

MAHATHIR

FROM WAN AHMAD HULAIMI

83
LONDON, MARCH 11, (BERNAMA) PRIME MINISTER (DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID THERE WERE NOW TANGIBLE CHANGES IN BRITISH ATTITUDE AND POLICY TOWARDS MALAYSIA TO WARRANT A RE-EXAMINATION OF THE COUNTRY'S POLICY TOWARDS THEM.

HE SAID THAT ON HIS RETURN TO MALAYSIA HE WOULD CONSULT HIS CABINET COLLEAGUES "IF IT WAS NOW RITE FOR US TO RE-EXAMINE OUR POLICIES TOWARDS BRITAIN."

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, WHO IS HERE ON A PRIVATE VISIT, SAID AT A PRESS CONFERENCE AT THE MALAYSIAN HIGH COMMISSION HERE YESTERDAY : +IT LOOKS AS IF THE BRITISH ARE KEEN TO RENEW OR TO IMPROVE THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH US.+

HE SAID: + IN THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, AND AFTER MY MEETING WITH PUAN MARGARET THATCHER, WE NATURALLY OUGHT TO HAVE SOME RECIPROCAL ARRANGEMENTS AND ACTION VIS-A -VIS THE CHANGE IN BRITISH ATTITUDES NOW PREVAILING.+

THIS CAN ONLY BE DECIDED AFTER DISCUSSIONS WITH HIS CABINET COLLEAGUES, HE SAID. -- MORE 1755/MB

ZCZC N120 (F/S)
MAHATHIR 2 LONDON

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR TOLD A GROUP OF MALAYSIAN JOURNALISTS THAT HE HAD BEEN WRONGLY LABELLED AS AN ANTI BRITISH PRIME MINISTER.

EVEN THOUGH HE WAS NOT BRITISH EDUCATED, THE FACT WAS THAT DURING THE JAPANESE OCCUPATION OF MALAYSIA HE WAS VERY PRO BRITISH AND ANTI JAPANESE, HE SAID.

+I AM NOT ACTUALLY ANTI BRITISH NOW. I MERELY DISAGREE WITH CERTAIN OF THEIR POLICIES AND ACTION, AND I THINK THE BRITISH THEMSELVES UNDERSTAND THIS.+

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THE MALAYSIAN HAD PATIENT FOR TOO LONG EVEN THOUGH THESE IRRITANTS CONTINUED TO HAPPEN.

+WE DID NOT EMBARK ON OUR ACTIONS IN HASTE AND WITHOUT THINKING,+ HE SAID.+BUT WHEN IT CAME TO THE LAST STRAW (BRITISH REACTION TOWARDS THE PURCHASE OF GUTHRIE), THAT LED US TO TAKE ACTION.+ MORE 1800/MB

ZCZC N121 (F/S)
MAHATHIR 3 LONDON

ASKED IF RELATIONS WITH BRITAIN WOULD BE ON A BETTER FOOTING NOW, HE SAID:+YOU CAN SAY THAT. CERTAINLY THINGS LOOK BETTER NOW THAN BEFORE.

+I THINK IT WOULD BE TO THEIR ADVANTAGE TO HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH MALAYSIA,+ DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID.

ON HIS LOOK EAST POLICY, HE SAID WHAT HE MEANT BY IT WAS NOT CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD.

ZTHE LOOK EAST POLICY MEANS THAT WE WANT TO LEARN FROM THE EAST. AND THAT WILL CONTINUE. IT DOES NOT MEAN THAT WE ARE GOING TO BUY FROM THE EAST, OR THAT EVERYTHING IS GOING TO BE GIVEN TO JAPAN.+

HE SAID THAT MALAYSIA WOULD CONTINUE TO SEND PEOPLE TO JAPAN AND TO RECEIVE JAPANESE HELP AND TECHNOLOGY. -- MORE 1810/MB

ZCZC N122 (F/S)
MAHATHIR 4 LONDON

THE LOOK EAST POLICY DID NOT EMERGE DURING HIS TOUGH STANCE TOWARDS BRITAIN, HE ADDED.

+I HAVE BEEN TALKING ABOUT JAPAN LONG BEFORE THIS. I HAVE BEEN TALKING ABOUT DISCIPLINE, ABOUT THE NEED TO WORK HARD...SINCE I WAS DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, SINCE I WAS MINISTER OF EDUCATION.+

EARLIER IN THE DAY, BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY FRANCIS PYM CALLED ON DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR AT THE MALAYSIAN HIGH COMMISSION. -- BERNAMA 1812/MB