

You don't represent the people, PM tells elite

BT 18 AUG 1987

THE elite group in the country should be careful when taking any action to pressure the Government, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday. They can give their views and present memoranda for study by the Government but they should never regard themselves as representing the Malaysian people.

Launching the Risda Mini-Estate Development Programme at Kampung Sadek near Baling, he said they should respect the country's system of democracy which provided for a government through popular vote.

He said the representatives voted in by the people in elections were the ones with the right to formulate and decide government policies and not the elitists, who he added represented only a minority in the population.

He told this group that if they truly wanted to become champions of the people, they should contest in the elections.

The Prime Minister said the

people should not be influenced by the views of these intellectuals but support the democratic system in practice in the country where the Government was formed through the general election.

Through a government elected by the people, many development programmes could be carried out for the benefit of the general public.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said intellectuals and the elite can give their views and opinions and hold seminars as well as present memoranda to the Government for consideration.

But they should not consider themselves an alternative to the Government constitutionally elected by the people.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the Government implemented development projects costing billions of ringgit since Merdeka because it knows the importance of development for the people.

He said the Barisan Nasional (BN) Government is aware the people voted it in because they

want development.

He said that during the colonial period, the British Government not only failed to carry out development projects for the people but also took out massive amounts of funds from the country.

After the country attained independence, the Government concentrated on developing rural areas which had been neglected by the colonialists.

On the New Economic Policy (NEP), the Prime Minister said it is to ensure progress for all sectors of the population. Allegations by critics that the policy benefited only a small group are unfounded, he said.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir hopes all communities will support the NEP and not be influenced by propaganda aimed at discrediting the Government over the policy.

In Alor Star, addressing about 400 Kedah BN leaders of various levels Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir urged Barisan Nasional compon-

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PM's advice to elite

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ent members to make use of party channels to resolve all problems through discussions.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir, who is BN chairman, said exposing problems in the press would be a loss to the BN and a gain to opposition parties. He urged BN leaders to take serious note of the fact that the opposition was continuing to hurl unfounded accusations against the Government.

On the state of the economy, the Prime Minister said it had not recovered fully and BN members should be patient.

They should continue to maintain the long standing unity without any communal conflict. The economy could be revitalised by a stable government under the BN leadership, he added.