

PM-COMMONWEALTH-AFRICA; DL BGT; 0825  
 DAY LEAD BUDGET

By DENNIS PASSA

CANBERRA (CP) - CANADIAN OFFICIALS AT A COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE SAID TODAY THEY PLAN TO PROPOSE A COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM TO BOLSTER THE STATURE OF THE COMMONWEALTH GAMES WHICH FACE A POSSIBLE BOYCOTT BY AFRICAN COUNTRIES NEXT YEAR.

DETAILS OF THE PROPOSAL WERE GIVEN TO REPORTERS BY CANADIAN OFFICIALS AS EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER JOE CLARK AND HIS COUNTERPARTS IN SEVEN OTHER COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES HELD THEIR FIRST CLOSED SESSION OF A THREE-DAY CONFERENCE IN THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL.

THE 1990 COMMONWEALTH GAMES IN AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND, FACE A POSSIBLE BOYCOTT BECAUSE BLACK AFRICAN COUNTRIES ARE UPSET OVER PLANNED CRICKET AND RUGBY TOURS OF SOUTH AFRICA BY ATHLETES FROM BRITAIN AND AUSTRALIA. THE 1986 GAMES IN EDINBURGH WERE MARRED BY A BOYCOTT BY NEARLY HALF OF THE ELIGIBLE COUNTRIES.

THE MAIN THRUST OF THE CANADIAN PROPOSAL - TO BE PRESENTED TO THE CONFERENCE WEDNESDAY - IS THAT A PROGRAM BE INSTITUTED TO HELP DEVELOPING COUNTRIES HOST THE GAMES, THEREBY INCREASING INTERNATIONAL EXPOSURE OF THE COMPETITION.

CANADA IS RECOMMENDING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR THE HOST COUNTRY; TRANSPORT SUBSIDIES TO ASSIST PARTICIPATION; CREATION OF A COMMONWEALTH GAMES TRUST TO PROVIDE SUGGESTIONS FROM GOVERNMENTS; AND A REVAMPING OF THE GAMES HEADQUARTERS OPERATION.

CANADA RECOMMENDS THAT A MEETING BE HELD IN LONDON IN SEPTEMBER WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COMMONWEALTH FOREIGN MINISTERS TO DEVELOP DETAILS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING IN OCTOBER IN KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA.

IF APPROVED THERE, THE PROPOSAL WOULD BE SENT TO THE COMMONWEALTH GAMES FEDERATION MEETING IN JANUARY IN AUCKLAND.

#### COUNTRIES INTERESTED

THE LAST TIME THE COMMONWEALTH GAMES WERE HELD IN A DEVELOPING COUNTRY WAS IN 1966 IN JAMAICA. THE GAMES ARE TO BE HELD IN VICTORIA IN 1994, BUT THERE IS INTEREST FROM KENYA, BARBADOS AND JAMAICA TO HOST THE GAMES IN 1998.

EARLIER TODAY, CLARK SPOKE AT THE OPENING CEREMONY FOR THE CONFERENCE OF THE COMMONWEALTH COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN MINISTERS ON SOUTHERN AFRICA. CLARK IS THE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN.

ON THE POSSIBLE BOYCOTT, CLARK SAID, "WE'RE WORRIED ABOUT THE THREAT TO A VIABLE AND IMPORTANT COMMONWEALTH INSTITUTION." BUT HE SAID HE WAS ENCOURAGED BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS "TO DISSUADE SOME OF THEIR ATHLETES."

AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER BOB HAWKE TOOK ISSUE WITH THE CRICKETERS FROM ENGLAND AND AN INTERNATIONAL GROUP OF RUGBY PLAYERS, INCLUDING SOME FROM AUSTRALIA, WHO ARE PLANNING THE SOUTH AFRICAN TOUR.

"SOME CLAIM THEY BELIEVE THAT THESE EVENTS WILL ACTUALLY HELP BREAK DOWN THE BARRIERS OF APARTHEID," HAWKE SAID. "UNFORTUNATELY, THE OPPOSITE IS THE CASE."

SIR SHRIDATH RAMPHAL, THE COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY GENERAL, SAID HE CONDEMNS THE SPORTSMEN FOR "HAVING ALLOWED GREED TO GET THE BETTER OF PRINCIPLE," BUT CAUTIONED AGAINST ANY BOYCOTT THAT WOULD HURT COMMONWEALTH ATHLETES.

ANOTHER MAIN ISSUE AT THE CONFERENCE IS THE IMPACT OF SANCTIONS AGAINST APARTHEID - SOUTH AFRICA'S RACIAL POLICIES THAT ENABLE FIVE MILLION WHITES TO CONTROL MOST ASPECTS OF THE COUNTRY WHILE THE BLACK MAJORITY IS DENIED BASIC RIGHTS.

AN INDEPENDENT REPORT, EXPECTED TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE CONFERENCE ON TUESDAY, SUGGESTED TOUGHER SANCTIONS AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA. AMONG OTHER PROPOSALS, THE REPORT RECOMMENDED THAT COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES CUT OFF ALL TRADE WITH SOUTH AFRICA WITHIN FIVE YEARS.

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