



Dear Friends of SOLWODI,

When I returned from my holidays on 22. July, my telephone was ringing continuously. As a result of the debate in the media on flat-rate-brothels, I got a lot of requests for an interview (see below). And I also received the good message that the LOTTO-foundation of Rhineland-Palatinate had offered to stage a charity concert with the Sinti-musician Django Reinhardt on 26. August, at the occasion of the 15th anniversary of our SOLWODI office in Koblenz (see below). It was a fantastic evening with a carrying away music in an almost sold out Koblenz city theatre. At the end I happily received a cheque for 10.142 Euro – LOTTO had very generously doubled the amount that had been raised (a comprehensive report can be found under www.solwodi.de)

Even more enjoyable was, that as a result of that charity concert cooperation between SOLWODI and Django Reinhardt had been initiated. He plans to support us, to improve the disgusting situation of Romany women from Romania and Bulgaria, who are presently being forced to work under inhuman conditions as prostitutes in flatrate-brothels and on the streets.

The online version of this circular letter will be published after the election in Germany. SOLWODI has a lot of claims for the new German government, such as the immediate ratification of the agreement of the European Council against trafficking, a Germany wide guarantee that victims of trafficking will not be expelled from Germany, even if they are not prepared to answer any questions, the recognition of gender as a reason to ask for asylum, a Germany wide assurance for all victims of trafficking and all female migrants, affected by violence, to have access to all education and integration programs, provision of funds for all advice offices, protecting flats and women's refuges. And last but not least we are claiming a reform of the prostitution law.

Instead of explaining above claims in detail, I use the opportunity for an appeal. An appeal not to the politicians at the top of the government, no, it's an appeal to all of us down here. I especially appeal to those educated citizens who accept that women are being degraded to objects, which can be bought to have sex with them in whatever form one wish. What about talking about ethics and what about showing compassion for such abused women. What about limiting ourselves in our desires? This would mean not doing everything one could do. For a society that believes to be democratic and human there must be an undeniable consensus that one doesn't do and accept certain things, even when they are being announced as tolerable – for example by disregarding the dignity of other persons, by allowing that they are considered as usable objects.



Yours, Sr. Lea

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Some words about us: "Jubilees" and "renovations"

SOLWODI in Braunschweig: The 10th anniversary will be celebrated on Tuesday 27. October at 11:00 with a public ceremony in the Dominican monastery St-Albertus-Magnus, Brucknerstr. 6. Sr. Dr. Lea Ackermann will address the audience, speaking about the subject: SOLWODI's fight against the deprivation of women's rights. On Friday 30. October at 19:30 a charity concert will be given in the St-Albertus-Magnus church, Brucknerstr.6 under the title:

"Sound in Space" – music between Bach and jazz with Ulrich Thiem (Cello / singing) and Andreas Böttcher (Vibraphone / organ). No entry fee will be charged, however a donation for women in distress will be expected.

SOLWODI Koblenz: The 15th anniversary will be celebrated on Wednesday 28. October in the parish room Heart Jesus, Löhrondell 1. From 14:00 onward the public is being invited to come. At 14:30 the journalist and author Cornelia Filter will deliver a speech about. "The role of women in a new outfit"

SOLWODI Ludwigshafen: As a result of a fire, the advice office needs to be redecorated and will therefore be closed from 28. September till 13. October. However contact is still possible via the mobile phone number: 0177 2030 155 or via e-mail.

SOLWODI's success: Mass protests against flatrate-brothels

From Cornelia Filter

"Sex with all women, as long as you want, as long as you can and how you want to do it! Sex with all extras! Anal sex, oral sex, nature, with 3 persons, group sex, gangbang everything is possible!" For a flatrate of 70 Euro during day-time and 100 Euro at night, beer and sausage included. With such an advertisement a flatrate –brothel in Fellbach near Stuttgart tried to attract men (see circular letter number 80). Thanks to a SOLWODI press release this advertisement can no longer be found on the homepage www.pussy-club.eu. In this press release Sr. Dr. Lea Ackermann had denounced this "unlimited humiliation of women" and at the same time encouraged the public to massively protest against such a humiliation. And it really happened. A wave of protest rolled through the country and protests filled the media.

What we didn't achieve with our campaign for a human prostitution law, we achieved with widespread press releases on 18. June 2009. Although there were at that date already estimated 100 flatrate-brothels in Germany, the Fellbach Pussy-club, which had opened on 5. June 2009, exceeded with its aggressive advertisement - for the "consumption" of women at all inclusive tariffs – which what people were prepared to, accept. Women from Fellbach, the equal rights officer and women's organizations formed an alliance against this flatrate-brothel. A coalition of women from the various parties in the parliament of Baden-Württemberg got together, aiming to reform the prostitution law and the Baden-Württemberg parliament will accordingly forward a revised draft for that law to the federal German parliament. The unanimous opinion of all protesters was expressed in an open letter, which was sent by women of Fellbach to politicians at country and federal level: "We claim that the prostitution law should be amended to provide protection for the dignity of women working as prostitutes". How urgently such an amendment is needed, could be seen, when on 26. July 2009 the Pussy-clubs in Berlin, Wuppertal, Heidelberg and Fellbach were raided by police. The Heidelberg club was closed at short notice due to constructional and health problems and the Fellbach club were closed for a longer time to come. This closure was not ordered because the prostitutes in the flatrate-brothels were deprived their dignity; no, the closure was ordered because hygienic conditions in the brothels were not acceptable and because it was suspected, that social security contributions had not been paid. No other legal reasons were available to the

prosecuting attorney for closing the brothels. The prostitution law unfortunately offers no legal arguments for such a closure. Since the prostitution law became effective on 1. January 2002, it's legal in Germany to work voluntarily as a prostitute. And the prostitutes in all 4 pussy-clubs had pretended they hadn't been forced to work there.

