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CHOGM-MAHATHIR

FROM SYED JAMIL JAAFAR 85

NASSAU (BAHAMAS), OCT 17 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD, TAKING A HARD LINE AT THE OUTSET, TOLD THE COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING WHICH OPENED HERE YESTERDAY THAT THE ORGANISATION SHOULD DO SOMETHING DEFINITE ABOUT THE ILLS BESETTING THE WORLD.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT IF THE COMMONWEALTH WERE TO BE PERPETUATED, IT MUST ACHIEVE TANGIBLE RESPECT AND MEANINGFUL RESULTS FOR ITS MEMBERS.

+IT MUST GIVE SUBSTANCE TO THE TERM COMMONWEALTH, PARTICULARLY FOR THE POORER NATIONS,+ HE SAID.

SHORT OF SAYING THAT THERE MIGHT AS WELL NOT BE A COMMONWEALTH UNLESS THIS WAS DONE, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID MALAYSIA'S EXPERIENCE WITH THE COMMONWEALTH HAD NOT ENDEARED THE ORGANISATION TO IT.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR WAS ONE OF FIVE PRIME MINISTERS GIVEN THE HONOUR TO RESPOND TO THE OPENING SPEECH BY BAHAMIAN PRIME MINISTER SIR LYNDEN PINDLING. THE OTHERS WERE BRIAN MULRONEY OF CANADA, ROBERT MUGABE OF ZIMBABWE, RAJIV GANDHI OF INDIA AND BOB HAWKE OF AUSTRALIA.  
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THE MALAYSIAN LEADER SPOKE ON THE CONTINUED APARTHEID IN SOUTH AFRICA, THE SUBJUGATION OF NAMIBIA AND THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ECONOMIES OF THE POOR COUNTRIES BY THE ECONOMIC POLICIES OF THE RICH AND THE POWERFUL.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THERE WAS NO GOVERNMENT LIKE THE REGIME IN SOUTH AFRICA.

+IT IS A TOTAL PARIASH. IT LEGALISES THE MORALLY ILLEGAL. MINORITY IS MAJORITY. SLAVERY IS FREEDOM. GHETTOS ARE NATIONS. LIKE ISRAEL, THEY RESPECT NO INTERNATIONAL NORMS.+

HE SAID THE WHITE RACIST REGIME SURVIVED IN THIS DAY AND AGE BECAUSE THE PEOPLE WHO WERE FOND OF CRITICISING ALLEGED RACISM IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WERE NOT PREPARED TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT THE MOST BLATANTLY RACIST REGIME IN THE WORLD.

THOSE WHOSE APPLICATION OF SANCTIONS WAS LIKELY TO BRING SOUTH AFRICA TO ITS KNEES HAD VARIOUS ARGUMENTS WHY THEY SHOULD NOT APPLY THE SANCTIONS.

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+RESTRICTIONS ON IMPORTS FROM POOR COUNTRIES; RESTRICTIONS WHICH CAUSE REAL HUMAN SUFFERINGS IN THESE SMALL STATES ARE ALL RIGHT. BUT NOT SANCTIONS AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA. THE BLACKS WOULD SUFFER. THAT IS THE EXCUSE.+

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE FACT WAS THAT THE BLACKS WERE ALREADY SUFFERING.

HE SAID THAT AS A DOCTOR, HE SHOULD KNOW THAT CURES WERE WERE ALWAYS PAINFUL BUT TO PERPETUATE SUFFERING WAS A POOR ALTERNATIVE TO THE TEMPORARY PAIN OF A CURE.

+IF SANCTIONS CAN HELP DESTROY A DESPICABLE POLICY LIKE APARTHEID, THEN SANCTIONS MUST BE APPLIED AND THEY MUST BE APPLIED BY THOSE WHO CAN HURT MOST, BY THE COUNTRIES WITH THE BIGGEST CLOUT.+

FAILURE TO DO THIS, HE SAID, WOULD MEAN HYPOCRISY. -- MORE  
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ON NAMIBIA, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT AS IF IT WAS NOT ALREADY BAD ENOUGH FOR SOUTH AFRICA TO REMAIN TRUSTEE OF THE UNFORTUNATE COUNTRY, THE NAMIBIANS WERE NOW BEING PUNISHED FOR AN ALLEGED CRIME COMMITTED BY ANOTHER COUNTRY.

