

10 OCT 1996

Mahathir - text

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 10 (Bernama) -- Following is the full text of the English translation of the speech by UMNO President Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the UMNO General Assembly, Dewan Merdeka, Putra World Trade Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Thursday Oct 10, 1996:

#### LEADERS AND LEADERSHIP

We are grateful to Allah that this year our party UMNO is 50 years old. Fifty in the history of mankind is short but 50 years for a party in Malaysia is rather long. Many of the political parties established 50 years ago no longer exist today. They have been overtaken by events. But UMNO is still around, active and still in power. For all these we should be grateful.

Will UMNO still be around in 50 years time? God willing, UMNO will still exist. But it is also possible that we will be a part of history. Whether UMNO will still be around 50 years from now will depend largely on us, members of UMNO. If we are wise, sincere and hold on to the principles of our struggle and religion, love our party, nation and race, God willing, UMNO will continue to exist. But if we lose our direction, if we become arrogant with power, if we are greedy and only pander to our desires, there is a great possibility that we will be destroyed and will disappear. Perhaps even before another 50 years, perhaps even in a shorter period of time, or perhaps at the next party elections or even this year, we will cease to exist.

Everything is determined by Allah, the Almighty. But Allah has enjoined upon us to help ourselves before we seek His help. So 'tie our camels' and leave it to Allah, the Almighty. Do not blame fate if we deliberately do something that is forbidden by God. Even those who try to save themselves may not be saved, if it is fated. But those who try to save themselves may have a better chance and that too is fate. So it is better that we try. It is better that we 'tie our camels'.

#### LEADERSHIP ELECTIONS STILL DEMOCRATIC

At this Assembly we will be electing the highest body to administer and manage our party. But this time around the election for the Supreme Council will be different from that practised since UMNO was formed.

This time many may feel that it is less democratic. Firstly, we have agreed at the UMNO General Assembly last year that the posts of President and Deputy President will not be contested this time. Secondly, we ban campaigns and require that candidates contesting for posts register their names at party Headquarters, without declaring their agenda if they are elected.

We also decided that divisions need not state who among the registered candidates will be their choice. All divisions are required to nominate all the registered candidates for all posts.

Compared with the previous elections, of course, this time it appears that this election is restrictive. However, it cannot be said to be undemocratic.

In the days of Dato Onn and Tunku Abdul Rahman, the Supreme Council

elections were held yearly without much problem. Usually there was no keen tussle for posts and membership of the Supreme Council. Even though in the beginning, during the era of Dato Onn, all posts including those of the Secretary General, Chief Information Officer and Treasurer were contested, there were no problems in electing them. Elections were carried out openly by show of hands only. Nominations were made on the spot. Normally, incumbents were re-elected without any challenge.

When Tunku Abdul Rahman took over the helm, changes were made to the UMNO Constitution requiring the Secretary General, Treasurer and Chief Information Officer be chosen by the President. The reason for this is that these officials had to work closely with the Party President.

Besides, the President had the authority to appoint five other Supreme Council members at his discretion. This was to ensure that those not chosen but whom the President believed could contribute would be given a chance to serve the party. Obviously, these rights made the President more powerful in the party.

All changes to the election of the Supreme Council members were agreed to at General Assemblies. UMNO realised then that if the party wished to be recognised as representing the Malays in the negotiations with the British, then the fact that it was united and fully supported by the Malays must be made clear. Otherwise, the British would ignore the Malays and continue to threaten the Malay Rulers to accept their plans.

UMNO's success is based on the fact that UMNO is solid and that any stand by the President will reflect the stand of all UMNO members. The British finally had to give independence to the Federation of Malaya in 1957, two years earlier to meet UMNO's demand.

The practice of electing the Supreme Council members yearly ceased after the 1969 incident, but when politics was allowed again, UMNO decided to hold the Supreme Council elections every three years.

#### OLD MALAY CULTURE STRENGTHENS UMNO

The political culture of the Malays has changed gradually. While the posts of President, Deputy President and Vice Presidents, were not challenged until 1972, the posts of UMNO Youth Chief and Wanita Chief were contested.

We should be grateful that the culture of contesting for party posts did not exist during the time UMNO was set up and this culture did not colour UMNO politics until after the struggle for independence. Tunku Abdul Rahman was invited with open arms by UMNO leaders who disagreed with Dato Onn, even though the Tunku was not directly involved with UMNO before becoming its President. The late Tunku did not ask to be nominated and did not campaign when nominated. Dato Onn too was not defeated in an election. He resigned because his stand was rejected by the majority of the UMNO Supreme Council members at that time.

