

MAHATHIR - INVEST

FROM RACHMANN NORDIN '84

CHICAGO, OCT. 12 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR.

MAHATHIR MOHAMAD HAS TOLD AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN TO FACE THE REALITY THAT THEY NEED TO SHIFT MANUFACTURING ACTIVITIES, ABROAD WHETHER FOR THE DOMESTIC OR FOREIGN MARKET.

HE SAID HIGH INTEREST RATES AND THE VERY STRONG DOLLAR WERE PRICING AMERICAN PRODUCTS OUT OF THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR TOLD LEADERS OF CORPORATIONS HERE THAT, +THE ARGUMENTS THAT AMERICAN GOODS ARE ALWAYS SUPERIOR NO LONGER HOLD WATER.+

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID IN THIS CONTEXT MALAYSIA COULD HELP THEM OVERCOME THE COMPARATIVE DISADVANTAGES.

MID-AMERICAN CORPORATIONS WOULD FIND IN MALAYSIA THE KIND OF ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMIC ADVANTAGES THAT COULD CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR SUCCESS, HE SAID IN A LUNCHEON ADDRESS HOSTED BY THE FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF CHICAGO YESTERDAY.

EVEN BY SOUTHEAST ASIAN STANDARDS, MALAYSIA'S POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE HAD BEEN OUTSTANDING, HE SAID.

MALAYSIA BELIEVED IT COULD PROVIDE THE KIND OF ENVIRONMENT TO ENABLE AMERICAN CORPORATIONS HAVE THE COMPETITIVE EDGE.

THE SUCCESS OF THE ELECTRONIC COMPONENTS INDUSTRY COULD BE REPEATED IN MANY OTHER AREAS, HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID 20 PER CENT OF AMERICAN INDUSTRIES WERE RELATED TO FOREIGN TRADE AND IN MOST OF THESE THEY HAD LOST THE COMPETITIVE EDGE, SOME TO JAPAN, SOUTH KOREA, TAIWAN AND THE EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES.

THESE COUNTRIES WERE NO LONGER PRODUCING HANDICRAFTS AND IMITATION GOODS BUT HAD EVEN MOVED INTO HIGH TECHNOLOGY AND THEIR PRODUCTS WERE TAILOR-MADE FOR THE MARKET AND ATTRACTIVELY PRICED.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT INDEED BUT FOR U.S. PROTECTIONISM, AMERICANS WOULD FIND THEMSELVES HARD PUT TO SELL THEIR OWN PRODUCTS AT HOME.

ISOLATIONISM HAD NOT WORKED POLITICALLY FOR AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN AND THERE WAS NO REASON TO THINK THAT ECONOMIC ISOLATIONISM COULD BE SUCCESSFUL, HE SAID.

EVEN THE UNITED STATES MUST DEPEND ON OTHERS FOR SOME OF HER NEEDS AND CERTAINLY WOULD NEED FOREIGN MARKETS.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR CAUTIONED AMERICAN CORPORATIONS THAT THEY WOULD ONLY OPEN THEMSELVES TO COUNTER-MEASURES IF THEY ADOPT WHOLESALE PROTECTIONISM.

+IN OTHER WORDS, YOU HAVE TO TRADE WITH THE REST OF THE WORLD AND YOU HAVE TO MAINTAIN AN OPEN MARKET, + HE SAID. --BERNAMA  
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