

The future of the Peter-Hesse-Foundation.

by Peter Hesse – summer 2009

After 25 years of the foundation and 72 years of my life I feel that I must thank all those friends who have in some way supported us. I also feel a need to structure the future of our small foundation. Part of this structuring is a more timely use of the net – this here being the first news-report to be put on our English homepage.

The Haiti-engagement, which started after an inner “wake-up call” in Haiti in 1981 was carried forward since the creation of the Peter-Hesse-Foundation in 1983 by Carol Guy-James Barratt. Some volunteers have also contributed valuable work mainly in Haiti. I had to care for the material means, acquired some supporting donations and made use of what was learned in Haiti in development politics. After a never-ending learning process, this became a success story – documented in the books*, which were written by Carol, by Irene Dänzer-Vanotti and by myself. In my almost 30 years as CEO of the artists’ color producing plant H. Schmincke & Co., founded by my ancestors, some of our company-staff volunteered their help and the Hesse-family also contributed. Since my departure from the Schmincke management and the concentration on work in the Foundation in 1998, I was searching for solutions for the future of the foundation and for the Haiti-engagement. An original vision of a larger, sufficiently stronger family-foundation together with my half-brother and half-sister, who co-own the company with me, finally failed due to their different priorities. Therefore, I had to look for a different solution for a sufficiently strong structure which would allow a paid professional management after my future departure from this engagement due to sickness or death. A foundation – being conceived to survive its founder – must be large enough to be able to afford paid professional management, once the active founder, who, of course, does not need to get paid, will have left.

To grow financially, I have in 2008 increased the foundation’s capital in two steps by making use of my savings in the family-company to one million Euro (€), which was later supposed to happen through my will anyway. Even one full million € is, however, too little to finance some professional management and retain sufficient funds for the foundation’s purpose: “help for needy people in developing countries, especially as survival-help for children and – whenever possible – as help for self-help”. As long as I am capable, healthy and alive, I will manage our foundation myself and extend our reach from Haiti to Africa with Carol’s most valuable participation. The newly increased foundation capital – hopefully further enriched by some of our faithful donors – will be sufficient. Later – when I am disabled or dead – the Peter-Hesse-Foundation shall be transformed to a “Treuhand”-Foundation in the “Deutsche Welthungerhilfe”, the German Agro Action, the largest German non-denominational NGO. The purpose of our foundation can be retained in this way. Since we are working with their Haitian branch, “Agro Action Allemande” in a most fruitful way since the very beginning of my Haiti engagement, I have full trust in the competence of this NGO. The German Agro Action can even benefit from the formal widening of their purpose beyond agriculture to work for children. All legal requirements for such a transfer in the future are already cleared with Germany’s state supervising structures and, of course, with the leadership of our big partners.

The CEO of the German Agro Action has even accepted the post of vice-director in the Peter-Hesse-Foundation, which was vacant after the departure of my half-sister. The other open post, formerly held by my half-brother, has been filled by a dear and reliable friend, Dr. Sabine Uhlen, a medical specialist in psychiatry, psychology and social medicine. Together with my wife, Isa Hesse, Dr. Uhlen will decide if and when I will not be able, due to age or illness, to manage our foundation anymore. At that moment the transfer of the Peter-Hesse-Foundation to the new "Treuhand"-Foundation will be executed. All is therefore set for a good future as clearly as possible.

In the beginning of 2009, I have been voted to join the supervisory board ("Kuratorium") of the "Deutsche Welthungerhilfe". This already now strengthens the grown ties with the Haitian "Agro Action Allemande". Since many years we are not only connected in friendship in Haiti, but we may even freely use a space in their Petionville office for our desk a filing cupboard. In view of our part-time presence in Haiti this is ideal. The future structure of our agreement to merge our foundations also provides additional safety for Carol and for my wife's part-time engagement for our foundation in case I have to depart from this world too soon.

In the meantime I can go ahead and use my acquired experience to work for better Early Childhood Development in international political circles and, of course, continue with our concrete Montessori-work in Haiti and in our new Africa-venture. Due to our global environmental, social and economic crises, the international civil society is gaining strength and is engaged in world-wide problem-solving. Global – if not even cosmic – consciousness is entering the minds and souls of a great number of active people. We want to work for change! In this framework, managerial and some political experience is most valuable. I feel challenged to co-create in a humble, but decisive way in this constructive movement.

* Peter Hesse: **Von der Vision zur Wirklichkeit.** Von Lernwegen zum Erfolg: von der Möglichkeit, SINN-voll zu leben." 1990 Cogito-Verlag, Kaarst-Büttgen – ISBN 3-00-4473-6

Irene Dänzer-Vanotti: "**Es ist DENNOCH möglich!** 25 Jahre Engagement von Peter Hesse in Haiti. 2006 Droste Verlag, Düsseldorf – ISBN 3-7700-1245-3.

Peter Hesse (as publisher for the Global Marshall Plan Initiative): "**Solidarität, die ankommt!** Ziel-effiziente Mittelverwendung in der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit." 2006 – ISBN 3-9809723-8-0

Carol Guy-James Barratt: "**Atelier Montessori**" (Français) 2007 – ISBN 978-3-9811650 – und Carol Guy-James Barratt: "**Montessori Workshop**" (English) 2007 – ISBN 981-3-9811650-1-2 (Both published for our projects and sold in a limited way by the Peter-Hesse-Foundation.)

Peter Hesse: "**Vision works.** From vision to action. From Haiti to ONE world in diversity. Wake-up calls for change." 2008 Erkrath, Peter-Hesse-Stiftung – ISBN 978-3-9811650-2-9 (Published by the Peter-Hesse-Foundation – but privately financed in full.)
