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3 APRIL 1985

3 MR LETWIN  
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FOR THE ATTENTION OF OLIVER LETWIN, C/O THE CABINET OFFICE  
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A BRIEF TELEX TO RECAPITULATE SOME OF THE BACKGROUND ON THE MALAYSIAN STUDENT QUESTION WHICH MIGHT BE USEFUL.

1. CAMBRIDGE COMMONWEALTH TRUST (CHAIRMAN HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES, ESTABLISHED OCTOBER 1982) AIMS TO HELP OUTSTANDING STUDENTS FROM THE COMMONWEALTH (PARTICULARLY DEVELOPING COUNTRIES) TO COME TO CAMBRIDGE. THE TRUST'S INITIATIVES IN MALAYSIA HAVE BEEN WARMLY WELCOMED BY MAHATHIR AND THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION (NOW THE HON. DATUK ABDULLAH BIN HAJ AHMAD BADAWI, WHO VISITED US IN CAMBRIDGE LAST OCTOBER). THE TRUST'S INITIATIVES ARE SIX-PRONGED.

- 1) A COLLABORATIVE ARRANGEMENTS BY WHICH THE PUBLIC SERVICE DEPARTMENT (WHICH HAS SOME RESPONSIBILITY FOR MANPOWER PLANNING AND STUDY OVERSEAS) SENDS CANDIDATES, BOTH GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE, TO CAMBRIDGE, MAINLY BUMIPUTRAS, TO REDRESS THE ETHNIC BALANCE. AS YET RELATIVELY FEW OF THESE CANDIDATES HAVE MADE THE GRADE, BUT THE PUBLIC SERVICE DEPARTMENT IS STRIVING TO IMPROVE THEIR PRELIMINARY TRAINING.
- ii) A COLLABORATION WITH THE SIME DARBY FOUNDATION BY WHICH TEN OUTSTANDINGLY ABLE UNDERGRADUATES AND GRADUATES, SELECTED FROM A VERY LARGE FIELD OF APPLICANTS BY OPEN COMPETITION, ARE ALREADY IN RESIDENCE IN CAMBRIDGE.
- iii) A SIMILAR COLLABORATION WITH MALAYSIA TOBACCO FOUNDATION (A SUBSIDIARY OF BAT) ON A SLIGHTLY MORE MODEST SCALE.
- iv) THE CAMBRIDGE MALAYSIA FOUNDATION (UNDER THE AEGIS OF THE CAMBRIDGE COMMONWEALTH TRUST) - PATRON YTM TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN PUTRA - AND INCLUDING AMONG ITS DIRECTORS TUN MOHAMED SUFFIAN BIN HASHIM (FORMER LORD PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL COURT OF MALAYSIA), (AND JOHN SKRINE AND HENRY BARLOW WHO ARE BOTH OLD MALAY HANDS). THE FOUNDATION IS ACTIVELY RAISING MONEY TO HELP SEND MALAY STUDENTS TO CAMBRIDGE. MALAYAN CEMENT (SUBSIDIARY OF BLUE CIRCLE) IS ONE OF THE FOUNDING MEMBERS AND SO IS TUN DATUK (PATINGGI TAN SRI HAJI) ABDUL RAHMAN YA'KUB (GOVERNOR OF SARAWAK). THIS PROMISES TO BE AN IMPORTANT VEHICLE FOR THE FUTURE.