Although Dato Onn's departure resulted in several UMNO leaders following him, UMNO was strengthened by Tunku Abdul Rahman, with the support of Dato Abdul Razak, Sardon, Senu, Khir Johari, Aziz Ishak and other UMNO veterans. At the same time, those who from the beginning did not agree with Dato Onn, such as Dr. Ismail and his brother, Sulaiman Abdul Rahman, began to join the UMNO leadership.

The UMNO leadership that was formed after the departure of Dato Onn was made up of the old Malay, i.e. those who were polite and well-mannered, those not greedy for posts. Likewise, other leaders in the party were not interested in contesting for the Supreme Council posts unless there were vacancies and then only if nominated. Very often, they rejected their nominations.

Perhaps this culture of politeness was inappropriate with politics and rendered UMNO less aggressive in fighting the colonialists, unlike other political parties in South Asia, South-East Asia and Africa. But because there was no challenge to the UMNO leadership, UMNO became strong and the leaders, credible. As a result, UMNO was able to fight for independence successfully. If the 'gentleman' leadership like the Tunku was challenged, it is possible that the British would have pitted certain quarters in UMNO against each other, thereby delaying the process of independence.

Even though the Tunku was not challenged, he did not rely completely on the politeness of the Malays. Besides making the necessary changes to certain posts within UMNO, Tunku also abolished the State UMNO and replaced it with the State UMNO Liaison Committee. As a result, delegates to the General Assembly came from divisions and not from the State UMNO which were more vocal and stronger than the UMNO divisions.

Throughout the Tunku's leadership there were no serious challenges against him, although towards the last years of his leadership there were views that he had been Prime Minister for too long. There was also the view that perhaps it would be better to separate the post of President of the party from that of the Prime Minister. There were also resolutions in the years before the 1969 elections that Tun Razak take over the party's leadership and also become the Prime Minister.

The challenge to the party's leadership would not have any impact for so long as the challengers did not have equal or almost equal stature with the incumbents. Any challenge from an ordinary member is meaningless and will not be successful.

According to Malay tradition, which was still prevalent at that time, it was impolite for someone who sits in the same Committee or in the Cabinet to challenge another, who also happens to be his boss. Old Malay culture dictates that no one of equal stature or of almost equal stature as the President should challenge the President. Therefore, even though there were resolutions at the lower levels urging Tun Razak to take over the post of President, Tun, however declined. With this the UMNO leadership remained intact. But there were signs that the Tunku himself was uncomfortable with Tun Razak and preferred another leader to take over Tun's place in the party and in the Government. However, Tunku did not do anything because to remove Tun from the post of Deputy President and Deputy Prime Minister would represent an act inconsistent with Malay tradition. The removal of Abdul Aziz Ishak cannot be compared to the situation had Tun Razak been replaced.

#### EMERGENCE OF NEW MALAY CULTURE IN UMNO

The old Malay culture underwent a gradual process of change until the 1969 incident. The racial riots in May of that year became the major factor influencing the change in Malay attitude towards leadership. Tunku was condemned until he himself felt that his influence and popularity had waned. He himself made the decision to withdraw and gave his seat to Tun Razak.

The UMNO change in leadership took place, but there was still no contest among the top leaders. Therefore, the UMNO leadership remained intact. The situation was almost restored to the old ways, until Dato Hussein Onn as the party President was challenged by an ordinary member, Haji Suleiman Palestin.

This was no credible challenge, yet this broke UMNO's tradition. Subsequently, it was easy to contest the posts of Deputy President and also Vice-Presidents.

The tradition finally came apart when the first credible challenge for

the post of President was made in 1987, during which a fierce contest ensued. The traditional Malay customs and politeness ended with this contest. For the first time money was widely used. Campaigns were no longer restricted. Open accusations by candidates and their supporters defaming not only those contesting but also the party and Government weakened both.

Eventually, party problems were brought to Court and the ruling party was declared illegal. A struggle to set up a party with the name UMNO ensued. The defeated group could not accept the reality and chose to set up another party to challenge the party that had inherited UMNO. God-willing, this animosity has subsided and today members of the party formed to fight UMNO have now returned to UMNO. Forgiving is still part of Malay customs and traditions and with that the split could be mended and unity reestablished. What was broken was a thread, not a piece of charcoal. We welcome the return of our colleagues to the UMNO fold so that we can struggle together for the sake of our race, God willing.

Although what had been broken had been mended, the impact of this struggle destroyed the old Malay culture. Any contest for posts in UMNO was no longer polite. All means, including the widespread use of money, were used even at the divisions and branches. Undoubtedly, party unity will not endure if such fights continued. A Malay proverb says "pisang tidak berbuah dua kali" (bananas do not fruit twice). But political parties are not bananas.

