

GET READY FOR THE YEAR OF THE PANTHERS

By MICHAEL RYAN

"I can promise you, Black Panther parties will be operating in Melbourne and all major towns before the year is out," Bruce McGuinness, the Black Power oracle, said yesterday.

"Young Aborigines are sick of inactivity. It is going to come to violent racial conflict."

The diminutive Mr. McGuinness, one of Australia's most articulate Aborigines, warned "other movements which are much more militant again, will spring up."

Mr. McGuinness sounded the

first whisper of the approaching storm after announcing that he was about to resign, in the next month, from the post of director of the Aborigines Advancement League.

He expects to embark on a Bachelor of Arts degree course at Monash University in March to further his dream of establishing "black studies", to preserve for the Aboriginal people their old culture.

A slim, small man with an apostle hair cut, the build of a former Jimmy Sharman boxing tent bantam-weight, and the tongue of a tan Demosthenes, Mr. McGuinness, 32, said:—

"Black Pantherism is already established in Brisbane and the founder, Dennis Walker, is a man

like Eldridge Cleaver to give Aborigines, a real leader.

"Already there have been reactions against police in Brisbane and Sydney and there are a number of very militant Aborigines in Melbourne.

"I think it will hit the fan some time this year."

Mr. McGuinness said he had kept Victorian Aborigines from uprising, while he was director of the league, but as a paid-up member "I'll be in a much stronger position to fight the Ministry".

Scattered among his warnings, Mr. McGuinness dropped gentle sayings like: "I just don't go for violence myself, I can't even shoot a rabbit.

"I couldn't burn property. I react in an Aboriginal way, by talking it out. The white man's way is to pick up guns and poison the waterholes."

Mr. McGuinness said that to him Black Power was not just the violent thing Governments tried to paint it. "Martin Luther King was the exemplar of Black Power."

However, while he preferred peaceful dealings, Australia's Black Panther movement "will probably come to force".

"How do you stop people from doing something they believe is right?" he asked.

"If I spoke out against them, they might get me."



Mr. McGuinness