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R NNBT 16-02 00309

ATTENTION: KETUA PENGARANG

TEKS KENYATAAN AKHBAR TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN

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16.2.88

Tun Hussein Onn has come out and joined the issue on the UMNO problem without intending to take one side or the other. Our sole interest is to restore UMNO to its legal status as the premier political party in this country. We have no axe to grind, no personal advantage to gain. We want peace and goodwill to return to Malaysia, and this should not be difficult.

Tun Hussein has made his views heard, and reading his words nobody can deny that he meant well and does everything for the love of the party. And all who want to see peace and good order restored must accept the fact that it is the duty of the leaders to contribute their share towards the restoration of peace and good order in this country.

I have, as the appointed leader for the pro-tem committee, invited the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister and one other minister to attend the pro-tem committee meeting. At that meeting it is our hope and our prayer that we can suggest ways and means of settling the issue amicably.

Our first duty must be to legalise UMNO and secondly to call for an assembly to appoint new office-bearers. And whoever is appointed as leader must lead UMNO. The new office-bearers must be given their rightful places in the government.

The Prime Minister has not given his reply. On the other hand, it was reported on Feb 15, 1988, that the Yang Di-pertuan Agong called on politicians and members of the ruling Barisan Nasional to give their loyalty and co-operation to the leadership of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, to prevent chaos in the country. -- more

PG946

R NNBT 16-02 00227

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TEKS KENYATAAN AKHBAR TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN (2)

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The New Straits Times also reported that the Barisan Nasional assembly of MPs, Senators and State Assemblymen in their pledge of loyalty to the Prime Minister said they would continue to defend his leadership. Barisan Backbenchers' Chairman, Ismail Said, led the assembly in taking their pledge.

The pledge of loyalty reads:

+ We pledge with utmost sincerity and whole-heartedly our undivided loyalty and support for Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad as Prime Minister of Malaysia and Encik Ghafar Baba as Deputy Prime Minister to continue to lead the people and nation.

We pledge to continue strengthening and defending the leadership of the people and nation under Dr Mahathir and Encik Ghafar from all threats and efforts to divide the multi-racial people of the country and to cause disunity. +

Further reports in the paper of the same day said that the Prime Minister indicated the possibility of seeking legal remedy in Parliament to resolve the problem confronting UMNO. He said everything possible would be taken to resolve the problem including +taking legal action through Parliament+. By these words he meant that he would not attend the pro-tem committee meeting. If that is his intention then he is defying the UMNO Constitution. -- more

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TEKS KENYATAAN AKHBAR TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN (3)
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Later speaking to reporters, the Prime Minister said he would not make public details of the move to resolve the problem. He said if the government appeared silent on the matter it did not mean that nothing was being done to revive UMNO. +We do not go around telling people that we are doing something. We cannot do that because we know that there are people waiting for their cue. If we do something they will counteract to stop us from resolving the problem.+ Dr Mahathir said these people will not stop even if the problem was solved. +They will continue their actions ... they will try through whatever means to make UMNO members betray (the party).+ He urged members to beware and not to fall prey to this group.

This group of people are Tun Hussein Onn and myself. Tun Hussein's father was the founder of UMNO and Tun Hussein was the first leader of +Pemuda+ and later became President of UMNO and Prime Minister until he handed the party over to Dr Mahathir. I took over from Dato Onn Jaafar and became President from 1950 to 1970 and afterwards handed over to Tun Razak. Can anybody believe that the two of us would betray UMNO?

According to the +Utusan+ of Tuesday February 16, 1988, the Registrar has rejected my application for registration of UMNO Malaysia on the ground that UMNO Malaya still exists. What then is the actual position? The President of UMNO must initiate the next move, and that must be done immediately.

It has just come to my knowledge that he has re-registered UMNO as +United Malay National Organisation (baru)+ and that has been approved by the Registrar. Let us see what is coming next. - end