Political animosity among the Malays usually spill over into the social field. Since the early years, UMNO and PAS members could not be friends even outside the party. PAS carries this culture to the extreme. They force their members and supporters to isolate themselves completely from UMNO members to the extent that they are not allowed to attend weddings or any functions held by UMNO members, neither could they marry UMNO members' children, pray together with UMNO members, or be buried in the same burial ground.

This culture to some extent prevails in UMNO whereby if contests for posts were held, permanent animosity will result. Actions taken to weaken the winner will be done by the loser, and vice-versa. Party unity will be destroyed. With that, every contest will result in the winner having diminishing number of supporters. Should this process continue, UMNO's membership will dwindle.

We believe this did not happen for UMNO membership continues to increase. But this increase is due to new memberships. The old members continue to dwindle because those who lost felt frustrated and isolated themselves from UMNO. Even those who had secured a place and position in the Government, when defeated, decided to 'retire' and become inactive. Only a small number of veterans continue to stay on, are active and willing to support their successors.

This change in UMNO and Malay culture must be acknowledged by the party and efforts should be taken to overcome it. Not all of the new Malay culture is harmful. Actually, many of the changes in the Malay traditions and customs bring a lot of good. But that they no longer have a feeling of shame in promoting themselves and competing may ruin the party leadership and UMNO. It is different in business where the willingness to compete openly, to strategise in order to win, would create successful Malay businessmen and entrepreneurs of integrity. Because of self-confidence we may be more successful in creating a race that is respected by others, not because of racial arrogance, but because of our success.

But self-confidence and the belief in one's self, should not be allowed to make one over-confident and arrogant. The danger of over-confidence is that when pursuing individual success one ignores the effect on others. Similarly in politics, a leader may succeed to fill a certain post, but the

party may be destroyed due to his campaigning tactics. By this logic we will get leaders who are competent campaigners leading the party with a diminishing number of followers. Finally, there will only be leaders but no followers.

This is not an exaggeration. In some countries party break-ups are frequent each time party elections are held. And finally the number of political parties increase and the animosity between them overshadows efforts at resolving national problems. In this country, too, the split between UMNO and Dato Onn resulted in the creation of the Independence of Malaya Party or IMP and Parti Negara, while the contest in 1987 saw the founding of Semangat

Thank God the majority of the Malays supported the new UMNO and the situation was restored. What would have happened if each party obtained the same number of support? Surely the opposition party will be the winner.

#### BAN ON CAMPAIGN TO SAVE UMNO

But we cannot allow Malay culture to change without making changes in the way we conduct politics, so that the new culture will not destroy us. It is for this reason that in electing leaders this time we have made a number of changes. With the approval of the Delegates Conference last year, the posts of President and Deputy President are not contested. Perhaps there is the impression that in this way the two leaders can protect themselves. But this decision was made spontaneously without any campaigning. If I am not wrong, the intention was to avoid a campaign and contest that would split the party, as was seen in 1987.

The supporters of candidates were not very concerned about the fate of the Party. For many of them, contest among leaders holding Government portfolios meant opportunities; an opportunity to stay on in the post if the incumbents won, or an opportunity to fill a post if the challenger won. No contest means no opportunity. No intense contest means less favours to repay.

The new generation will inherit the party. But we must ensure that the party they inherit is one that is sound and safe. It is worthless to inherit a party that is crippled and lifeless. As the Malay saying goes, "menang jadi arang, kalah jadi abu." (For the victors a piece of charcoal, for the losers ashes).

While no contests for the posts of Deputy President and President in the party may slightly taint party democracy, nevertheless this will ensure the party's well-being. Remember democracy is for the good of the party, and that the party does not exist to prove democracy is great. Democracy without a strong party is meaningless.

The ban on campaigns becomes all the more important because of the use of unhealthy tactics of campaigning. In the past, when elections for the UMNO Supreme Council were held yearly, no problem was faced by the party. This was because the candidates did not campaign. They relied on their record in the party or in the relevant Assemblies. Obviously, if they became Ministers, their performance could be clearly observed and evaluated. But it must be remembered, not all that is done by Ministers, Chief Ministers or Members of the Legislature, in executing their functions, will make them popular. What is important is that members would be able to evaluate the candidates' performance without campaigns which deliberately taint or glorify the candidates.

What should also be noted is that before they became 'Yang Berhormat', their performance in the states, divisions or branches should be credible and worth noting. In other words, the process to attain a niche in the party starts from the lower rung. Sometimes this requires a long time

before the leadership qualities of a person is known and acknowledged. Today, many wish to 'leap frog' from nowhere to occupy the highest position in the shortest time possible.