- V) VARIOUS COLLABORATIONS (WHICH INCLUDE MALAYSIA WITHIN THEIR SCOPE) BETWEEN THE CAMBRIDGE COMMONWEALTH TRUST AND UK COMPANIES AT THIS END, FOR EXAMPLE TATE AND LYLE (LORD JELICOE WHO USED TO BE CHAIRMAN OF TATE AND LYLE AND NOW CHAIRMAN OF THE BRITISH OVERSEAS TRADE BOARD HAS BEEN AN ACTIVE SUPPORTER), SHELL AND GUTHRIES.
- VI) AD HOC PART-COST BURSARIES FROM THE CAMBRIDGE COMMONWEALTH TRUST TO SOME 14 MALAYSIAN STUDENTS - PARTICULAR MENTION SHOULD BE MADE OF YAA RAJA TUN AZLAN SHAH EX LORD PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL COURT OF MALAYSIA AND NOW 'DEPUTY KING', SHOSE SON IS AMONG THOSE MALAYSIAN STUDENTS RESIDENT IN CAMBRIDGE. AS THE HIGH COMMISSIONER DAVID GILLMORE WILL CONFIRM, THERE IS MUCH ENTHUSIASM IN THE TOP RANKS FOR THE CAMBRIDGE CONNECTION (FOR EXAMPLE, MANY OF THE JUDGES ARE CAMBRIDGE MEN AND SO ARE THEIR CHILDREN).
2. ON A WIDER FRONT, I WANTED TO GIVE YOU PRELIMINARY (AND CONFIDENTIAL) INFORMATION ON A NUMBER OF QUITE WELCOME DEVELOPMENTS IN MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENTS PLANS FOR SENDING (AT THEIR COST!) STUDENTS ABROAD, PARTICULARLY TO THE UNITED KINGDOM.
- I) THE PUBLIC SERVICE DEPARTMENT (WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND, I BELIEVE, THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE) NOW PLAN TO PREPARE ABOUT 1000 STUDENTS PER ANNUM FOR ENTRY INTO UK UNIVERSITIES, BY TAKING 'A' LEVELS IN MALAYSIA (BUT WITH THE CAMBRIDGE LOCAL EXAMINATION BOARD ORGANISING THE EXAMS) AT TEN SPECIAL SCHOOLS. THE FIRST BATCH WILL BE TAKING THEIR 'A' LEVELS IN JUNE 1987 AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE DEPARTMENT HOPE TO PLACE THE WHOLE LOT (1000 AND MORE) IN UK UNIVERSITIES. THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT PART OF THE OVERALL GOVERNMENT PLAN TO MEET THEIR FUTURE MANPOWER REQUIREMENTS AND, BY THE WAY, TO REDRESS THE BALANCE IN FAVOUR OF BUMIPUTRAS, THE ETHNIC MALAYS.
- II) FOR THEIR ELITE CANDIDATES (AS IT WERE THEIR MERIT SCHOLARS) - AGAIN LIKELY TO BE MAINLY BUMIPUTRAS - PERHAPS THIRTY A YEAR, THEY WANT AN OXBRIDGE OR TOP UK UNIVERSITY EDUCATION (ON THE LINES OF LEE KUAN YEW'S PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION SCHOLARS FROM SINGAPORE WHO COME TO OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE - AS WELL AS HARVARD-IN IMPRESSIVE NUMBERS). THE IDEA IS THAT THESE THIRTY OR SO BEGIN RIGHT AWAY TO DO THEIR 'A' LEVELS AT TOP EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS IN THE UK (AGAIN AT THE PUBLIC SERVICE DEPARTMENT'S EXPENSE) AND BE HEADED TOWARDS OXBRIDGE. THIS AGAIN IS A DEVELOPMENT WHICH SHOULD BE WELCOMED, WHILE BEARING IN MIND THAT NO UNIVERSITY CAN GUARANTEE A PLACE UNLESS THE CANDIDATES ARE OF SUFFICIENT CALIBRE AND MEET THE NORMAL ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS.



111) THEN THERE ARE THE PERSONS THE PUBLIC SERVICE DEPARTMENT SEND ON MORE SPECIFICALLY TECHNICAL COURSES. ABOUT 200 OUT OF SOME 600 COME TO THE UK FOR ENGINEERING AND OTHER USEFUL SUBJECTS. THE PUBLIC SERVICE DEPARTMENT IS ANXIOUS TO IMPROVE THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR PLACING THESE STUDENTS - AND I AM SURE THERE ARE WAYS IN <sup>which</sup> UNIVERSITIES AND POLYTECHNICS CAN HELP.

3. IT IS WORTH MENTIONING THAT BRITISH BUSINESSES IN MALAYSIA HAVE (AS EVEN THE CAMBRIDGE EXPERIENCE SHOWS) BEEN ACTIVE IN MENDING FENCES AND BUILDING BRIDGES AND THEY, ESPECIALLY BMITA AND THE ANGLO MALAY SOCIETY DESERVE ENCOURAGEMENT.
4. FINALLY YOU WILL KNOW THAT THE FCO AND ODA ARE KEEN THAT MALAYSIA BE KEPT IN THE SIGHTS WHEN AND IF THE 'PYM PACKAGE' IS LOOKED AT AGAIN BY THE POWERS THAT BE.

KIND REGARDS,

DR. ANIL SEAL,  
DIRECTOR,  
CAMBRIDGE COMMONWEALTH TRUST

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PLEASE ACKNOWLEDGE SAFE RECEIPT.

RGRTKS GOT OK KK  
TKS VERY MUCH

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