

N132: (F)
MAHATHIR-LAW
(EMBARGO: FOR RELEASE AFTER 10.30 PM TODAY)

KUALA LUMPUR, FEB. 12 (BERNAMA) -- MALAYSIANS OUGHT TO VOTE INTO POWER STRONG GOVERNMENTS WHICH ARE ABLE TO RULE AND NOT JUST REIGN, (DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD) SAID TONIGHT.

WITH SUCH RULE THE POTENTIALS OF MALAYSIA WOULD IN TIME BE FULLY HARNESSSED FOR THE GOOD OF EVERYONE, HE ADDED WHEN ADDRESSING THE ANNUAL DINNER OF THE BAR COUNCIL OF MALAYA HERE.

"LAWYERS, I AM SURE, ARE NOT TOO HAPPY OVER THE STRENGTH OF THE GOVERNMENT, BUT I CAN ASSURE THAT THE ALTERNATIVE -- WEAK GOVERNMENTS -- ARE GOING TO BE WORSE, FOR THE NATION AS WELL AS FOR YOUR PRACTICE," THE PRIME MINISTER SAID.

"FOR MY PART, AND FOR OBVIOUS REASONS, I PRAY AND HOPE THAT MALAYSIANS WILL VOTE INTO POWER STRONG GOVERNMENTS WHICH ARE ABLE TO RULE -- NOT JUST REIGN."

HE NOTED THAT THOUGH THERE SHOULD NOT BE ABSOLUTE POWER -- "WE ARE TOLD THAT POWER CORRUPTS AND ABSOLUTE POWER CORRUPTS ABSOLUTELY" -- THERE SHOULD BE EFFECTIVE POWER FOR SOCIETY TO THRIVE AND PROGRESS.

THE MAJORITIES COMMANDED BY A RULING PARTY WERE "ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY" TO MAINTAIN AN ORDERLY SOCIETY. ALSO, MALAYSIA'S TREMENDOUS PROGRESS SO FAR HAD BEEN POSSIBLE DUE TO THE CONTINUANCE OF STRONG GOVERNMENTS - GOVERNMENTS WITH LARGE MAJORITIES IN PARLIAMENT. - BERNAMA MORE 2030/LK

N133: (F)
MAHATHIR-LAW 2 KUALA LUMPUR (EMBARGO)

"GOVERNMENTS SOMETIMES HAVE TO DO UNPLEASANT THINGS, JUST AS DOCTORS SOMETIMES HAVE TO CUT IN ORDER TO HEAL," DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID.

"A RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT, IN ORDER TO GIVE ITS BEST TO THE PEOPLE, HAS TO BE STRONG. IN THE TWO-PARTY SYSTEM FOUND IN SOME DEVELOPED COUNTRIES THE SEE-SAWING BETWEEN TWO EQUALLY MATCHED PARTIES HAS RESULTED IN WEAK AND INEFFECTIVE GOVERNMENTS."

HE REALISED THAT POWERFUL GOVERNMENTS POSED A CERTAIN DANGER, EVEN THOUGH IT MIGHT NOT BE ABSOLUTE, AND THERE WAS FEAR THAT, BECAUSE THE RULING PARTY IN MALAYSIA COMMANDED TWO-THIRDS MAJORITIES ALL THE TIME, IT WOULD EXPLOIT THAT MAJORITY.

"I AM NOT SAYING THAT THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE, BUT IN A DEVELOPING COUNTRY THE NEED FOR STRONG GOVERNMENTS IS SO GREAT THAT THE DANGER OF VESTING TOO MUCH POWER IN A GOVERNMENT MUST BE ACCEPTED," HE SAID.

"AS I HAVE SAID BEFORE, WE HAVE TO ACCEPT THE GOOD WITH THE BAD. THERE IS NO WAY WE CAN HAVE OUR CAKE AND EAT IT TOO." -- BERNAMA MORE 2033/LK

N1341 (F)
MAHATHIR-LAW 3 KUALA LUMPUR (EMBARGO)

ON THE BAR COUNCIL, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS STUDYING ITS ROLE WITH REGARD TO LAW-MAKING -- IF ITS ROLE WAS TO ADVISE THE GOVERNMENT ON THE MAKING OF LAWS, THEN IT SHOULD DO THAT, IN THE LITERAL SENSE AND NOT IN THE ENGLISH DIPLOMATIC SENSE AS IN THE CASE OF THE BRITISH ADVISORS DURING THE COLONIAL PERIOD WHOSE "ADVICE WHEN GIVEN MUST BE ACCEPTED."

THE GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN RELUCTANT IN THE PAST BECAUSE PROPOSALS FOR NEW LAWS WERE GENERALLY CONFIDENTIAL, BUT HE WAS SURE THAT IF THE COUNCIL'S ADVICE WAS CALLED FOR, IT WOULD GUARD THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF THE PROPOSALS "EVEN THOUGH YOU MAY NOT LIKE IT."

"IF THE GOVERNMENT WISHES TO HAVE A PUBLIC DISCUSSION ON THEM THEN IT WILL SAY SO," HE ADDED.

