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UNIPOLAR WORLD FRAUGHT WITH DANGERS, SAYS MAHATHIR

Mahathir - Cold War

from Donald Baptist

① Dr. M. Overseas trips.

CARACAS, Nov 28 (Bernama) -- The hope that there would be a more democratic and equitable relationship among nations, big and small, with the ending of the Cold War has been crushed, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said here Wednesday.

Indeed, the new unipolar world was fraught with dangers of a return to the old dominance of the powerful over the weak, he told the second summit of the Group of 15 (G-15) countries. His address was well received.

He said: +The global unity of action which ended an unacceptable aggression against a small country has not been translated into new positive global approaches to resolve pressing issues which beset the international community.

+Instead a **New World Order** is propounded **seemingly** to legitimise interference in the **affairs** of independent nations.+

**He said that in an independent world there might be grounds for internationally determined action but there could be no justification for unilateral decisions to meddle in another country's affairs.**

A part of that **New World Order** was the forceful spread of the religion of Democracy and Free Market, as interpreted exclusively by self-proclaimed prophets whose dictates must be accepted as holy script.. -- more

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+It is **mt.** that we reject these precepts **totally**. **Rut.** as with all religions there are many **perceptions**, **definitions** and **interpretations**. **To insist** that there can be only one interpretation of the new religion is to propagate **rule by** self-appointed clergy,+ he added.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said threats were **made** and **conditionalities proposed on** trade and aid if the Northern political and, economic model was **not** strictly adhered to.

He added:+ it does not require a detailed **analysis of** developments in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe to realise that there is **no magic** in democracy of the **free market**..+

+They **do not** make poverty, debt and backwardness disappear and they certainly do **not** guarantee stability, a **sine qua non** for a community's well fare and development.+

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir **said** together with democracy and the free market+ **came** the new **gospel of** +the environment+ where developing countries are told that they must curb their **aspirations** and **approaches towards** development **so** that mankind, **that is**, the rich North's enjoyment. of the good **life was** not threatened.

+Against all accepted **codes of** ethics, the poor are being told, and indeed coerced, into **paying for** the well-being of the rich,+ he added. --

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Turning to environmental issues, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said even the global environment, one of the many issues requiring the co-operation of all countries, was being subjected to sectarian pressures and interests.

+We are told that issues involving global commons such as the high seas outside the national jurisdiction and the disposal of radioactive waste cannot be included in the on-going global discussions to prepare for United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UnCED) 1992 in Rio. +

+On the other hand, the management of forests, often the sole source of wealth to the poor, is spotlighted as if proper forest management alone will cure all the environmental ills. +

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said if forests could save the world from the greenhouse effect, then there should be a massive effort at greening the world.

This could best be carried out by the rich and technologically advanced North which is the principal culprit of global environment degradation, he added.

+There is no excuse for such negative actions as boycotting tropical timber, forcing forest dwellers to remain primitive and keeping developing countries permanently poor in order to prevent deforestation, he said.

Presently, the rich which make up less than 20 per cent of the global population was responsible for 80 per cent of the greenhouse gas emissions and most countries in Western Europe and North America have less than 30 per cent of their land area under forest cover compared with developing countries with tropical forests where the figure is more than 50 per cent..

-- Bernama.

▼28/11/90-58MST