

JHB Inner City Anti Eviction Campaign

Contact the JHB Inner City AEC through the Anti Privatisation Forum
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‘People who earn less than R3,000 a month cannot afford to stay in the inner city.’

- Mayor Amos Masondo, 18 December 2002

The Johannesburg City Council fired its first shot against inner city residents when, in the early hours of 20 November last year, it sent its **RED ANTS** of Wozani Security into Armadale Place. The owner had been neglecting the maintenance of the building so that tenants had to take it over. No eviction notice had been served and the building’s owner has not been made to answer but nothing stopped the Red Ants from stripping the building of anything valuable and evicting the **2000** residents. Violent clashes between the Red Ants and the residents made the front page of *The Star*.

The inner city Anti Eviction Campaign was formed by Armadale and other inner city residents and led a march to the MEC for Housing on 14 December 2002 **DEMANDING** an end to the forced removals, the return of homes, a stop to the water and electricity cut-offs, and that the persecution of immigrants and hawkers stop. The Campaign has received **NO RESPONSE** from the housing department to the memorandum submitted.

Since the evictions from Armadale, the Johannesburg City Council threw all the tenants of the New Nation and Philadi Medical buildings out on to the streets. Meanwhile, eviction has been threatened against Commercial Centre residents on Bree Street. The residents of Pioneer Place in Soper Road, Hillbrow, have been defending against an eviction application in court and their water supply has been repeatedly cut. And two members of the Doornfontein Chambers tenants committee were arrested on a false charge laid by a man who claims to be the owner of the building.

It’s WAR against the poor

Reconstructing apartheid

Poverty has become an added expense on both sides of the mining town. Where Apartheid regulation kept the metropolitan centre of Joburg for whites and the township reserves for black labour, the government is today engineering a city and society by targeting the poor. The move to evict tenants from inner city buildings is brute force used by the city bosses to bleed the centre and push the poor back to their labour reserves.

Criminalising the poor

The government is using the force of the police and in the case of the Sands in Hillbrow, the army was deployed as well to remove tenants. The government is cracking down on anyone daring to say ENOUGH! Inner city residents have already been found guilty even before being accused. Claimed to be overflowing with sewerage, drugs and prostitution, inner city buildings and the people who stay in them have been painted as unhygienic, criminal elements. A government cannot be seen throwing children and pensioners out of their homes otherwise.

Transforming the economy?

Opening only new desolate townships in Diepsloot and Vlakfontein, clearly the economy is growing - the poor are becoming so many, in fact, only the pavement can be found for relocating discarded inner city residents to. What transformation, then, when all it proves is

A BITTER LIFE FOR ALL.

To join the Campaign, come to the Public Meeting
Saturday, 22 February 2003

The JHB Inner City Anti Eviction campaign holds weekly meetings at the APF office in Cosatu Hse on Tuesdays, 05h30pm.

