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PM-CLARK-AUSTRALIA; DL; 0271

DAY LEAD

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA (CP) - EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER JOE CLARK BEGAN A PRIVATE VISIT TO SYDNEY TODAY AHEAD OF A COMMONWEALTH FOREIGN MINISTERS CONFERENCE NEXT WEEK.

CLARK ARRIVED AFTER A 29-HOUR FLIGHT FROM THE FRENCH CAPITAL WHERE HE HAD ATTENDED A TWO-DAY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CAMBODIA.

HE LEAVES ON SATURDAY FOR CANBERRA TO ACT AS CHAIRMAN FOR THE FOURTH MEETING OF THE COMMONWEALTH COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN MINISTERS ON SOUTH AFRICA.

AN EXTERNAL AFFAIRS SPOKESMAN SAID IN SYDNEY TODAY THAT CLARK, WHO HAS BEEN AWAY FROM OTTAWA FOR MORE THAN A WEEK, WILL GET CAUGHT UP ON DEPARTMENTAL BUSINESS AND PREPARE HIMSELF FOR THE CANBERRA CONFERENCE THAT BEGINS MONDAY AND ENDS ON WEDNESDAY.

CLARK IS EXPECTED TO ATTEND A WORKING DINNER OF SOME OF THE CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS ON SUNDAY NIGHT AND MAY MEET WITH COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY GENERAL SIR SONNY RAMPHAL.

BEFORE LEAVING LONDON ON WEDNESDAY, RAMPHAL CONDEMNED THE ANNOUNCEMENT BY A GROUP OF 16 LEADING ENGLISH CRICKETERS THAT THEY WOULD TOUR SOUTH AFRICA OVER THE NEXT TWO WINTERS.

HE BRANDED THE ANNOUNCED TOUR "AN ACT OF TREACHERY" AND CONSIDERED THE CRICKETERS "UTTERLY SELFISH."

HOWEVER, HE SAID HE DOES NOT EXPECT A BOYCOTT OF NEXT JANUARY'S COMMONWEALTH GAMES IN AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND, BY BLACK MEMBERS OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

NEW ZEALAND FOREIGN MINISTER RUSSELL MARSHALL IS EXPECTED TO BE IN CANBERRA NEXT WEEK TO ARGUE HIS COUNTRY'S CASE AGAINST ANY BOYCOTT OF THE GAMES.

OTHERS TAKING PART IN NEXT WEEK'S COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE INCLUDE AUSTRALIAN FOREIGN MINISTER GARETH EVANS AS WELL AS MINISTERS FROM GUYANA, INDIA, NIGERIA, TANZANIA, ZAMBIA AND ZIMBABWE.

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