

AM-COMMONWEALTH-AFRICA; NL BGT ST LD; 1046  
1st LEAD - 580 (EDS: INCLUDES CLARK REACTION TO SOUTH AFRICAN  
STATEMENTS; EDITS TO TIGHTEN. NO PICKUP.)

By DENNIS PASSA

CANBERRA (CP) - EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER JOE CLARK SAID TODAY THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT TURNS ITS AMBASSADORS INTO "STUNT MEN" WHENEVER THE COMMONWEALTH MEETS TO DISCUSS APARTHEID.

CLARK, IN THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL CANBERRA FOR THE FOURTH MEETING OF THE COMMONWEALTH COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN MINISTERS ON SOUTHERN AFRICA, WAS RESPONDING TO A POLL RELEASED IN OTTAWA ON TUESDAY BY THE SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY INDICATING CANADIANS OPPOSE SANCTIONS IF THEY HURT THE BLACK MAJORITY.

"WELL, IT'S A CURIOUS FACT THAT WHILE SOUTH AFRICA TRIES TO DISCOUNT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE COMMONWEALTH; EVERY TIME WE HOLD A MEETING THEY TURN THEIR AMBASSADORS INTO STUNT MEN," CLARK SAID WHILE ENTERING A COMMITTEE ROOM TO START THE THIRD AND FINAL DAY OF THE CONFERENCE.

"THEY RELEASE PARTIAL RESULTS OF OLD POLLS IN OTTAWA AND ASK FOR THE RIGHT FOR THEIR AMBASSADOR IN AUSTRALIA TO SPEAK TO US," CLARK SAID, ADDING THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT THEN DENIES TRAVEL DOCUMENTS TO OTHERS WISHING TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY TO APPEAR BEFORE THE COMMITTEE.

#### REJECTS REQUEST

ON MONDAY, CLARK REJECTED A REQUEST FROM DAVID TOTHILL, SOUTH AFRICA'S AMBASSADOR TO AUSTRALIA, TO APPEAR BEFORE THE COMMITTEE, SAYING THE PURPOSE OF THEIR MEETING WAS TO HEAR FROM PEOPLE "WHO ARE OFTEN SILENCED."

EARLIER MONDAY, THE MINISTERS LEARNED SOUTH AFRICA PREVENTED AZHAR CACHALIA, TREASURER OF THE ANTI-APARTHEID UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT, FROM LEAVING SOUTH AFRICA TO SPEAK TO THE GROUP IN CANBERRA.

CLARK SAID THE POLL, CONDUCTED BY GOLDFARB CONSULTANTS OF TORONTO, WAS PARTIAL.

"I THINK IT WAS WEIGHED TO TRY TO BE CARRIED ON THE VIEW THAT SANCTIONS HURT BLACKS DISPROPORTIONATELY, AND THAT ARGUMENT HAS BEEN CONTESTED BY A NUMBER OF THE PEOPLE WHO ARE HERE."

THE POLL SAID WHEN THOSE QUESTIONED WERE ASKED IF THEY WOULD SUPPORT SANCTIONS OR TRADE RESTRICTIONS "IF THEY RESULTED IN HARDSHIP FOR BLACK SOUTH AFRICANS," ONLY 37 PER CENT OF THOSE SURVEYED SAID YES.

FIFTY-TWO PER CENT WERE OPPOSED.

CLARK SAID INCREASED SOUTH AFRICAN ACTIVITY SURROUNDING THE COMMONWEALTH MEETINGS INDICATES THEY ARE HAVING AN EFFECT ON THE PRETORIA GOVERNMENT.

"I THINK IT INDICATES THAT THE WORK OF THIS COMMITTEE HAS ACQUIRED MORE IMPORTANCE THAN ANY OF US THOUGHT IT WOULD WHEN WE STARTED," CLARK SAID.

"I THINK THERE IS THE PROSPECT OF SOME REAL CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICA. THE COMMONWEALTH IS AN INSTRUMENT WITH UNUSUAL INFLUENCE AND I THINK THE SOUTH AFRICANS ARE BEGINNING TO REALIZE THAT."

#### DRAFTS REPLY

CLARK ALSO SAID HE DRAFTED A REPLY TO A LETTER FROM FOREIGN MINISTER PIK BOTHA OF SOUTH AFRICA URGING COMMONWEALTH FOREIGN MINISTERS TO REJECT A REPORT WHICH SAID SANCTIONS AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA ARE EFFECTIVE AND IN SOME CASES HELPED CREATE JOBS FOR BLACKS.

CLARK SAID SINCE THE LETTER WAS WRITTEN TO HIM IN HIS CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN OF THE CONFERENCE, HE WANTED TO SEEK THE APPROVAL OF THE OTHER MINISTERS AT TODAY'S MEETING BEFORE RELEASING ITS CONTENTS.

ON TUESDAY, THE MINISTERS AGREED TO ASK BANKS TO PUT PRESSURE ON SOUTH AFRICA BY IMPOSING TOUGH REPAYMENT TERMS ON THE BILLIONS OF DOLLARS THE COUNTRY OWES THEM.

THE MINISTERS SAID BANKS SHOULD EXERT AS MUCH PRESSURE AS POSSIBLE WITHOUT MAKING SOUTH AFRICA DEFAULT ON ITS LOANS. THE PROPOSALS WERE MADE IN LIGHT OF SOUTH AFRICA'S NEED TO RESCHEDULE ITS FOREIGN DEBT BY JUNE 1990.

THE COMMONWEALTH COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN MINISTERS ON SOUTHERN AFRICA DISCUSSED THE POSSIBLE MEASURES AS PART OF AN ATTEMPT TO FORCE PRETORIA TO END APARTHEID.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER JOE CLARK, CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING, SAID THE COMMONWEALTH WILL PROPOSE MEETINGS WITH SENIOR OFFICIALS OF THE BANKS INVOLVED IN RESCHEDULING THE DEBT.

"THE WORLD KNOWS THAT THE RESCHEDULING QUESTION IS URGENT," CLARK TOLD REPORTERS.

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