

# Britain happy with Dr M's decision

**KUALA LUMPUR, Sun.** — The British High Commission here is happy that the 18-month 'buy-British-last' policy has been lifted.

"We are very pleased about the announcement made by Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad," a spokeswoman for the High Commission said today.

"It came as a surprise. However, we can safely say that this means our efforts to promote better relations with Malaysia have been acknowledged and appreciated."

She said the imposition of the policy from October 1981 had resulted in the British public sector losing out on contracts

worth millions of pounds.

Yesterday, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir announced that British contracts and tender award proposals for Government projects need no longer be vetted by the Prime Minister's Department.

Instead, administrators of the various departments concerned can now decide on the tenders or contracts.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the Government directive on vetting was ineffective since the depreciating pound had resulted in British goods being cheaper.

This directive had been issued after the Council of the Securities Industry in Britain amended rules govern-

ing the large share acquisition and takeovers on the United Kingdom stock market following the successful bid by Malaysia's Permodalan Nasional Bhd to acquire control of Guthrie Corporation.

It also came after Britain imposed the full-cost fees for foreigners studying in the country.

However, since the implementation of the 'buy-British-last' policy, Britain had made several overtures to improve relations between the two countries.

One of these was the setting up of a £5-million (\$17.4 million) special trust fund to assist Malaysian students studying in Britain.