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MDM

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Don't trigger the Casspirs, DP's Wynand Malan warns

MDM

defiance:

plea for

restraint

BRUCE CAMERON

Political Correspondent

THE Democratic Party has appealed to the police and the Mass Democratic Movement to exercise restraint as a war of words builds up in anticipation of a major defiance campaign next week.

While Minister of Law and Order, Mr Adriaan Vlok, repeated his claims that the MDM was intent on a programme of militant action, MDM spokesmen were insistent today the campaign would be peaceful.

Democratic Party co-leader, Mr Wynand Malan, said today people had a right to peaceful protest but warned the MDM leadership that if its protests were conducted in such a way as to "trigger the Casspirs", they would be partly responsible for the consequences.

Mr Malan condemned the three bombings in Johannesburg last night, one of which was directed at the all-white J.G. Strydom hospital which is to be a target of the MDM's protests.

Mr Malan said the bombings would not make a contribution to peaceful solutions.

Dr Farook Meer, secretary of the Natal Indian Congress which is heading the defiance campaign in Natal, today rejected Mr Vlok's claim that violence was planned.

"There is no MDM document which advocates violence or the use of petrol bombs."

He said Mr Vlok was attempting to create a pretext so he could take action against peaceful protest.

Dr Meer said the planned protests, which would include occupying white schools and hospitals and marching on the Union Buildings, would continue.

"We have never employed nor would we employ the technique of petrol bombs. We challenge the Minister to produce the document or the evidence on which he relies."

Meanwhile, a Daily News reporter writes that Natal's MEC for Hospital Services, Mr Valentino Volker, has urged people to act responsibly in response to the MDM's call for blacks to present themselves for treatment at white hospitals next Wednesday.

Eight whites-only hospitals were targeted by the MDM, and in Natal, Durban's Addington Hospital and Pietermaritzburg's Greys Hospital were singled out.

Mr Volker, who is the National Party's Berea candidate in the forthcoming election, said there was no intention to turn anybody away who needed treatment.

"If people present themselves at hospitals and are in need of treatment they will get it. Of course, if there is nothing wrong with them I don't know what it is that is expected of us," he said.
News by B. Cameron and V. Quinlan, 85 Field Street, Durban.