+WHY SHOULD NAMIBIA REMAIN SUBJUGATED SIMPLY BECAUSE CUBAN TROOPS ARE IN ANGOLA?+

HE SAID THESE WERE SOME OF THE PROBLEMS FACING THE WORLD WHICH THE COMMONWEALTH SHOULD DO SOMETHING ABOUT.

IT SHOULD AT LEAST AGREE ON WHAT COULD BE DONE ABOUT SOUTH AFRICA; IT SHOULD HELP POSITIVELY TO RESTORE THE ECONOMY OF THE WORLD AND ATTEMPT TO REMOVE ALL KINDS OF RACIAL AND COLOUR DISCRIMINATION.

+IF THE COMMONWEALTH REFUSES TO DO SOMETHING DEFINITE, THEN THE CLUB SHOULD CEASE TO PRETEND,+ HE SAID. -- MORE

CHOGM-MAHATHIR 5 NASSAU

+IT SHOULD ADMIT THAT IT REALLY CANNOT CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS SOLVING THE PROBLEMS FACED BY ITS MEMBERS, IF NOT THE WORLD.+

+THEN WE CAN RELAX AND ENJOY OUR GET-TOGETHER,+ HE TOLD PRESIDENTS AND PRIME MINISTERS FROM 45 OTHER COUNTRIES.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE CONCEPT OF JUSTICE AND FAIR PLAY HAD CHANGED CONSIDERABLY WITH THE MOST IMPORTANT DETERMINANT OF INTERNATIONAL BEHAVIOUR NOW BEING STRENGTH -- ECONOMIC STRENGTH, POLITICAL STRENGTH AND MILITARY STRENGTH.

THE ECONOMIES OF THE POOR COUNTRIES WERE BEING DESTROYED BY THE ECONOMIC POLICIES OF THE RICH AND THE POWERFUL.

THE INFLUENTIAL COUNTRIES WERE EXERTING PRESSURE ON THEIR CLIENT STATES TO REJECT LEGITIMATE CLAIMS SUCH AS THAT ON ANTARCTICA.

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CHOGM-MAHATHIR 6 NASSAU

+AND OF COURSE WE SEE POWERFUL NATIONS PHYSICALLY OCCUPYING NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES, CLAIMING THEY WERE DOING IT TO PROTECT THEMSELVES.+

HE SAID THE WEAK HAD TO SUBMIT TO ALL THESE BECAUSE THEY HAD NO CHOICE.

THE SMALL DEVELOPING COUNTRIES COULD COME TOGETHER TO SEEK SECURITY IN NUMBERS BUT THE CAVALIER FASHION WITH WHICH EVEN THE UNITED NATIONS HAD BEEN DISMISSED BY THE RICH AND THE POWERFUL HAD PROVEN THE NAIVETE OF THIS ASSUMPTION.

HE ALSO SPOKE ON THE PROBLEM OF PLUMMETTING PRICES OF PRIMARY PRODUCTS WHILE THE PRICES OF MANUFACTURED GOODS INCREASED.

DEVELOPED COUNTRIES FIXED THE PRICES OF PRIMARY PRODUCTS THEMSELVES THROUGH COMMODITY EXCHANGES WITH MEMBERSHIP CONFINED TO THEMSELVES. IF THEIR MEMBERS LOOKED LIKE LOSING MONEY, THEY THEN CHANGE THE RULES. -- MORE

CHOGM-MAHATHIR 7 NASSAU

+THEY EVEN START RUMOURS TO INFLUENCE PRICES. AND THE WESTERN PRESS AIDS AND ABETS THEM.+

SOME OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES TRIED TO INDUSTRIALISE AND EXPORT THEIR PRODUCTS BUT THE PROTECTIONISM IN THE RICHEST MARKETS SOON PUT PAID TO THAT, HE ADDED. -- BERNAMA

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