In the media one could read that 80 of the 100 prostitutes in the Fellbach club came from Romania and 30 of the women were described to be Romania (see below) The reason for those young women to be prepared to be offered here in rich Germany like beer and sausage was a lack of alternative jobs in their home countries. Poverty sometimes forces people to do things they normally wouldn't do. But it appears that those women from Romania were under other pressure as well. The chief police officer from Waiblingen, Mr. Ralf Michelfelder – in charge of the Fellbach case – explained, there were indications for serious criminal offences. On internet pages for brothel clients there were complaints, that prostitutes were wounded at their genitals already at midday and therefore no longer available to clients. And there were also complaints, that women were crying all the time.

The goal of the prostitution law, which was passed under the red/green government, was to provide better legal protection for women working voluntarily as prostitutes, for example by being regularly employed. Did the women, working in the Fellbach club, know of that possibility? We doubt it. According to the police report, most women from Romania couldn't speak German. As a result they were not capable to inform themselves about their legal rights or to read the contracts, which stated that they would

work as independent sub-employees for 100-200 Euro per day (The 26 year old manager of the 4 pussy-clubs, Patricia Floreiu, at least pretends that the women understood all that) This is absurd, since the women didn't only work in the clubs, no, they also permanently lived in those clubs. It's getting even more absurd, when one hears, that during the raid to the Fellbach club, 200.000.- Euro cash were found in the club's safe, whereas the prostitutes didn't have a single cent in their purses. The raid was carried out on a Sunday; the following day would have been pay-day. It's uncertain, how much money one would have found in the purses on Monday. However it seems to be certain, that the Fellbach pussy-club made a daily profit of around 12.000,- Euro. Had the prostitutes been employed officially and had the social security contributions been paid, the daily profit would only have been around 2.000,- Euro. This rough calculation was made by the prosecuting attorney Andreas Thul-Epperlein at a press conference one day after the raid. As mentioned before, the raid was made to prove that social security contributions had not been paid as necessary.

By the way – club management. Behind Patricia Floreiu appears to be a network of organized criminals. This is being assumed by the Fellbach police, since the 80 Romanian prostitutes were picked up by a fleet of cabs immediately after the club's closure. "This must have been organized by somebody in the background" The official manager couldn't have accomplished this logistic masterpiece, because she had been arrested.

The club in Fellbach has been reopened on 1. September 2009 with a new name and a new management. In the meantime one had discovered that

the owner of the building, in which the pussy-club had been run, is Prince Marcus von Anhalt. His highness, the landlord, himself remedied the hygienic and legal disgraces. Result: The new establishment's name: " FKK – Safari " (a place where people enjoy themselves undressed).

Which kinds of naked culture – which means naked women – are being offered to clients now in Fellbach can be seen in the internet under www.fkk-safari.de. More informative is an article in the German magazine "Spiegel" from 22. September 2008. There one could read that the real name of the so called prince is Mar-

cus Eberhardt and that he started his carrier as a pimp in Pforzheim." By now he is 41 years old, he spent 4 years in prison and he is most likely running the greatest number of brothels in Germany". But it seems, this didn't satisfy him any longer as the Spiegel scoffs. Marcus Eberhardt bought his title. Now the pimp from Pforzheim, together with his adoptive parents "Zsa Zsa Gabor" and "Fredric von Anhalt" might feel like a film star from Hollywood.

Although this might sound funny, the bitter truth is: "With the prostitution law has the legal position of the brothel-owners and pimps been

strengthened whereas that of the prostitutes has been considerably weakened". This was said by the criminal director from Augsburg, Mr. Klaus Bayerl, in the SOLWODI circular letter number 77. Hopefully we will be able to report in a future circular letter that the new German Government, which has been elected on 27. September, dares to change the policy concerning prostitution, which means in favour of prostitutes and against those making profits with those women.

(A comprehensive report on that subject can be found under www.solwodi.de).

For a project against prostitution of poverty-stricken Romany woman cooperation with Django Reinhardt has been agreed

From Sr. Lea Ackermann

At the charity concert in favour of SOLWODIO Koblenz, Sr. Lea Ackermann made the acquaintance of Django Reinhardt. In the following report she explains the cooperation options that were discussed.



