing sector (Rüland 1982a: 217). The National Housing Authority (NHA) was founded in 1975 with the explicit goal of serving the housing needs of the poorest 30% of the population. Its performance in the Marcos years, however, was outright pathetic: Between October 1975 and December 1985, a total of 4,054 new housing units, or some 400 per year, was constructed in NHA administered projects in all of the Philippines (NSO 1987: 611). To make things even worse, construction costs were far too high to meet the needs of the target groups. An extreme case was Urban BLISS, the ambitious pet project of Governor Imelda Marcos. Likewise allegedly designed for the poor, the characteristic four-storey tenement blocks came out so expensive that they accommodate mainly some of the regime's vassals and other privileged groups. With a total output of less than 2,500 units and many more squatter houses demolished to make room for them, the BLISS program had no positive impact on the housing situation.

In the late Seventies, the Philippines became the pilot country of the World Bank's new strategies of urban development. In an adoption of Turner's concept of 'housing by people',<sup>3</sup> squatting had been renamed 'self-help housing', and emphasis was laid on (or rather, lip service was paid to) on-site development and slum improvement rather than housing production. The first step was the identification of 415 'blighted areas' in Metro Manila, with a population of 1.6 million; 253 of them were designed 'Areas for Priority Development' (APDs). The second step was the attempt to upgrade the Tondo Foreshoreland and the development of Dagat-dagatan as an in-city relocation site. Because the undertaking proved to be as expensive as the results were unsatisfactory, the third step was back to square one: The bulk of the following 'Sites and Services' programs was done in the resettlement areas outside Metro Manila (NSO 1987: 610f.). The investments trickled straight up the to land developers and the construction industry. To

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1,000 Pesos each claiming that it 'cannot question the wisdom of legislation' (Intersect 1/3, October 1987: 7).

<sup>3</sup> In an absurd reflection of the common clichés picturing slums as 'quarters of misery', Turner's book 'Housing by People' was published in Germany as '*Verelendung durch Architektur*' ['miserabilization' through architecture] (1978).

date, most APDs are as congested and dilapidated as ever; in 1989, only 10% of then 316 were considered as 'completely developed' (Zablan 1990: 8).<sup>4</sup>

While the carrot failed to materialize the stick was used extensively. Imelda Marcos' ideas about a more beautiful and modern Manila did not include widespread slums. Her alleged quotation of Marie Antoinette's saying 'If the poor don't have bread, let them eat cake' and her labeling of squatters as 'plain landgrabbers' (Rüland 1989: 10) became famous in the Philippines. In a beautification campaign of the Potemkin type, shanty towns were hidden from the eyes of foreigners and wealthy Filipinos behind white fences, large billboards or concrete walls. Some of the latter were further beautified by large paintings of palm-trees, parrots and beautiful persons: '*Die Mauern hatten das, was hinter ihnen lag, verbergen sollen; jetzt lösten sogar sie sich in Illusionen auf*' [The walls had been meant to hide what was behind them; now even they dissolved in illusions] (Daus 1987: 153).

Not all slum dwellers were lucky enough to be merely hidden in the attempt to create a presentable metropolis. Large-scale demolitions remained the preferred solution. As the 1974 Miss Universe Pageant was approaching ten thousands of people lost their homes when the areas along the parade route were bulldozed; similar uprootings took place prior to the visit of US President Ford in 1975 and the IMF-World Bank conference in 1976 (Bello *et al.* 1982: 107). The year 1982, eventually, saw the regime's last *tour de force* before it restricted itself to pure self-preservation after the assassination of Ninoy Aquino. In what was called the 'last campaign' against squatting, demolitions were undertaken in several parts of Metro Manila, with the alleged goal to hit 'professional squatters' who 'make a living out of squatting by going from one land to another and selling their land' (quoted in van Naerssen 1989: 210).<sup>5</sup> Not surprisingly, the 'last campaign' resulted in as final a solution as any one before it although it caused the uprooting of another 46,000 families (Rüland 1982b). Instead, it instigated the (re-) emergence of organized resistance against displacement that is the central subject of my work.

Much has been written about the disappointing performance and the broken reform promises of the Aquino administration that had started with a lot of what turned out to be unearned laurels. With regard to the urban poor, neither was PD 772 repealed nor

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<sup>4</sup> That the ultimate failure of conventional strategies to solve the problems of housing the urban poor is not restricted to the Marcos regime or to the Philippines in general is demonstrated by Rondinelli (1990).

<sup>5</sup> It should be noted that there *are* people who make a living out of squatting. New squatter areas are regularly developed by syndicates that bribe officials, provide basic infrastructure (most importantly, a source of water) and eventually organize an invasion and coordinate the defense of the new settlement in the first critical months. To justify demolitions with the existence of professional squatters has remained popular until today (Karaos 1993), disregarding the logical contradiction that those who have sold the land and moved on are hit by uprooting the buyers.