

MAHATHIR - UNION
BM

83 (P)
KUALA LUMPUR, JULY 28 (BERNAMA) -- (DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAS NO INTENTION TO OPPRESS THE WORKERS OR TO DISREGARD THE TRADE UNIONS.

ON THE OTHER HAND, IT HOPED TO WORK WITH THEM IN PARTNERSHIP, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID WHEN OPENING THE 16TH CUEPACS TRIENNIAL CONVENTION HERE TODAY.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT, EMPLOYERS AND THE TRADE UNIONS SHOULD NOT LOOK AT EACH OTHER AS ENEMIES BUT SHOULD WORK TOGETHER AS ONE BIG FAMILY.

CONFRONTATION HAD NO PLACE IN SUCH A RELATIONSHIP, HE ADDED.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT WITH INCREASED EFFICIENCY IN THE GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION, MORE REVENUE COULD BE COLLECTED AND MORE ALLOCATION COULD BE MADE ON PROJECTS THAT COULD BENEFIT THE PEOPLE AS WELL AS THE GOVERNMENT.

IN THIS RESPECT, HE SAID, THE GOVERNMENT WAS PREPARED TO COOPERATE WITH CUEPACS NEW LEADERSHIP TO BE ELECTED AT THE FOUR-DAY CONVENTION. -- MORE 2125/MK

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HOWEVER, THE PRIME MINISTER REMINDED CUEPACS TO REVIEW ITS POSITION AS THE SITUATION WAS NO LONGER SIMILAR TO THAT OF THE 19TH CENTURY WHEN TRADE UNIONISM EMERGED IN THE COUNTRY.

HE WOULD LIKE THEM TO CONSIDER WHETHER CONFRONTATION, THREATS AND INDUSTRIAL ACTIONS WERE NEEDED TO OVERCOME PRESENT PROBLEMS.

HE REGRETTED THE THINKING THAT WORKERS AND EMPLOYERS WERE ENEMIES STILL PREVAILED UNTIL NOW. AS A RESULT ALL ACTIONS WERE BASED ON THIS ENMITY.

+PERHAPS THERE ARE OTHER FORMS OF RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN WORKERS AND EMPLOYERS WHICH HAVE NOT CROSSED OUR MINDS,+ HE ADDED. -- MORE 2129/MK

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DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR URGED MALAYSIAN WORKERS NOT TO BE INFLUENCED BY THE TRADE UNION SYSTEM IN EUROPE AS THIS COULD ONLY DAMAGE THE NATION'S ECONOMY.

IF THE ECONOMY COLLAPSED, THE WORKERS TOO WOULD SUFFER, HE SAID.

HE SAID IF THEY HAD THE CHANCE, THESE FOREIGN TRADE UNIONS WOULD NOT HESITATE TO INTERFERE IN THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL AFFAIRS OF MALAYSIA.

+THEY ARE PREPARED TO ACT AGAINST OUR PROPERTY IN THEIR COUNTRIES BECAUSE THEY KNOW THAT WE WILL NOT HARM THEIR PROPERTY HERE,+ HE ADDED.

THE PRIME MINISTER STRESSED THAT IN THIS MODERN AGE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE WORKERS AND EMPLOYERS SHOULD BE ONE OF MUTUAL PARTNERS.

IT WAS WRONG TO THINK THAT WORKERS COULD BE SACKED ANYTIME WHEN A COMPANY MADE A LOSS OR WORKERS COULD LEAVE THEIR EMPLOYMENTS WHEN OFFERED HIGHER SALARIES ELSEWHERE.

THROUGH THIS CONCEPT OF PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN WORKERS AND EMPLOYERS THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD SUGGESTED THE FORMATION OF INHOUSE UNIONS INSTEAD OF TRADE UNIONS. -- MORE 2135/MK

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HE SAID UNDER THE INHOUSE UNION SYSTEM, THE WORKERS WERE NOT GROUPED ACCORDING TO TRADES BUT TO THE FIRMS THEY WORKED FOR AND THEIR FATE DEPENDED ON THE PROGRESS OF THE FIRMS.

IT WAS UP TO THEM TO ENSURE THE PROGRESS OF THEIR FIRMS.

THE EMPLOYERS IN THIS CASE WOULD TREAT THEIR WORKERS AS PARTNERS AND AS SUCH BOTH PARTIES WOULD RESPECT EACH OTHER AND WORK TOWARDS GREATER PROGRESS.

PROFITS TO A FIRM WOULD ALSO MEAN HIGHER BONUS FOR THE WORKERS.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID IF THIS INHOUSE UNION SYSTEM WAS PRACTISED TOGETHER WITH THE LIFE-TIME EMPLOYMENT CONCEPT AND THE PAYMENT OF BONUS ACCORDING TO PROFITS THERE WAS A POSSIBILITY THAT IRRESPONSIBLE ACTIONS BY EMPLOYERS AND UNIONS WOULD NOT HAPPEN.

HOWEVER, HE REMINDED THEM THAT THE SUCCESS OF THIS SYSTEM DEPENDED ENTIRELY ON THE PARTICIPANTS THEMSELVES. -- MORE 2225/MK

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BUT DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR WAS CONFIDENT THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF THE INHOUSE UNION SYSTEM SUCCEEDS IN THIS MODERN AGE WAS HIGHER THAN THAT OF THE TRADE UNION SYSTEM.

HE REITERATED THAT INDUSTRIAL ACTIONS WOULD NOT BENEFIT THE NATION AS LOSSES THROUGH STRIKES WOULD REDUCE THE GOVERNMENT'S REVENUE AND ABILITY TO SPEND ON PROJECTS THAT WOULD BENEFIT THE PEOPLE.

THE PRIME MINISTER WAS HAPPY THAT CUEPACS AND OTHER TRADE UNIONS IN THE GOVERNMENT SECTOR HAD NOT ACTED BEYOND THE LIMITS AS HAD HAPPENED IN SOME OTHER COUNTRIES.

HE BELIEVED THAT CUEPACS WOULD CONTINUE TO ACT LIKEWISE IRRESPECTIVE OF ANY CHANGES IN ITS LEADERSHIPS.

MALAYSIA, HE SAID, COULD NOT ACT AS IF IT WAS A RICH NATION OR ADOPT THE PRACTICE OF A WEALTHY NATION.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR WAS LATER PRESENTED WITH A GOLD MEDAL IN RECOGNITION OF HIS SERVICES TO THE CAUSE OF THE WORKERS.

OTHERS PRESENTED WITH THE GOLD MEDALS WERE CUEPACS OUTGOING PRESIDENT ENCIK T. NARENDRAN, VICE-PRESIDENT CIK THERESA CHOONG AND DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL ENCIK ILIAS WAN CHIK. -- BERNAMA 2236/MK