

MAHATHIR

FROM REJAL ARBE<sup>82</sup>

NEW YORK SEPT 29 - (DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD HAS TOLD A NUMBER OF INFLUENTIAL AMERICANS INTERESTED IN ASIAN AFFAIRS THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S EMPHASIS IN PUTTING FORWARD ISLAMIC VALUES AMONG THE MUSLIMS WOULD NOT LEAD TO THE COUNTRY'S INSTABILITY.

HE SAID MALAYSIA SAW THE NEED TO HAVE SPIRITUAL VALUES IMBUED IN ITS PEOPLE WHILE AT THE SAME TIME CARRY OUT PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY.

SPIRITUAL VALUES HAVE TO BE MAINTAINED AMONG THE PEOPLE, OTHERWISE THEY WOULD LOSE THEIR SENSE OF DIRECTION, HE TOLD THEM YESTERDAY.

HE TOLD MALAYSIAN NEWSMEN ACCOMPANYING HIM DURING HIS CURRENT VISIT HERE THAT HE PERCEIVED SOME APPREHENSION AMONG THE MEMBERS OF THE ASIAN SOCIETY AND THE COUNCIL FOR FOREIGN RELATIONS ABOUT ISLAMIC REVIVALISM IN MALAYSIA.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR WAS EARLIER ENTERTAINED TO A LUNCHEON BY MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY AND THE COUNCIL, FOLLOWED BY A QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION BEHIND CLOSED DOORS. -- MORE

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THE PRIME MINISTER SAID A LOT OF PEOPLE SEEM TO THINK THAT THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT IS EMPHASISING ISLAM IN THE COUNTRY. "THEY SEE ISLAM IN THE LIGHT OF ISLAMIC REVOLUTION, INSTABILITY AND THE LIKE.

"SO THEY ARE RATHER APPREHENSIVE THAT THEY MIGHT BE DEALING WITH AN UNSTABLE GOVERNMENT.

"I EXPLAIN TO THEM THAT I DON'T SEE IT THAT WAY. WE SEE THE NEED TO HAVE SPIRITUAL VALUES (IMBUED AMONG THE PEOPLE)."

THEY SEEM TO THINK THAT BECAUSE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ACTION IN EMPHASISING ISLAMIC VALUES AMONG THE MUSLIMS, THERE WOULD BE GREATER FRICTION BETWEEN THE MALAYS WHO LOOK TOWARD ISLAM AND THE CHINESE WHO LOOK TOWARDS CHINA.

"I EXPLAINED TO THEM THAT THIS IS NOT SO AT ALL. THE CHINESE IN MALAYSIA ACCEPTS THE MALAYS AS MUSLIMS," HE SAID. -- MORE 1516/IB

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THE PRIME MINISTER WHO ALSO MET UN SECRETARY GENERAL JAVIER PEREZ DE CUELLAR THIS MORNING AND DISCUSSED MATTERS CONCERNING KAMPUCHEA, AFGHANISTAN, THE MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM AND THE IRAN/IRAQ WAR.

HE SAID ENCIK PEREZ DE CUELLAR HAD SOUGHT CLARIFICATION OVER THE KAMPUCHEA ISSUE AS THERE SEEM TO BE SOME APPREHENSION ON THE PART OF SOME PEOPLE THAT THE ASEAN COUNTRIES SEEM TO DIFFER IN THEIR OUTLOOK TOWARDS THE COUNTRY.

"I EXPLAIN THAT WE MAY APPEAR OUTWARDLY TO DIFFER BECAUSE OF OUR DIFFERENT EMPHASIS BUT BASICALLY WE HAVE A SIMILAR APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM," HE SAID.

ON THE IRAN/IRAQ WAR, THE SECRETARY-GENERAL EXPRESSED APPRECIATION IN THE EFFORTS BEING CARRIED OUT BY THE ORGANISATION OF ISLAMIC CONFERENCE (OIC) TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM.  
-- MORE 1520/IB

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ENCIK PEREZ DE CUELLAR, HOWEVER, SAID THAT SUCH EFFORTS NEEDED TO BE COORDINATED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS EFFORTS AND THOSE OF THE NON-ALIGN MOVEMENT.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT HE TOLD THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL THAT BECAUSE OF THE PECULAR NATURE OF THE WAR WHERE ISLAM IS INVOLVED, THERE WAS A SPECIAL ROLE TO BE PLAYED BY THE OIC. THAT WAS WHY THE OIC HAVE TO CONTINUE WITH ITS EFFORTS.

ASKED ABOUT THE INEFFECTIVENESS OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN SOLVING MANY INTERNATIONAL ISSUES, DTAUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID IF THE BIG POWERS ACT OUTSIDE THE UN, THEN OF COURSE IT COULD NOT BE EFFECTIVE.

HE SAID IT WAS EVERYBODY'S RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE THE ORGANISATION WORK. "IT IS A USEFUL FORUM FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION," AND THAT WAS WHY HE WAS ATTENDING THE MEETING.

THE PRIME MINISTER IS SCHEDULED TO ADDRESS THE 37TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT 3AM MALAYSIAN TIME ON SEPT. 30. --  
BERNAMA 1524/IB