If there is no campaign there will be quarters alleging that certain people will suffer since they are not able to project their capabilities. But even if campaigns were allowed, some will be victims as they cannot afford to campaign, while others, less talented, are capable of using specific tactics to project themselves. Actually those who are efficient, yet capable of campaigning in an unhealthy manner, may be those least suitable to lead the party. The possibility is that with the current tactic of campaigning, unprincipled people and those who bribe will lead the party. The party will definitely be destroyed if such people continue to lead the party, especially at the highest levels. UMNO will be led by corrupt leaders who acquired posts not by virtue of their ability as desired by the party and Government. Led by corrupt leaders, Malaysia's performance will deteriorate and it will be impossible for Malaysia to be a successful nation. We will be looked down upon by others.

If we disallowed campaigns and imposed a number of rules for this election, the objective is to save the party. What is important and overriding is the party, not specific individuals. It is alright for individuals to be disappointed but the party must survive and its integrity maintained for as long as possible. Those disappointed should remember even if campaigns were allowed, it is possible that they could still be disappointed. From the party's perspective, the disappointment of some leaders is unavoidable, whether or not campaigns are allowed. But, without campaigns, damage due to disappointed candidates is not as bad as damage due to unhealthy and intense campaigns, which can split the party.

Disappointment among candidates is normal during elections. There are bound to be losers. It is impossible that the contest for one post by a few will not result in anyone losing. If we lose and are willing to accept it, our party will be safe. If we are unwilling to accept defeat, then we should not seek elections. What is important in elections is that all parties accept the result. In as much as we want the defeated to accept us as winners, so too when we lose, we should accept the winners.

If we have this competitive spirit then we will accept whatever the decision. Once elections are over we should close ranks and face the challenge posed by the opposition parties. As I had said what is important is the party, not specific individuals. A party without specific individuals can continue to be effective, while an individual without a party will be a voice in the wilderness.

Although there are no campaigns, leaders who are capable will still attract attention and support. Gradually, his leadership qualities will be acknowledged and he will move up the ladder and may ultimately fill the highest post. This is not impossible because there are past UMNO members who never campaigned yet were able to be leaders and held high posts in the Government.

I realise there is anger among candidates and members because of the decision to ban campaigns in the contest for the Supreme Council seats this year. All kinds of restrictions were imposed that it was alleged no one could move. I said allegedly because the public knows there were campaigns. We know who among the candidates are active, have been using my name and that of the Deputy President and even using money. Their victory is no guarantee that action will not be taken against them later when we have sufficient evidence. And those delegates moving around demanding this and that will also face disciplinary action even after the elections.

This unusual measure was taken because UMNO is too important for the Malays and other Bumiputeras. UMNO is not only a political party that provides opportunities to individuals to hold high position in the country. UMNO too is not only meant to rule and develop this country; UMNO is more than that. UMNO is a reform movement for the Malays and the Bumiputera which is more capable and effective compared to other reform movements. Whether we are able to restore our dignity, be a race that is highly respected and looked up to by other races in the world, or whether we become one of the advanced races, will depend on this cultural reformation that has and will be undertaken by UMNO. If UMNO fails to bring about these reforms, then our race, the Malays particularly, together with other Bumiputeras, will be humiliated and have to submit to others again. I am convinced that no UMNO member would want the Malays to revert to their position under colonial rule. In fact, we do not want to see ourself reverting to our position before the May 1969 incident, during which independence was rather empty for we were a race that was still backward, not knowledgeable and unsuccessful in many fields, except in politics.

The current position of the Malays and other Bumiputeras has changed. No one questions our ability to administer and develop our country. We are able to prove that our administration is not only far better than the administration of our past colonisers, but much better than most countries, including some of the developed nations. A race which seemingly did not understand economics, business and industries is now not only able to develop the country's economy rapidly, but is a model in economic management. Bumiputeras who were said to be ignorant of business, who were mere 'Ali' in the 'Ali-Baba' partnership, today own and run successful sophisticated business firms, with capital worth billions and reaping profits comparable to those of international firms. They can afford to buy not only non-Bumiputera companies but are also able to own foreign enterprises abroad. In banking and telecommunications, aviation and motor industries, Malays and Bumiputeras are comparable or have even superseded other races in Malaysia. And many more successes have been achieved by Malays and Bumiputeras because of the cultural reforms initiated by the UMNO-led Government and UMNO.

Nevertheless, the performance of the nation and that of Malays and Bumiputeras has not reached its peak. It has yet to reach levels that could guarantee its sustainability without supervision and guidance by UMNO and the UMNO-led Government. We have not fully developed. We are undergoing the process of development. We are still fragile. If shaken, we will crack, break and fall into pieces. A lot needs to be done, especially in the formation of a culture and qualities that could withstand onslaughts. And this responsibility must be shouldered by UMNO. Reforms that need to be initiated must be carried out by UMNO. The new Malay/Bumiputera civilisation must be moulded and initiated by UMNO. Other parties and groups are not only incapable but if they attempt to do so, they may cause our achievements to revert to the status prevailing before, of being backward and weak. Do not think that this is not possible. We have seen how many countries which were once developed, have regressed because of a change from a capable to an incapable Government.

