



Prime Minister

Malaysia

I am doubtful about this. Foreign and Commonwealth Office
You cannot get him down to Chequers and offer less than 1 hour's London SW1A 2AH
talks. You want to concentrate on the party conference this weekend.

28 September, 1982

2. You made him a courteous offer of lunch on Friday, which he could not accept. I suggest you do nothing more. Agree?

Now p-a.

Handwritten initials and a fraction: 1/10

Dear John,

A J-C. 30/9

Invitation to Malaysian Prime Minister

You will have seen by now Kuala Lumpur telno 375 containing Dr Mahathir's reply to the invitation extended to him by the Prime Minister to lunch on 1 October. While it is perhaps not surprising that he should have declined the invitation, the terms of his reply are somewhat lacking in warmth. Given Dr Mahathir's well known sensitivity about dealing only with his equals we do not propose to offer a call on him while he is here by another Minister. We are also paying particular attention to the protocol of his reception in order to minimise any risk of causing offence.

Mr Pym nevertheless wonders whether, given the persisting difficulties in Anglo-Malaysian relations, particularly on the commercial side, and the fact that these spring largely from Dr Mahathir's personal views, the Prime Minister might not be able to find time over the weekend of 2-3 October, despite the pressures of the Party conference, to offer him at least a short call. Dr Mahathir might refuse again but we would at least have succeeded in showing that we take him seriously. If he were to accept this could be of considerable benefit to Anglo/Malaysian relations even if the Prime Minister would not have anything new of substance to say to him on this score.

We do not of course wish to appear to be running after the Malaysians unduly, but the risk of this is perhaps lessened if the Prime Minister's reply to Dr Mahathir is to the effect that she is disappointed that Dr Mahathir cannot come to lunch on Friday, but of course understands the reasons; and that she is sorry again that her weekend programme does not allow her to offer him lunch then but would be delighted if Dr Mahathir could nevertheless find time for a short talk.

I understand that the Prime Minister is likely to be at Chequers over the weekend. The distance from London would obviously lessen the attraction to Dr Mahathir of the offer of a talk, but on balance we still think the offer worth making.

Yours ever

Handwritten signature: John Holmes

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

(J E Holmes)
Private Secretary