

Bhagwati Festschrift – August 5, 2005
Letter from Leif Pagrotsky
Minister of Education, Research, and Culture
Sweden

Dear Jagdish,

Many friends and distinguished colleagues from the academic world celebrate and salute you today.

But you have friends and fans in the more hands-on world of trade policy makers and trade negotiators, too. I have been one of those. Not least during my nine years as Minister of Industry and Trade in the Swedish Government, I very much appreciated and benefited from our discussions on and your knowledge of the labyrinths of international trade and economics.

On the barricades for a better world order you are an effective ally, always full of tireless energy and sharp analysis. You choose to speak directly to the general public – my voters and superiors – with clear and convincing argument, and you make life more difficult for the many protectionists around the world that are our common opponents.

When we disagree, and you and I sometimes do, our discussions are intense and tough, as they should be between good friends sharing values and goals. I thank you for forcing me to think things over once again, identifying my weak points and sharpening my analysis. That's what friends are for, and that's what the international trade community needs more of. So please keep up the good work.

I wish I could have been present on this special evening in New York, but from the somewhat cooler Sweden I raise my glass and send you my warmest regards and congratulations on your birthday.

Stockholm 5 August 2005

Leif Pagrotsky
Minister for Education, Research, and Culture
Minister for Industry and Trade 1997-2004