

BRITAIN CALLS FOR BETTER RELATIONS

LONDON (WNS) -- Douglas Hurd, Foreign Office Minister of State, said he hoped relations would improve between Israel and Britain, regardless of who becomes the new Israeli Prime Minister, and called a "new chapter" in Britain-Israeli relations it was reported here.

Referring to the Israeli elections, Hurd expressed the hope that the next government could pursue "a clear line of policy, and I expect that will happen." Speaking just the day after Britain assumed the six-month presidency of the European Economic Community (EEC) Hurd added that the 10 member countries would pursue the EEC peace initiative "without respite."

He added that the EEC's policy was "not yet fully defined and Britain sought to keep closely

alongside the U.S. Middle East policy.

Hurd said that there was still no plans for Lord Carrington, current chairman of the EEC, to meet with Palestine Liberation Leader Yasir Arafat. However, it remained a possibility within the framework of the Euro-Arab dialogue later in the year. Looking forward to what Hurd termed "close and frank relations" with Israel he suggested that relations could have been better over the past year had Israel reacted differently to the EEC's Venice Declaration initiative, calling for mutual recognition by Israel and the Palestinians.

"It should have been possible without yielding anything of substance for Israel to have welcomed the Venice Declaration, and at the time underlining the principle or Israel's right to exist," he said.

WHY ISRAEL IS RETALIATING

TEL AVIV (WNS) - Palestinian terrorists launched a Katyusha rocket attack from Lebanon on the coastal resort of Nahariya killing three people and wounding 13. Rockets fired by the terrorists also wounded 12 people in the border town of Kiryat Shemona. Both towns also sustained severe property damage and crops in settlements between the two towns were set afire by rockets.

The attacks were described as the heaviest since the Yom Kippur War by Israeli military sources. United Nations sources said nearly 300 rockets were lobbed into Israel's northern towns.

Israel retaliated the next day as it carried out its heaviest attack in recent years on Palestinian bases in Lebanon. According to a military spokesman five bridges spanning the Litani and Zaharani rivers were destroyed as were the regional headquarters of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Arab Liberation Front, terrorist groups based in the Damour and Sidon areas. Beirut radio confirmed that the bridges were completely demolished and extensive damage was sustained by the Palestinian bases. The radio report said the Israeli

planes released balloons to draw off SAM-7 aircraft missile fire.

Deputy Defense Minister Mordechai Zippori said recently that Israel would step up its anti-terrorist activities in south Lebanon in view of reports that the terrorists have acquired sophisticated arms from Libya, Syria and the Soviet Union. He said these included long range Katyusha rocket launchers with 21 to 41 barrels in each launcher. Chief of Staff Gen. Rafael Eitan said the terrorists had also obtained tanks and artillery.

The rocket attacks followed a heavy Israeli air attack on targets near Damour, south of Beirut. During the air raid, the Israeli Air Force shot down a Syrian aircraft in a short dogfight when Syrian fighters tried to intercept the Israeli planes.

In another terrorist incident, an Israeli army colonel was killed and five other Israelis -- two soldiers and three civilian policemen -- were wounded when an explosive device went off under the vehicle they were driving in the Rafiah area south of Gaza. The El Fatah terrorist organization claimed responsibility for the explosion which it claimed was set off by an electronic device triggered from some distance away.

MACCABIAH "BLACKOUT"

The third largest international athletic competition in the world, the 11th Maccabiah Games have taken place in Israel and if you watch, listen or read sports news, you might be under the impression that sports news ceases when the "Boys of Summer" take to the picket lines. The coverage in the general press of this most important and festive sports event in Israel has been slim and in some cases non-existent.

The Games featured a total of 3500 athletes with a delegation of nearly 400 representing the United States. Athletes from 35 countries competed in the Games that highlighted 31 sports, from basketball to swimming and chess to bridge. It was a long way from the first Maccabiah in 1932 which lasted just two days and drew about 25,000 fans.

The opening ceremonies for this year's Games, which cost a reportedly \$3.2 million to mount, found an enthusiastic crowd of 50,000 sports fans watching Shlomo Glickstein, Israel's top seeded tennis champ, race into the Ramat Gan Stadium bearing the traditional Maccabiah torch which had been kindled earlier in Modi'in, birthplace of the Maccabees.

Whatever the reasons for this U.S. media blackout of the Maccabiah Games, we can only suggest that the tide should change. The athletes from the United States could do with some added exposure as can the viewers with quality and quantitative sports. Baseball will no doubt continue, as it has for a century, as the most popular summer sport in the U.S. despite the progress and final outcome of the baseball strike.

But when Sunday afternoon sports programming brings Triple A minor league baseball from Omaha, Nebraska or a tug-of-war between the Steel Workers Union and Mine Workers Union of Pittsburgh into our living room, "the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat" has been demoted as compared to the international sporting spirit of the Maccabiah Games. There is no baseball in the Maccabiah Games. However, this summer continues in the United States for a sports hungry audience deprived of good competitive athletic drama. The 11th Maccabiah provided this outlet.

BEGIN MEETS WITH RELIGIOUS LEADERS COURT WILL TRY 4 ARABS

JERUSALEM (WNS) -- Premier Menachem Begin cancelled the weekly Cabinet meeting to open coalition negotiations with the National Religious Party leaders. He offered them four portfolios in a new Cabinet -- education, interior, police and religious affairs ministries.

He also suggested that a coalition agreement with the NRP include a clause stating that the Prime Minister supported the "Who is a Jew?" amendment to the Law of Return and that efforts would be made to recruit a coalition majority in favor of it.

Begin met with members of the Herut Secretariate and said he was seeking to form an 18-member coalition government which would include eight members of his own Herut Party, six of Likud's Liberal Party wing and two NRP ministers -- each of who would hold dual portfolios. He would offer one portfolio each to the Tami and La'am factions.

TEL AVIV (WNS) -- A military court in Nablus ruled that it was competent to try four Arabs for the murder of six Israeli Jews and the wounding of 16 others in an ambush of worshippers on their way home from synagogue in Hebron in May 1980.

The defense had claimed the court had no right to try them as the four were "prisoners of war." The judges refused to allow a delay until the defense appeals to the Supreme Court, but noted the defense lawyers could still do so.

The four Arabs refused to cooperate with the court. When asked whether they understood the charges against them which carry a death sentence, they refused to reply, laughing loudly instead and shouting Palestine Liberation Organization slogans.

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