

FROM K.C. LEONG

BANGKOK, AUG. 24²¹ (BERNAMA) — DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID TODAY HE IS +VERY HOPEFUL+ THAT WITH A LITTLE BIT MORE GUIDANCE, MALAYSIANS WOULD BE ABLE TO ACHIEVE REAL RACIAL HARMONY.

THERE IS NO VERY DRAMATIC WAY OF BRINGING ABOUT HARMONY AMONG THE RACES AS THIS WAS A PROBLEM THAT NOT VERY MANY PEOPLE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO SOLVE, HE ADDED.

THE PRIME MINISTER MADE THESE REMARKS AT A QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION FOLLOWING A LUNCH AT THE FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS CLUB OF THAILAND HERE.

HE SAID WHEREVER THERE ARE DIFFERENT RACES LIVING TOGETHER THEY HAVE ALWAYS BEEN AT EACH OTHER'S THROATS AND IN SOME COUNTRIES THIS HAD BEEN GOING ON FOR YEARS.

+I THINK WE HAVE DONE VERY WELL INDEED COMPARED TO THESE OTHER COUNTRIES. RACE RELATIONS IN MALAYSIA IS FAR BETTER THAN ANYWHERE ELSE IN WHERE THERE IS THAT KIND OF MIXTURE OF RACES,+ HE ADDED.

HE SAID THERE IS A NEED TO RECOGNISE THAT THERE IS A RACIAL PROBLEM IN MALAYSIA AND ADDED THAT HE HAD STRIVEN TO MAKE THIS FACT RECOGNISED THROUGH HIS EARLIER SPEECHES AND WRITINGS, PARTICULARLY THE BOOK, THE MALAY DILEMMA.

— BERNAMA MORE 1830/YF

ND94 (F)

MAHATHIR-RACIAL 2 BANGKOK 8'8'8'

THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY IS BASED ON THIS RECOGNITION THAT THERE IS A PROBLEM OF RACE RELATIONS IN MALAYSIA ARISING FROM THE UNEQUAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BETWEEN DIFFERENT RACIAL GROUPS.

AND, OVER TIME, THE PEOPLE HAD COME TO REALISE THAT THE NEP IS A GOOD THING FOR THEM AND EVEN THOSE WHO FELT THEY WERE GOING TO BE DEPRIVED OF THEIR OPPORTUNITIES HAVE NOW FOUND THAT THEY HAVE ACTUALLY DONE EXTREMELY WELL, DESPITE OF OR BECAUSE OF THE NEP, HE SAID.

+MANY MORE PEOPLE NOW ARE BEGINNING TO REALISE THAT THE NEP IS IN FACT WHAT IT PURPORTS TO BE, A POLICY THAT IS TRYING TO BOOST THE ECONOMY WHILE AT THE SAME TIME CREATING A MORE EQUITABLE SOCIETY IN WHICH THE RACES CAN LIVE WITHOUT FEAR OR ENVY OF EACH OTHER,+ HE ADDED.

AS TO WHAT ELSE COULD BE DONE, HE SAID THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS TO EXPLAIN TO THE PEOPLE THAT THE NEP IS REALLY TO STIMULATE GROWTH OUT OF WHICH WEALTH CAN BE REDISTRIBUTED.

THIS POINT IS NOW WELL TAKEN AND OF LATE, THE CHINESE COMMUNITY WAS RESPONDING VERY WELL INDEED, HE ADDED. —
BERNAMA MORE 1837/YF

N095 (F)
MAHATHIR - RACIAL 3 BANGKOK ๑'๑'๑'

+I FIND THAT THEY ARE VERY READY TO LISTEN AND THEY HAVE EVEN ASKED ME WHAT IT IS THEY NEED TO DO,+ DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR ADDED.

THE CHINESE BUSINESSMEN HAD ALSO SAID THE PAST POLICY OF CONFRONTATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT IS OVER AND WANTED TO DO SOMETHING POSITIVE TO CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS THE NEP AND HE HAD TAKEN THEM AT THEIR WORD AND FELT THEY WOULD DO SOMETHING.

ASKED ABOUT AN ARTICLE HE WROTE IN A MALAYSIAN NEWSPAPER CRITICISING THE PRESS AND WHETHER IT MEANT HE WOULD IMPOSE CENSORSHIP AND MUZZLE THE PRESS, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID+

+I HAVE NO INTENTION OF MUZZLING THE PRESS BUT I WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE PRESS BE MORE RESPONSIBLE.+

HE COMPLAINED ABOUT DETAILED DESCRIPTION BY SOME NEWSPAPERS OF HOW THE AUTHORITIES SUCCEEDED IN COUNTERING THE HIJACKING OF AN AIRCRAFT AND SAID SUCH REPORTS WERE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE AS THEY WOULD ONLY HELP THE TERRORISTS TO BETTER PLAN FUTURE HIJACKINGS. — BERNAMA MORE 1839/YF

N095 (F)
MAHATHIR - RACIAL 4 BANGKOK ๑'๑'๑'

SIMILARLY THE BUYING OF CLASSIFIED GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS AND PUBLISHING THEM COULD FRUSTRATE THE CONDUCT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.

+WE ARE TRYING TO SOLVE PROBLEMS (BETWEEN+NATIONS) BUT YOU ARE CREATING PROBLEMS FOR US,+ HE ADDED TO A BURST OF LAUGHTER.

+I MAY HAVE SOME DEFECT ON A CERTAIN PART OF MY BODY WHICH IS COVERED BUT NEED I GO AROUND STARK NAKED DISPLAYING IT + HE ASKED TO EVEN GREATER LAUGHTER.

+LET US HIDE SOME OF OUR IMPERFECTIONS.+

HE ADDED THAT THE ARTICLE HE WROTE WAS MAINLY FOR THE MALAYSIAN PRESS AS HE WANTED THEM TO UNDERSTAND THAT THEY ARE PART OF THE NATION-BUILDING PROCESS AND THAT THEY HAD THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO MAKE.

+IF WE WANT TO HAVE A MULTI-RACIAL NATION THAT IS UNITED, THEN THE PRESS MUST PLAY ITS ROLE,+ HE ADDED.

+IF I HAD WANTED TO CENSOR THE PRESS THE BEST WAY WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN TO WRITE IN THE PRESS BUT SIMPLY TO CLAMP DOWN.+ — BERNAMA 1844/YF