

Business Day 1/8/85

SA-built yacht flying stars and stripes

LONDON — Whitbread Round-the-World yacht race organisers say that they will make a port call in South Africa, despite "civil unrest."

The chairman of the race committee, Rear Admiral Charles Williams, said he expected anti-apartheid protests in Auckland, where the fleet is due a month after leaving Cape Town on December 4.

Williams told a Press briefing at Cowes: "I have no compunction whatever that we go to South Africa."

The 27 000-mile race was entitled to the hospitality countries would give, he added.

The race chairman also defended the entry by Atlantic Privateer, which reportedly started out as South Africa's bid for the Whitbread trophy, but now flies an American flag.

There was "civil unrest" in South Africa, he said, adding: "We'll have to take that one as it comes."

He was sure the authorities would "afford protection" should it be re-

RALPH GOWLING

quired.

Williams said the race was "not contravening any Gleneagles Agreement."

He said the British Foreign Office supported the view that there was no breach of the agreement, which calls on Commonwealth governments to discourage sporting links with South Africa.

"We are not entering into a contest situation with South Africa. These boats are not formed into national teams," he said.

It was "sad" the position had been misconstrued in some countries.

"In races so far we have generated unanimity among nations," he said.

Between 17 and 22 yachts are expected to make what Williams said would be a "breathtaking start" in the fourth round-the-world race at Portsmouth on September 28.

The race chairman said he believed Atlantic Privateer's entry was not a big issue, because she was now Baltimore-registered and skipper Peter Kuttel held dual nationality.

"Only five South Africans are now on board," he said.

Atlantic Privateer was reportedly built and registered in South Africa.

She became Apple McIntosh and took line honours in this year's Cape-Uruguay race, breaking the record by one hour 44 minutes, and was then renamed Atlantic Privateer.

The round-the-world race has three compulsory stop-overs, with the leaders expected to arrive in Cape Town on November 3, Auckland on January 3 and Punta del Este (Uruguay) on March 12.

The re-starts are December 4, February 15 and April 9, and the leaders are due back at the Portsmouth finish on May 7. — Sapa.