



# AGAINST THE SELLOUT OF THE CITY!

*For the preservation of Hermannstraße 48!*

**Third-party buyers, yet still not safe from eviction:  
the renters of H48 continue to fear for their apartments.**

Both the buyer and the seller have appealed against the right of first refusal ('Vorkaufsrecht') of our houses exercised by the district of Neukölln. The **pre-purchase has been delayed for now**, possibly until a judgement from the administrative court. This might take several years, during which particularly the **inhabitants of the factory building will have to fear for their apartments**. We demand the recognition of our housing situation and full rental protection for all people living in (former) factory buildings.

Since the rent freeze ('Mietendeckel') was overturned, the buyer's interest in our houses is likely to have grown. What makes our houses so attractive from the perspective of an investor is the factory building in the back courtyard. The problem is: a good **80 people live there**, with loft beds, postboxes, and numerous bathrooms installed; but also **with 'commercial' rent contracts**. This is true in many former factory buildings in Berlin. Decades ago, empty and unattractive commercial units were intentionally rented to flat-shares. Now that the apartments have become attractive, **it is being claimed that the rental law for commercial space is applicable, so that neither protection from eviction, nor rent control, nor the rent freeze, apply**; and the space can thus be taken over and turned into luxury apartments.

The owner of our houses (for now) is not only appealing against the right of first refusal, but is also cracking down on the renters themselves. **One large flat-share, whose contract had already been cancelled last year, was suddenly evicted just three weeks after the right of first refusal was exercised**, as the tenants – knowing that the ownership of the building might soon change hands! – did not want to hand over the keys. Further flat-shares have since then received **warnings and threats that their contracts will be cancelled**.

In this way, the owner is proving exactly what the district of Neukölln recognised: we are in acute danger of being forced out. For this reason we, the renters of H48, had organised ourselves a year ago, and communicated to our landlady our readiness to buy. And for this reason, the district of Neukölln exercised the right of first refusal for our houses in February, when our landlady preferred to sell to a shadowy company instead.

Our situation is of course particularly absurd, but nevertheless typical. Therefore, we demand: those who have pocketed our rent for decades should not be allowed to destroy affordable living space and our well-developed neighbourhood structures. **Neighbourhood protection ('Milieuschutz') and protection from eviction should also protect those who live in former factory buildings.**

## Contact

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