



EPISCOPAL CHURCHPEOPLE for a FREE SOUTHERN AFRICA

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South Africa - DEFIANCE

The Mass Democratic Movement in South Africa is engaging in a nationwide non-violent campaign against apartheid and the Pretoria regime.

The Movement encompasses medical bodies, the churches, trade unions and other organizations challenging the ruling system in South Africa

MDM leaders say - 'We are calling on our people to conduct this defiance in as orderly, disciplined and peaceful way as possible...Our people are no longer prepared to tolerate unjust and illegal apartheid measures which are passed against us by an illegitimate government. Defiance of these is concrete expression of the fact that we are not bound by legislation passed by a minority parliament, that we owe no allegiance to this minority regime, and that we are demanding full democracy in the country of our birth.'

The Defiance Campaign has started with black South Africans presenting themselves at whites only hospitals, demanding medical facilities be opened to all people. The reaction from the apartheid regime can be foreseen - crackdown. (see press article oversheet).

The South African Mass Democratic Movement needs the support and the solidarity of the outside world.

MESSAGES AT ONCE TO:

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Johannesburg 2000
South Africa

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AND - STRONGER ACTION:

Demand your representatives in Congress commit themselves to full support of the 1989 Comprehensive Sanctions Bill - H. R. 21.

Demand your senators support identical language in the upper house.

An indication of the potential power of our elected representatives can be seen from the attached letter to President Bush signed by over 100 congresspersons in which the demands of the South African Mass Democratic Movement are incorporated: release of political prisoners, end of the state of emergency and lifting the banning orders on all political organizations.

Anti-apartheid groups organise renewed action

After a period of confusion, South Africa's anti-apartheid groups are preparing a new campaign, as Shaun Johnson writes from Johannesburg.

SOUTH AFRICA'S black townships are stirring again. After an extended period of confused inactivity, deepened by news of the meeting between the President, P.W. Botha, and Nelson Mandela, and talk of a "negotiated settlement", anti-apartheid organisations are gearing themselves for a peaceful but intensive face-off with the Pretoria government.

The unifying focus is opposition to the ethnic election of 6 September — but the challenge is far more extensive. On Wednesday, the myriad trade union and activist groups which are referred to here as the "mass democratic movement" announced a campaign of "non-violent direct action against segregated facilities and amenities" in South Africa.

The initiative, which is to begin on 2 August with crowds of blacks "presenting themselves for treatment" at whites-only hospitals around the country, is expected to extend to other apartheid institutions and could reach a peak during the election period.

It is a sign of political rejuvenation in the townships, a resurgence of anti-apartheid energy which had dissipated in the grip of the State of Emergency. There have been indications in recent months that community organisations, decimated in the clampdown of June 1986, are beginning to re-emerge. The extent of this regrouping of political forces will be judged by the ability of organisations such as the United Democratic Front and the Congress of South African Trade Unions to spearhead organised, disciplined protest action.

Pretoria has already served warning that it will do all it can to thwart these plans: the government is in no mood, as it shakily approaches the elections, to allow such a show of anti-apartheid sentiment.

The Law and Order Minister, Adriaan Vlok, pre-empted the announcement of the campaign by warning that he had a document to prove that "revolutionaries" had drafted a master plan to violently disrupt the elections. It was being directed by 30 key activists.

The anti-apartheid organisations have reacted uncompromisingly. Mr Vlok has grossly distorted their intentions, they say, and the one-million-strong labour federation Cosatu has challenged the minister to prove his allegations "in open court".

Cosatu yesterday gave a document to *The Independent* on which, it claims, Mr Vlok is basing his allegations. The document — a draft resolution circulated at Cosatu's recent congress but never adopted or even debated — differs substantially from the minister's version. It calls for militant anti-apartheid action but it does not propose violence.

Speaking in the conservative

town of Fochville on Tuesday night, Mr Vlok had referred to a planned march on the Union Buildings in Pretoria, the use of petrol bombs against election candidates, and a petition demanding the release of political prisoners.

No references to any of these appear in the document in the possession of *The Independent*. "These are blatant lies," said the Cosatu general secretary, Sydney Mufamadi. "There is nothing in the document which remotely suggests acts of violence."

Mr Mufamadi said a reference in the draft resolution to a campaign "to demand that health facilities are desegregated and opened to all people" was presented by Mr Vlok as reading "all people must turn up at hospitals ... to disrupt medical services". There are several other inconsistencies between Mr Vlok's claims and the Cosatu document, and a



Adriaan Vlok: 'proof of sabotage'

protracted slanging match is certain to ensue.

More important, however, is the extent to which the minister will act upon his thinly-veiled threat of a renewed clampdown. He is clearly constrained by the recently-achieved atmosphere of optimism about South Africa's potential for reform — both here and abroad — and would likely be loath to spark a new wave of protest by issuing fresh banning orders.

However, he faces an anti-apartheid movement with no intention of yielding to the threats. "We are determined to claim our democratic right to protest against apartheid laws and protest against the apartheid elections," resistance leaders announced jointly this week. "We are also determined to do this peacefully. But if the government creates a situation where they make peaceful protest impossible they must take full responsibility for the consequences of their actions."

If this determination is translated into organisation, Mr Vlok will find himself in an uncomfortable position. The far right-wing Conservative Party is buoyant and has proved adept at making political capital out of what it characterises as government "weak-kneedness" in the face of "black radical" pressure.