The success or failure of a particular race is not due to its ethnicity. The Europeans were successful not because they were white. The Japanese, Koreans and Chinese were successful not because they were ethnically Mongolians. Similarly, brown-skinned people are strong or weak not because of their skin colour. In all ethnic groups there are those who can succeed and those who will fail. The capacity to succeed or fail is with everyone.

What determines the success or failure of a race is their culture, the combined values that is believed, upheld and practised. If the combination of these values is consistent with success, then that race will be successful. Otherwise, that race will fail and become backward. Well-known civilisations in the history of mankind are a result of cultures that are consistent with the formation and achievements of that civilisation.

#### UMNO BRINGS CHANGES TO MALAY CULTURE

If today we have achieved some progress, this is not due to the Government's policy alone, but mainly because of the changing culture of the Malays and other Bumiputeras brought about by UMNO. Before the existence of UMNO, the Malays were easily humiliated and colonised. It was UMNO which influenced the thinking of the Malays and gave them the courage to fight their colonial masters.

It was UMNO which gave confidence that the Malays could administer their independent country themselves. At a time when other Malay parties were not confident of the Malays' ability to govern, UMNO was convinced and were able to convince the majority of Malays of their capability.

After independence, the problem of how to render independence meaningful arose. The colonialists regarded the role of the administration as merely that of law enforcer. The UMNO-led Government regarded administration as a means to develop the nation and people. UMNO's view and approach to the concept of government was its own and it was far better and more meaningful than those of the Colonial government.

This resulted in a race which in the past were only able to plant padi and tap rubber, becoming able to produce sophisticated goods in modern factories. From being a farmer, there now emerge an industrial community with different values more consistent with national development and competitiveness with other races.

The Malays and Bumiputeras in the industrial era in Malaysia are not similar to the Malays when Malaysia was an agricultural nation. Their culture had changed radically. Not all these changes are good. But if the culture of the Malay peasants were retained, then industrialisation would not have been successful, and the Malays would not have been as well recognised as they are now.

UMNO has played a role in the formation of the Malay Bumiputera culture by conducting various courses, seminars, studies and the delivery of thousands of speeches. A book 'Mental Revolution' was published by UMNO in its efforts to guide the Malays to better adapt to the changes resulting from the transformation from rural to urban, from farmer to factory worker and from the daily eking of living to an era where income is regular and expenses planned.

Perhaps many of us did not realise the cultural transformation initiated directly or indirectly by UMNO. But the fact is that UMNO is able to change the culture of the Malays and create a new culture for them. And it is this culture that has helped the success of the New Economic Policy, albeit, not fully.

#### CREATING A CULTURE FOR THE INFORMATION AGE

But a culture that is consistent with the NEP will not necessarily ensure our success in this Information Age. Although information can improve our ability in numerous fields, it can also weaken and destroy us. Today we face the problem of moral decay and problems such as drug abuse, bohsia, child abuse and child abandonment. These, to some extent, originate from the affluence resulting from industrialisation and rural-urban

migration. Rural culture differs from the culture of the urban areas. In the rural areas we are close to our family and friends. We are not free to act as we pleased. We know what shame is.

In towns we live in a society where we do not know one another. Colleagues and friends are of the same age. Interests and desires are the same. What we do is also done by our friends. If we are wrong, so are they. As such, we no longer feel ashamed or shy if we commit wrong. We will do whatever we want.

Evidently, many of our youths are not able to deal with this freedom. The religion that is taught emphasises more on the form that is supposedly Islamic than on the substance of Islamic teachings. The trivial is given emphasis but not the substance. Therefore, even though on the surface adherence to religion appears to be stronger now, in reality the understanding and belief in religion is weak. The fact is that many of those involved in drugs and undesirable activities are Malay children. There must be something that is not right with the moral education that is said to be based on religion. Religion cannot be wrong. But we know that what is taught is the interpretation and opinion of certain individuals. For this reason, Islam is divided into various sects and beliefs, including those that are clearly wrong and contradict the true teachings of Islam. Due to wrong interpretations by certain interests, religion which should act as a bulwark of protection is no longer capable of doing so.

The Government has attempted to mould character capable of overcoming problems associated with living in affluence in the urban areas through the 'rakan muda' programmes, including the teachings and practices of religions. It is evident that the progress thus far showed that we have not been able to deal with these problems adequately. Will we be able to create a generation capable of taking over our place given their continuous exposure to information and values which can further destroy their culture?

We cannot isolate our race from outside world. Whether we like it or not we are exposed to foreign cultures loaded with sex and violence. Pandering to our base desires, useful knowledge in this information age is not pursued for the benefits they can bring. Instead we allow ourselves to succumb to our base desires.

