

D209

U E714 AAE
MAHATHIR-UNITY

BM

IPOH, MARCH 10⁹⁰ (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY THE MALAYS SHOULD BE KNOWLEDGEABLE OF THE HISTORY AND TRUE SPIRIT ON WHICH UMNO WAS FORMED SO AS NOT TO BE MISLED BY SPLINTER GROUPS CLAIMING TO FIGHT FOR THE MALAY SPIRIT OF 1946.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THE TRUE SPIRIT OF 1946 CALLED FOR THE CONSOLIDATION AND SOLIDARITY OF THE MALAYS WITHOUT ANY REGARD TO POLITICAL IDEOLOGY, DESCENT AND PAROCHIALISM.

THE MALAYS COMPRISING MEMBERS OF VARIOUS ORGANISATIONS INCLUDING SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND LITERARY BODIES, IGNITED BY THE SPIRIT TO UNITE AND TO STRENGTHEN THEIR POSITION, HAD ASSEMBLED AT THE SULTAN SULEIMAN CLUB TO FORM UMNO.

THE MALAYS SHOULD REMEMBER THAT THEY, WHO WERE AT ONE TIME POOR AND FAR BEHIND IN ALL FIELDS, HAD NOW SUCCEEDED IN CHANGING THEIR CIRCUMSTANCES THROUGH UMNO, GUIDED BY THAT SPIRIT, HE SAID WHEN OPENING AN EXHIBITION ON THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF PERAK UMNO, HERE.

IF THE MALAYS WERE NOT AWARE OF THAT HISTORY, THEY WOULD READILY BELIEVE THE CLAIMS MADE BY PEOPLE WITH VESTED INTERESTS FROM ONE OF THE SPLINTER GROUPS THAT THE 1946 SPIRIT CALLED FOR COLLABORATION WITH THE DAP AND PAS, HE SAID. -- MORE

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DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, WHO IS UMNO PRESIDENT, SAID THAT THE STRUGGLES OF UMNO WHICH CONTINUED TO UPHOLD THE TRUE 1946 SPIRIT, HAD SUCCEEDED IN ESTABLISHING A STRONG GOVERNMENT, PROMOTING RACIAL HARMONY AND CONTRIBUTING TOWARDS RAPID NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

COMPARED WITH OTHER MULTI-RACIAL COUNTRIES AND THOSE WHICH HAD ACHIEVED INDEPENDENCE AT THE SAME TIME AS MALAYSIA, THE COUNTRY WHICH WAS PLAGUED WITH MORE PROBLEMS, HAD BEEN ABLE TO DEVELOP RAPIDLY BECAUSE OF THE SPIRIT OF UNITY, HE SAID.

+IF WE HAVE TO SPEAK OF THE 1946 SPIRIT, THE SPIRIT IS THAT OF THE SPIRIT OF UNITY. WE HAD NO INTENTION WHATSOEVER TO COOPERATE WITH THE OTHER RACES AT THAT TIME.

+LATER IN 1952, THE ALLIANCE EMERGED AND THEN EXISTED COOPERATION BETWEEN UMNO AND MCA. BUT IN 1946, THERE WAS NO THOUGHT OF COOPERATION WITH THE OTHER RACES ... WHAT WAS IMPORTANT WAS TO CONSOLIDATE THE MALAYS FIRST,+ HE ADDED.

+BUT SOME PEOPLE SAID THAT THE 1946 SPIRIT ADVOCATED COLLABORATION WITH THE DAP IN THE WEST COAST AND PAS IN THE EAST COAST.

+WHATEVER UTTERED TO THE DAP IN THE WEST COAST SHOULD BE KEPT AWAY FROM PAS' KNOWLEDGE IN THE EAST COAST AND WHATEVER UTTERED TO PAS IN THE EAST COAST SHOULD BE KEPT AWAY FROM THE DAP'S KNOWLEDGE IN THE WEST COAST,+ HE SAID. -- MORE

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+SUCH DECEIT WAS NOT PART OF THE SPIRIT OF LOVE OF THE RACE IN 1946,+ DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID.

IF THE MALAYS WERE IGNORANT OF UMNO'S HISTORY, THEY MIGHT BELIEVE THE CLAIMS BY INTERESTED PARTIES THAT THE 1946 SPIRIT MEANT COLLABORATION WITH THOSE WHO TOTALLY REFUSED TO ACCEPT THE SPECIAL PRIVILEGES ACCORDED TO THE MALAYS AND WITH THOSE WHO HAD AT ONE TIME BRANDED OTHER MUSLIMS AS INFIDELS, HE SAID.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THE SPIRIT OF MALAY UNITY UNDER THE AUSPICES OF UMNO HAD ALSO SUCCESSFULLY LED TO THE FALL OF THE COMMUNIST GUERRILLA STRUGGLES IN THE COUNTRY.

ACCORDING TO HIM, WHEN HE MET NELSON MANDELA IN LUSAKA RECENTLY, THE BLACK LEADER HAD TOLD HIM THAT HE WAS IMPRESSED TO LEARN THAT THE COMMUNIST GUERRILLAS IN MALAYSIA HAD ABANDONED THEIR ARMED STRUGGLES WHILE THEIR COUNTERPARTS IN OTHER COUNTRIES HAD BEEN ABLE TO SUCCEED.

HE HAD TOLD MANDELA THAT ANY FORM OF STRUGGLE COULD NOT BE SUCCESSFUL IF IT FAILED TO WIN THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF THE PEOPLE.

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THE COMMUNISTS FAILED IN MALAYSIA BECAUSE UMNO, REPRESENTING THE PEOPLE, HAD WON THEM OVER AND MADE THEM REALISE THAT THEY COULD ATTAIN THEIR ASPIRATIONS THROUGH THE PARTY, HE ADDED.

THIS PERCEPTION WAS ALSO SHARED BY THE NON-MALAYS WHO HAD ENJOYED MUCH BENEFITS FROM UMNO'S STRUGGLES WHICH WAS BASED ON MODERATION AND NOT GREED FOR POWER, HE SAID.

HE ALSO TOLD MANDELA THAT MALAYSIA COULD DEVELOP RAPIDLY AND MAINTAIN PEACE BECAUSE THE VARIOUS RACES COULD FORM POLITICAL PARTIES AND WERE ABLE TO BE AFFILIATED IN THE ALLIANCE AND NOW THE BARISAN NASIONAL. WITH THE COALITION, ALL THE RACES WERE REPRESENTED IN THE GOVERNMENT.

+IF WE CHOOSE TO GRAB EVERYTHING FOR OURSELVES, THE COUNTRY MIGHT NOT ENJOY PEACE AND THE COMMUNISTS WOULD GAIN THE SUPPORT OF THE NON-MALAYS.

+BUT THE FORMER UMNO LEADERS HAD WISELY ESTABLISHED A FORM OF COOPERATION WITH THE OTHER RACES WITHOUT SACRIFICING THE IDENTITY OF THE MALAYS AND STILL ENSURED PEACE AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT,+ HE SAID.

THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO REGARDED THE THREE UMNO SPLINTER GROUPS AS THORNS IN THE FLESH.

+WE WILL NOT DIE BUT IT IS STILL PAINFUL. IT IS DISTURBING AND WE HAVE TO PULL OUT THE THORNS ALL THE TIME, LEAVING US WITH VERY LITTLE ELSE TO DO,+ HE SAID. -- BERNAMA

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