Django Reinhardt

When on 29. July 2009 the flatrate-brothel " Pussy-club " in Fellbach was closed, immediately many cabs turned up to take away about 80 Romanian prostitutes - among them 30 Romany women. Before that raid, that led to the closure of the Pussy-club, the police had asked the Stuttgart women's advice office (FIZ) – that cooperates with SOLWODI – for support. FIZ turned up in Fellbach – at the time of the raid – with interpreters and had also provided accommodation for the women from Romania. But there was no chance to make use of those provisions, since the women had disappeared with cabs.

The newspaper "Rheinische Post" reported on 5. May 2009 about 300 women from Bulgaria, working as prostitutes on the streets of Dort-

mund. "Those women are extremely young and uneducated. They believe, when they take the pill only once, it's sufficient to get no longer pregnant. They believe a tampon would be good for contraception. They don't know anything about neither sexual diseases nor Aids". The Rheinische Post found out, that with the money those women earn in Dortmund, they support great families in the Bulgarian Romany ghetto of Stoliponovo. Social workers from Dortmund have – even with Bulgarian interpreters – no chance to get in contact with those prostitutes, because they only speak Bulgarian dialects. Romans are the international language of the Sinti and Romany.

Also the musician Django Reinhardt, who was born in 1962 in Koblenz and now lives in an environment in which one speaks the Rhine-dialect, speaks Romans. But he speaks a German version of that language. He says, he could communicate with his East-European brothers and sisters, if simple matters are concerned such as: " I would like to drink a coffee, but it's already getting difficult, if I also need sugar and milk. But I know German Sinti-women, who can speak perfectly Romanian and Bulgarian Romans-dialects. These women could

act as interpreters for SOLWODI. This could reduce the existing mistrust. In Romania and in Bulgaria police and legal authorities are still corrupt. When Romany would rely on such agencies, they would be lost. Help-organizations, that support raids in Germany, are also considered to be unreliable. But if in such a situation a Sinti-woman would say in Romans: "You should know, that those people from SOLWODI are trying to help you, they are not betraying you", this would immediately create confidence."

Sr. Lea said: "Django Reinhardt immediately caught my confidence, especially since he is also a socially engaged person. In Koblenz he has rented rooms for a Sinti-center, in which children and youths are being educated and also get a job-training. My motto is also his motto: Each person has got talents that need to be discovered and then to be fostered. No person should be forced into prostitution because it hadn't been educated".

(Find more about that agreement on cooperation with Django Reinhardt under www.solwodi.de).

SOLWODI Kenya: Lasting success has been proved scientifically

From Birgit Hafner

Birgit Hafner, aged 33, is normally working as an engineer for Daimler in Stuttgart. Generously her employer allowed her to take a "sabbatical" for studies about Africa at the University of Edinburgh and to write an analysis about SOLWODI Kenya. Here is her enjoyable report about the results of her studies:

SOLWODI Kenya finances every year a job-training for 40 – 50 young women, a training which can't be compared with the German, so called dual way training. "Dual" means a practical on the job training in a firm plus a theoretical training at a special school – all free of charges. On top of that are German trainees also paid a monthly salary. Contrary to that do Kenyan trainees earn nothing, no, they even have to pay, if they attend special training centre.

A one year training – for example – to become a hairdresser, will cost about 350,-Euro. This might appear not too expensive, but it's much, if one looks at the average monthly salary of a Kenyan hairdresser of 35,-Euro. Poor people can't afford such a training and if they would attend such a training, they would not be available for a year for earning the money to feed their family. For that reason SOLWODI also supports the family members of the trainees financially. But it's not only money that counts.

In 2006 I had been working for 4 months as a trainee for SOLWODI Kenya to get a first hand impression of Sr. Lea's mission and her vision as well (see circular letter 69) In 2008 I returned to Mombasa, this time with a scientific interest. I wanted to see, how efficient this training program was in the long run- not only for SOLWODI but I also wanted to find out, whether this program could be used in other areas as well, because there are worldwide only very few organizations and projects aiming to educate and train young women, thereby protecting them from being forced into prostitution by poverty.

For my master-exam in "African studies" I discovered the following: From 1998 until 2008 SOLWODI Kenya had enabled 389 Kenyan women – from unedu-

cated and very poor families – to get a job-training. 70 % of them managed thereafter to feed themselves and their families without working as prostitutes. With some of those women I had interviews. Also money was a subject, but not the main one. Almost unanimously those women said, that their life – before SOLWODI helped them – had been "unhappy and hopeless". But the life, as it developed through SOLWODI's help "can't be taken away from us anymore". A young ex-prostitute, who is a trainer herself now, told me: "education helps. It helps girls to become self-conscious and independent and that's what we need".

SOLWODI Kenya's motto reads: "From welfare to Empowerment", which means, that poor Kenyan women not only need money donations but also equal rights. In 1985 the UNO-world women conference in Nairobi, which Sr. Lea attended and which inspired her, defined "Empowerment" as follows:

- Self-consciousness with the ability to state personal needs and interests as well as the recognition of personal abilities and how they could be used;
- Self-determination, to include the own body;
- A sense of justice that recognizes injustice and enables oneself to defend oneself against it;
- Solidarity, based on the recognition of a distress, which has not been caused by oneself but by the society.

All this is being achieved by SOLWODI Kenya - and it's long lasting success has now been proved scientifically.

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