

MAHATHIR - BRITISH

83  
KUALA LUMPUR, APRIL 2/ (BERNAMA) - (DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY THAT THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE DIRECTIVE ON WHERE POSSIBLE, DO NOT BUY BRITISH GOODS, WAS BECAUSE THESE GOODS ARE CHEAPER NOW.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT SINCE THE GOVERNMENT WAS NOW FORCED TO BUY BRITISH, THE DIRECTIVE WAS INEFFECTIVE.

HE TOLD NEWSMEN AFTER CHAIRING AN UMNO SUPREME COUNCIL MEETING HERE THAT IT WAS +STUPID+ IF MALAYSIA DID NOT BUY BRITISH GOODS BECAUSE ONE POUND STERLING WAS NOW WORTH ONLY \$3.40.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR CLARIFIED THAT HE NEVER SAID +BUY BRITISH LAST.+

+WHAT I SAID WAS WHERE POSSIBLE DO NOT BUY BRITISH GOODS BUT IF THE PRICE IS CHEAP IT WILL BE STUPID NOT TO DO SO.+

HE ADDED THAT INFAC T THE GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN BUYING BRITISH GOODS ALL THIS WHILE. - MORE 1725/BW

MAHATHIR - BRITISH 2 KUALA LUMPUR

ASKED ABOUT BUMIPUTRA MALAYSIA FINANCE, THE HONG KONG SUBSIDIARY OF BANK BUMIPUTRA, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT THE MATTER WAS NOW VERY WELL HANDLED AND MANAGED BY BANK BUMIPUTRA OFFICIALS.

HE ADDED THAT IN VIEW OF THIS IT WAS NOT NECESSARY FOR HIM TO INTERFERE.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT IN BUSINESS IT WAS NECESSARY TO OVERCOME PROBLEMS AND THE BANK NOW WAS DOING JUST THAT.

WHEN ASKED WHETHER ACTION WOULD BE TAKEN AGAINST THE BANK OFFICERS WHO FLOUTED BANKING LAW IN GIVING OUT LOAN TO THREE HONGKONG PROPERTY FIRMS, DATUK SERI DATUK MAHATHIR SAID ACTION COULD BE TAKEN AT ANY TIME.

BUMIPUTRA MALAYSIA FINANCE WAS REPORTED TO HAVE GIVEN LOANS TOTALLING ABOUT \$1 BILLION TO THREE HONG KONG PROPERTY FIRMS - THE CARRIAN GROUP, THE EDA GROUP AND A DEVELOPER KEVIN HSU, WHICH WERE SAID TO BE IN TROUBLE BECAUSE OF THE CRASH IN HONG KONG PROPERTY MARKET.

ON COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC SITUATION, PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT UMNO MEMBERS WERE AWARE THE PROBLEMS FACED BY THE GOVERNMENT NOW.

- BERNAMA 1728/BW