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Carrington visit seen as rebuff to PLO

From Christopher Walker
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Mr David Kimche, director-general of Israel's Foreign Ministry, said today that Israel had never feared that Lord Carrington might cancel this week's official visit as a result of Arab pressure caused by the security crisis in the occupied West Bank.

He also disclosed that Israel would be proposing that the British Government should introduce parliamentary legislation to outlaw companies from participating in the Arab boycott of Israel, similar to laws which have already been introduced in France and America.

Mr Kimche made clear that Israel would be flatly rejecting the thrust of Britain's policy that there should be mutual recognition between Israel and the Palestine Organization, using the latest wave of West Bank violence to back up its arguments.

In an interview with *The Times*, on the eve of the Foreign Secretary's controversial 48-hour visit to Jerusalem, Mr Kimche said: "We were convinced that once Lord Carrington said that he would come, he would not be put off by the instigations and provocations of the PLO. We had no doubts and we are happy he is coming."

He added that the Israeli Government had not yet decided how to react publicly to one of the most contentious elements in the visit — a plan by a senior Foreign Office official to hold talks with Mr Karim Khalef and Mr Bassam Shaka, two of the elected Palestinian mayors dismissed from their West



Lord Carrington: An open policy

Bank posts last week by Israel.

Lord Carrington will not be crossing to the annexed section of the city for private meetings with Britain's consul-general.

During today's interview Mr Kimche said: "We welcome the visit greatly. We have always held feelings of friendship for Great Britain, and we are sorry that there has been a period recently in which there appeared to be differences of opinion between us. We hope very much for a closer relationship in the future."

He cited Britain's enthusiastic support for the EEC's Venice declaration as he main cause for the recent deterioration in Israeli-British relations. "We hope that this time we shall hear from Lord Carrington a more forthcoming attitude regarding the Camp David peace process."



Menachem Begin: spate of personal attacks

Asked to explain Israel's belief that such a change in Britain's Middle East policy might be imminent. Mr Kimche said: "First of all, British troops are in the Sinai peace-keeping force and, secondly, the mere fact that Lord Carrington is coming to visit us. We hope that there has been a reassessment regarding the Camp David process."

Lord Carrington will be the first British Foreign Secretary to pay an official visit to Israel since 1978. He comes at a time when relations have been strained by a number of factors ranging from personal attacks against him by Mr Menachem Begin, the Prime Minister, to the embarrassing absence of any senior British representative at last year's funeral of Moshe Dayan, the Israeli war hero.

It is understood that dur-

ing this week's talks Israel has no intention of raising the latest cause of diplomatic embarrassment — the arrest earlier this month of Miss Rhona Ritchie, the First Secretary at the British Embassy, on a charge under the Official Secrets Act. She has now been released in England on £10,000 bail.

Mr Kimche explained today that senior Israeli ministers will spell out to Lord Carrington their conviction that the latest wave of West Bank violence was deliberately provoked by the PLO.

They will argue that the PLO was forced to instigate the disturbances as a result of its weakened state caused by the continuing ceasefire along Israel's northern border and a renewed Jordanian move to re-assert itself in the West Bank.

He added that Lord Carrington would also be told of Israel's strong opposition to what it sees as European encouragement of the PLO, which has worked to undermine what he described as "moderates" among Palestinians in the West Bank prepared to work with the autonomy scheme.

□ The Jordanian and Lebanese ambassadors in London today called for the cancellation of Lord Carrington's visit to Israel Denis Taylor writes. They told Mr Douglas Hurd, Minister of State at the Foreign Office, that the serious situation on the West Bank demanded a reappraisal of British relations with Israel.

They said Britain and the EEC countries should revive their initiative, which should be pursued until a Palestinian state had been created.