Finally we will regress and revert to our former status as a race that was humiliated and colonised.

All these would not have happened or become a serious problem had we succeeded in creating a culture that can protect us from the negative aspects of the information era. We need clean and strong leadership to prevent this. And this leadership must come from UMNO. The quality of leadership in UMNO will determine whether or not our race will succeed in this information age. Because UMNO must not only be confined to politics, UMNO must also lead the cultural reform so that we can protect ourselves from being influenced by the evils that come with the information explosion and affluence. This 'devil' and the 'devil' brought about by poverty that can lead to our loss of faith is the same. Therefore we cannot seek refuge by allowing poverty and by isolating ourselves from this information era. Isolating one's self from problems is not the way to overcome them. A civilised race needs to confront and face these problems squarely.

#### IMPACT OF ELECTING CORRUPT LEADERS

What kind of leaders do we need? Certainly not leaders who are amoral, corrupt or who are interested in position over respect and success of his race, religion and nation.

It is quite usual even for leaders who are clean to be influenced by money, given power and opportunity.

But those who from the beginning had shown negative traits and offered bribes to seek position and without any qualms misused power and opportunity in furthering himself, will certainly be more willing to be bribed after having attained high position and becoming leaders. Leaders who resort to bribes to seek support will not hesitate to accept bribes to support or to approve anything. A corrupt leader will set up a corrupt Government.

As Prime Minister or Minister or office bearers with specific portfolios in the Federal or State Governments, the income is sufficient only to live a moderate life.

Therefore if money is needed in campaigns they would need to resort to illegal practices or by issuing licenses, AP's, shares and awarding tenders or contracts, etc. to their supporters. Perhaps those who received or hoped to receive something will appreciate the immoral holders of certain posts in Government. There are those among UMNO members who feel that power is of no use if it cannot be used to help friends or family, or supporters and party members. To them it is not wrong. To them this is an act of repayment. According to them since they gave the support, they should now be compensated. Besides, what is given does not belong to the Minister but to the Government. Power that is subjected to rules is not power, so it appears. To these people power means the right to do anything. If it can only be used according to the rules, then that is not power, they say.

But believe me, whether to reciprocate a good deed or not, bribery and the abuse of power can destroy our party, our nation, race and religion. The reason is that for every favour granted, there are tens, hundreds or even thousands of others who do not get anything. And these people will be disappointed and would reject the party when the time comes to elect representatives to Legislative Assemblies. What is the use of being a leader of a defeated party?.

And corrupt leaders will not stop at only returning the favour of those who helped them. Sooner or later they will want to enrich themselves by selling their power and influence. Agents have to be paid. To obtain approvals, applications will be deliberately delayed until bribes are made.

In the beginning, bribery will be discreet. Government servants, aware of these abuses, will threaten that they too should be bribed. Finally, those in authority and those without authority but aware of the corrupt practices of those in authority, will become corrupt. Since everyone is involved, no one will feel ashamed. Everyone will accept bribes. Bribery will be condoned. Bribery will be openly practised and its culture may penetrate all levels of society.

If this happens, all Government dealings will cease to function smoothly and all costs will escalate. Nothing will be exempted from bribery. Licences, AP's and approvals require bribes. Dealings with the private sector, such as banks, require specific payments to those who are in position to approve.

Bribery knows no limit. Over a period of time there will be more demands by more people. Finally, investors will move out, job opportunities will not increase but will be reduced, poverty will be rampant and the economy will not grow. All work will be delayed and will slow down.

A nation that accepts bribery as its culture may never progress. Corrupt UMNO leaders will sell their souls to whoever offers them more. Government policies, especially those related to Malay and Bumiputera interests, will be set aside. Remember, the ability of the Malays and the Bumiputera to offer bribes is not as great as the other races.

In the event, the development of the Malays and the Bumiputeras can no longer be carried out. Those Bumiputera who receive benefits from the Government are those who are corrupt and perhaps incapable. And they will

sell off immediately everything they received for instant wealth. They will spend everything just as fast for they hope to get more.

The whole Malay and Bumiputera society will collapse. Our race will collapse. This nation will revert to its former situation of poverty, chaos and instability. The hope of the Malay and other Bumiputeras to become a developed race will be dashed. The foreigners, especially those who continually alleged that the Malays as Muslims could never progress and be a successful and developed race, will laugh at us. And all this because of the selection of corrupt candidates to lead UMNO.

This may be the scenario if corrupt practices which start from a contest for posts are not overcome.

Meanwhile what will happen to UMNO? Today we have seen how the cost of electing the Supreme Council has escalated. It first began when a State placed their delegates to the General Assembly in a well-known hotel. Then other states followed suit. Later, the hotel status had to be upgraded to five stars. It must be nothing less if support is to be given.