THE GOVERNMENT WOULD STUDY THE COUNCIL'S ADVICE BUT IT RESERVED THE RIGHT TO ACCEPT OR REJECT IT, AND WHEN THE PROPOSAL BECAME LAW "THEN I PRESUME THE LEGAL COMMUNITY'S ROLE WOULD BE LIMITED TO THE APPLICATION OF THE LAW."

"LAWMAKERS SHOULD MAKE THE LAW AND THE PRACTITIONERS SHOULD PRACTISE IT," DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID. "THE ONLY WAY THAT LAWMAKERS THAT YOU DON'T LIKE CAN BE STOPPED FROM MAKING LAWS IS TO DEFEAT THEM IN THE ELECTIONS -- I SPEAK FROM EXPERIENCE AS YOU MAY KNOW."

"HOWEVER, WITHOUT CAMPAIGNING FOR THE NEXT ELECTION I WOULD LIKE TO POINT OUT THAT CHANGE IS NOT ALWAYS FOR THE BETTER. WE SEE IN MANY COUNTRIES AGITATIONS FOR CHANGE -- AND WHEN THERE WAS CHANGE THE PEOPLE AND THE NATION WERE WORSE OFF." -- BERNAMA MORE

N135: (F)
MAHATHIR-LAW 4 KUALA LUMPUR (EMBARGO)

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR REFERRED TO PEOPLE WHO FELT THAT LIFE IN THIS COUNTRY WAS A MISERY AND ADVISED THEM TO "COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS HERE, AND IF AFTER THAT YOU STILL FEEL LIKE PACKING YOUR BAGS TO LIVE ABROAD, I AM SURE YOU WILL BE TRULY HAPPY ABROAD."

"IT IS WORTHWHILE TO REMEMBER THAT ONE HAS TO TAKE THE GOOD WITH THE BAD," HE ADDED. "THERE IS NO PLACE WHERE EVERYTHING IS GOING TO GO ONE'S WAY ALL THE TIME."

HE HOPED THAT THEY WOULD RECOGNISE THAT MALAYSIA WAS NOT A BAD PLACE ENTIRELY, EVEN FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF JUSTICE., THEY WOULD THEN FEEL A BIT HAPPIER, AND THAT WOULD CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS THE SUM TOTAL OF HAPPINESS IN THE COUNTRY.

ON THE GOVERNMENT'S RECENT OFFER TO FREE HARD-CORE DETAINEES, BEING HELD WITHOUT TRIAL, ON CONDITION THAT THEY LEAVE THE COUNTRY, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THERE WOULD BE PEOPLE WHO WOULD DEMAND THAT AS CITIZENS THESE DETAINEES HAD THE RIGHT TO STAY IN THIS COUNTRY.

BUT HE REITERATED THAT SOCIETY'S RIGHTS OVERRODE THOSE OF INDIVIDUALS., IF THE INDIVIDUALS DID NOT CARE FOR THE INTERESTS OF SOCIETY, THEN SOCIETY HAD A RIGHT TO DEPRIVE THEM EVEN OF THEIR LIVES UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES. -- BERNAMA MORE 2043/LK

N136: (F)
MAHATHIR-LAW 5 KUALA LUMPUR (EMBARGO)

"IF WE CAN DEPRIVE AN INDIVIDUAL OF HIS LIFE AND SEND HIM INTO THE NEXT WORLD, WE CAN ALSO DEPRIVE HIM OF HIS RIGHTS IN THIS COUNTRY AND SEND HIM INTO THE REST OF THE WORLD -- THE WORLD IS A BIG PLACE., HE CAN HAVE HIS FULL FREEDOM THERE," HE ADDED.

THOSE WHO WERE SO MOVED BY HIS SUFFERINGS COULD ALLEVIATE THEM BY ACCEPTING HIM AS A CITIZEN AND GIVING HIM THE RIGHTS OF CITIZENSHIP.

"IT IS OUR EXPERIENCE THAT PEOPLE WHO CONDEMN RACIALISM OR WHATEVER ELSE, SOON CHANGE THEIR MINDS WHEN THEY HAVE THE SPECTRE OF RACIAL PROBLEMS, OR WHATEVER, AT THEIR DOORSTEPS," DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID.

"IT IS ALSO OUR FEELING THAT THOSE WHO TALKS OF HUMAN RIGHTS FROM A DISTANCE ARE LESS CONCERNED WHEN SUCH RIGHTS ARE IGNORED IN FRONT OF THEIR NOSES."

HE ADVISED THE PEOPLE TO STAND BACK AND LOOK AGAIN AT THIS COUNTRY BECAUSE "IT WOULD IMPROVE YOUR PERSPECTIVE AND PERHAPS, WITH DUE RESPECT, MAKE YOU BETTER LAWYERS AND BETTER CITIZENS -- I AM NOT SAYING YOU ARE NOT, BUT THERE IS NO HARM IN SEEKING TO IMPROVE."

ON GROUSES BROUGHT UP TO HIM RECENTLY BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COUNCIL, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE WAS LOOKING INTO SOME OF THEM. -- BERNAMA 2052/LK