

POLICY , , , FROM WAN AHMAD HULAIMI

LONDON, MAR. 3 (BERNAMA) -- MALAYSIA'S 'BUY BRITISH LAST' POLICY HAS COST BRITAIN NOT LESS THAN £20 MILLION (M\$68.6 MILLION) AND MAY WELL BE £50 MILLION (M\$171.5 MILLION)', ACCORDING TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS FOREIGN AFFAIRS SELECT COMMITTEE, SIR ANTHONY KERSHAW.

'BRITISH CONSULTANTS HAVE SUFFERED MUCH,' HE SAID. 'I WILL NOT BE FRANK IF I DID NOT TELL YOU THAT THIS IS RESENTED IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND IT WILL TAKE TIME FOR THE IMPRESSION TO FADE.'

SIR ANTHONY WAS SPEAKING IN A FORUM ON ANGLO-MALAYSIAN RELATIONS ORGANISED BY UMNO CLUB LONDON AT MALAYSIA HALL YESTERDAY.

ON AN OPTIMISTIC NOTE, SIR ANTHONY OBSERVED THAT THERE WERE SIGNS OF IMPROVEMENT.

AMONG THESE, HE MENTIONED DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD'S APPROVAL OF THE FORMATION OF A MALAYSIAN-BRITISH TRADE ASSOCIATION BOTH IN KUALA LUMPUR AND IN LONDON AND THE RECENT BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSAL TO INJECT £5 MILLION (M\$17.15 MILLION) INTO THE SUBSIDY FOR MALAYSIAN STUDENTS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM. -- MORE 2315/MB

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ON THE SUBSIDY, HE SAID: 'THIS IS NOT AN ENORMOUS SUM AS THINGS GO TODAY NEVERTHELESS IT IS INDICATIVE OF THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO AMEND A MISTAKE AND IT POINTS IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.'

LOOKING BACK ON EVENTS WHICH LED TO THE DETERIORATION IN ANGLO MALAYSIAN RELATIONSHIP, SIR ANTHONY SAID THAT IT WAS NOT FAIR TO APPORTION BLAME ON EITHER SIDE.

'I THINK SOME OF THE REPOSTING ON MALAYSIA IN THE BRITISH PRESS WAS NOT CONSTRUCTIVE OR ACCURATE AND MIGHT WELL HAVE GIVEN AN UNFORTUNATE IMPRESSION,' HE ADDED.

HOWEVER, HE SAID THAT THERE WERE ONE OR TWO THINGS WHICH OUGHT NOT TO BE HELD AGAINST THE UNITED KINGDOM.

'IT NOT TRUE THAT OUR STOCK EXCHANGE RULES WERE CHANGED IN ORDER TO VEX MALAYSIA. THE RULES APPLIED TO EVERYBODY AND WERE DESIGNED TO MAKE TRADING FAIRER AND EASIER.'

IT WAS ALSO NOT TRUE, HE SAID, THAT THE UNITED KINGDOM SUPPORTED THE EEC'S IMPORT RESRICTIONS. -- MORE 2150/MB

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+OF THE 2187 MILLION (M641.4 MILLION) WORTH OF MALAYSIAN IMPORTS INTO THE UK IN 1980, 40 PER CENT ENJOYED PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT UNDER EEC RULES,+ HE SAID.

THE UNITED KINGDOM DOES NOT OPPOSE IN ANY WAY THE MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT'S NEW ECONOMIC POLICY, SIR ANTHONY SAID.

+WE HAVE NO RIGHT TO DO SO. THE INCREASE IN BUMIPUTERA PARTICIPATION IS A MATTER ENTIRELY FOR MALAYSIA WHICH WE DO NOT PRESUME TO INTERFERE.+

HE ADDED: +ONE CAN HOWEVER NOTE THAT MOST OF THE INCREASE IN MALAY PARTICIPATION IS SO FAR BY WAY OF TRUST COMPANIES AND NOT TO INDIVIDUALS AND WE NOTE ALSO THAT CHINESE HOLDINGS HAVE BEEN REDUCED.+

ANOTHER SPEAKER IN THE FORUM, DR MICHAEL LEIFER, A LECTURER AT THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS, SAID THAT ONE OF THE PRECIPITATING ISSUES WHICH LED TO THE LETERIORATION IN ANGLO-MALAYSIA RELATION WAS + THE ADVENT TO HIGH OFFICE OF DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD.+ - MORE 2144/OM

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DR LEIFER SAID THAT IN TERMS OF HIS BACKGROUND OUTLOOK AND TO SOME EXTENT IN TERMS OF HIS PERSONALITY , DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR REPRESENTED A CHANGE - A QUALITATIVE CHANGE.

+HE IS A MAN WHOSE ASSOCIATION WITH THIS COUNTRY ARE NOT THE SAME AS HIS PREDECESSORS AND HIS EXPERIENCE HAS BEEN DIFFERENT AND HAS GIVEN HIM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE.+

DR MAHATHIR'S PERSPECTIVE, SAID DR PEIFER, ENCOMPASSED THE VIEWS OF A NEW GENERATION OF MALAYSIAN WHO HAD COME OF AGE AT THE TIME WHEN THE COUNTRY WAS INDEPENDENT AND HAD BEEN MOST CONSIIOUS OF THE NEED TO UNDERPIN THAT INDEPENDENCE AND TO MAKE SURE THAT INDEPENDENCE WAS WELL RESPECTED OUTSIDE MALAYSIA.

+MALAYSIA'S REACTION TO BRITAIN WAS A PRODUCT OF MALAYSIAN BUT MORE PARTICULARLY MALAY SENSITIVITY TO THE LEGACY OF COLONIALISM+, HE SAID.

+THIS UNDERLYING REASON IS REINFORCED BY WHAT I CAN ONLY DESCRIBE AS A STRONG ELEMENT OF BRITISH INSENSITIVITY.+ +SO WITH A COMBINATION OF MALAY SENSITIVITY ON THE ONE HAND AND BRITISH INSENSITIVITY ON THE OTHER, RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO STATES CAME TO A VERY LOW EBB,+ DR LEIFER SAID .

BOTH SIR ANTHONY KERSHAW AND DR LEIFER WELCOMED THE PRIME MINISTER'S PRIVATE VISIT TO LONDON NEXT WEEK AS A SIGN OF IMPROVED RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MALAYSIA AND BRITAIN. -- BERNAMA