It is said that all expenses for delegates and observers were borne by the State Liaison Committee. But where did such enormous amounts of money come from? It could perhaps be party donations. But can the party's money be utilised to popularise specific individuals?

Then candidates began offering bribes and gifts to delegates. There were competition between candidates and the amount of bribes increased. But now the process of bribery begins much earlier. A year or more before elections, bribery begins. It is not the performance or the person's ability that is the basis for selection. What determines support is the value of the bribe that one is willing to give.

At this level, delegates begin offering their support if gifts are given. And candidates are forced to spend even more. Those who can afford by virtue of their success following the NEP will offer more to the delegates. But voting is secret and the same delegate will seek bribes from other candidates. Thus delegates become prosperous following bribes received from all candidates. Not only are travelling expenses to Kuala Lumpur and the five-star hotels borne by candidates, overseas trips are also arranged or promised. Initially, it was just across our borders but today trips to Europe and America must be sponsored to ensure delegates' loyalty. Because delegates to the General Assembly get many benefits, contest to be delegates become intense. Candidates vying to be delegates to the General Assembly begin bribing divisional delegates. Those who won must recover their incurred expenses. They in turn demand something from the Supreme Council candidates, if their support is to be given.

Where did all these money come from? Certainly, the normal income is insufficient. Perhaps other rich supporters have helped. But is this help for free? Is this not also corruption?

As a result, leaders who abuse their positions and are corrupt will lead UMNO and become Government leaders. Can we trust such leaders? Would they not try to sell us, UMNO members, the Malays, the Bumiputeras and also our country? What is the difference between these UMNO leaders and those who take drugs? When addicted, the dignity of our race and nation will be sold to anyone.

It is difficult to visualise something that has yet to happen. But believe me what I have tried to portray can happen. To some extent it has already happened. Government's power has been used to buy support.

To develop a nation and race is not easy. It needs time and determined effort. But to destroy a nation and race is easy. And no other means is more effective than to chose leaders who abuse their position and are corrupt. Leaders, be they Kings, Presidents or dictators, are those who have destroyed their glorious empires in the history of mankind.

## MALAY REFORMATION PROCESS CONTINUES

Earlier on I had stressed that UMNO Reform Movement, a Renewal Movement. UMNO has pioneered the creation of a new culture for the Malays, a culture that has brought many advancement. From a race that was once colonised, we have become a race that is respected and a model for other races.

But the process of Malay and other Bumiputeras reformation is not over. A lot more needs to be done. We have identified and planned a number of things. But all these will not materialise if we lack honest and sincere leadership, not only for today but also for our future. The culture which we have created now will not be able to ensure the quality of our leaders. Our culture today is not as yet capable of creating a new Malay civilisation.

We must maintain UMNO's power in Government to ensure the creation of a culture and the setting up of a new civilisation. To date, what we have achieved is merely to forge an ordinary culture based on ordinary values, such as good manners, discipline, hard work, sincerity and fairness and other values which are considered universal. In general, we have tried to adopt these values, with some success, but this is insufficient.

Culture, in fact those universal values of a particular race, differ from those of other races because of their philosophy and detailed interpretations. Thus the finesse of one culture differs from the finesse in other cultures. There are races which regard that respect for leaders, family and old age are part of good manners but there are others which regard all these as obsolete and will not make their culture any better. As a result, the institutions of family, religion and marriage remain intact in some cultures but are destroyed in others. Yet both races insist that they are well-mannered and civilised.

The concept of cleanliness and beauty also varies from one culture to another. For some, not being unclean means clean, for others, not dirtying is regarded as clean. For the first group, after littering, they expect others to do the cleaning up. For the other, cleaning is unnecessary because they did not create any mess. Similarly with beauty. What is considered as beautiful in one culture may be considered as ugly in another. What is clear is that cleanliness and beauty have different meanings in different cultures.

There are races adept at cooking delicious foods. Others not only desire delicious foods but their presentation, decoration and the manner the food is consumed must also be refined before the food is considered perfect. Which one should be the basis for our new culture and the new civilisation?

Art in one culture may be considered as refine but the same art in some other cultures may be regarded as crude. Some cultures emphasise quality, yet others emphasise low price. There are races who try to avoid defectiveness in their work and seek perfection. There are others who are not mindful of minor defects in their work and there are yet others who are of the view that since it is only God who is perfect, they therefore need not try to avoid defectiveness in their products. In fact there are some who deliberately make mistakes in their work to prove that only God is perfect. This attitude is one of arrogance because no matter how hard one tries, one's products could never be free from defect. If we examine carefully we will certainly find evidence of defectiveness no matter how competent one is. Therefore, we need not deliberately cause any defect in our work. We are not free from defectiveness. However, if we strive for perfection, the quality of our products will improve and become more

valuable. A race which strives for perfection will be more successful compared to a race which does not. Which should we chose to become part of our culture?

Similarly with justice. Rightly what is considered fair in one society should also be fair in another. But actually it is not so. What is considered as just in one society is considered as unjust in others. In fact, what is just in a particular era of a society is regarded as unjust by the same society in another era.

The success or failure of a society depends on its concept of justice and the way justice is practised and dispensed.

The implementation of justice in Islam is subject to many different interpretations. All Muslims claim that they strongly adhere to the principles of justice in Islam, but what they practise is different. There are Muslims who hang their enemies without trial in the name of Islam. On the other hand, there are Muslims who demand the full process of judgement, also in the name of Islam.

Because of the above-mentioned and other differences, civilisations that are created and their achievements vary one from the other. Islamic civilisation was created in the early years of Islamic expansion. Since then, Islamic civilisation has deteriorated to its present weak state. Does the concept of justice in Islam today not play a role in weakening Islamic civilisation?

All that I have mentioned and many more which I am unable to say are the fine details that have to be considered if we want to make it as part of our culture. By selecting these fine details which can make our culture consistent with development and success, our achievements will also be special. With this culture we will be able to develop the arts, knowledge and competence unique to us. Our mental and physical development, our achievements in the field of knowledge and the arts, our economic, social and political development as well as our architecture and engineering - all will reflect the new Malay/Bumiputera civilisation, a civilisation associated with Malays and Islam.

This is the Reformation which should be initiated by UMNO, to follow that which has made UMNO successful until now. Clearly, many more need to be studied, refined, checked and inculcated before the new culture of the Malays and Bumiputeras, before the emergence of a recognised and respected Malay and Bumiputera Islamic civilisation of the 21st century will materialise.

#### KIND OF LEADERS NEEDED BY UMNO

All these must be initiated by UMNO. But this is possible only if we have an UMNO that is led by leaders who are of high calibre, with quality, incorruptible and do not place their personal interests above others. UMNO leaders must be made up of those committed to fighting for Reforms which have been pioneered and willing to make sacrifices for the love of their nation, culture and religion. UMNO leaders must be those of high calibre, who will lead the Government for several more decades, for the creation of the new Malay civilisation will take a long time.

We may think that there is no difference between one leader and another. That it does not matter very much who we chose as there will be not much change. Development will be achieved irrespective of whoever is the leader. This view is incorrect. Do not think that anybody can defeat the Malayan Union, achieve independence or bring rural development. In other countries, because of wrong choices in leaders, the nations which had developed have regressed. And when leaders are rightly chosen, the undeveloped nations become developed. Is our experience not the same in

Malaysia? If we make the right choices then unexpected development could take place. Among the delegates who contested, there are those who will be suitable. But there are others who will only destroy our future. If these people are chosen, then clearly we will not be able to develop an excellent culture to create the Malay and Islamic civilisation that we hoped for.

#### REJECT CORRUPT LEADERS

As a Malay, as a Bumiputera, as someone who loves his nation, race and religion, I urge all delegates to reject all candidates who have offered bribes to you in whatever form, including those who campaigned, despite the ban. Reject them before they destroy our party which we love, before they attempt to destroy our reform movement whose objective is to create a new Malay/Bumiputera civilisation. Reject all of them, regardless of whether they are your friends. Loyalty to friends who are immoral will destroy our struggle for race and nation. Send them this clear message - UMNO has no place for corrupt leaders.

Reject them for the sake of religion, race and nation and our future. There will be no loss and our party will not weaken if those who are corrupt are not among our leaders or in the party. On the contrary, we will be stronger and be able to manage our party and our struggle more effectively and successfully, God willing.

The struggle of our race has not ended. A lot more needs to be implemented and initiated before we could become a race that is developed and respected by the world. We have talents. We have the ability. And we can do it, InsyaAllah.

There are signs reflecting our ability to achieve the targets we have set. Do not sacrifice our future. Do not sacrifice the new culture and civilisation that we will build, just for the small gain we make today.

I am sad because I am forced to expose these dirty linen in public and to make this appeal. But I believe that calamity will befall us if we do not reject those who bribed us.

Love the party, love the race, love the religion and love the nation. I pray that those who vote today will do so with all sincerity, thinking of Allah the Almighty. God willing by doing so, God will protect us, save our struggle for the sake of our race, religion and nation in order for us to evolve the Malay and Islamic Civilisation in the 21st century. With this we can redeem the dignity of our race.

--BERNAMA ZS ITEM STORED AS: AB962 MED 00282 PE 10-10 1132 Mahathir  
text 11 Kuala Lumpur KIND