

07 SEP 1997

Umno-Ideas (News Analysis)  
A MOUNTAIN OF IDEAS FOR UMNO

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 7 (Bernama) -- Never before, at least not in recent past, have so many ideas and issues been thrown at Umno delegates to take home, ponder and grapple with as in this year's general assembly which ended here today.

The ideas covering a wide range of issues on the party's and nation's agenda came from Prime Minister and Party President Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in his policy speech opening the general assembly on Friday, in yet another attempt to ask the Malays to uphold the dignity of their race and Islam by getting their priorities right but along the path of moderation.

Dr Mahathir again tried to awaken the Malays from their slumber to face up to the challenges of the new millennium which brings with among other things, the harsh realities of the borderless world.

At the end of the four-day assembly, the mountain of ideas that came straight from Dr Mahathir's ever fertile minds would have left the delegates still groping to grasp the unambiguous message of "mental revolution" he is driving at in his presidential speech.

Here are the highlights of his ideas:

#### ISLAM

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- (To a small section of Muslim society) knowledge said to be of no relevance to Islam is neglected,
- While rejecting such knowledge, they do not hesitate to buy and use produce of non-Muslim, including weapons to kill other Muslims.
- Sexual crime are more rampant among Malays who are Muslims than the non-Muslims.
- Our mistake is to give too much emphasis on aurat (the part of the anatomy a Muslim should not expose) than to the effect of covering aurat on our morals.
- The Quran is not to blame. We are actually at fault because we only emphasise on covering of aurat but not on the prevention of sexual crime, which is the ultimate objective of Islamic teaching.
- Just like the horse and sword which are no more effective in military defence, covering of aurat is no more effective in curbing sexual lust in a multi-racial society.
- We do not have to shout to the whole world that we are the champion of Islam, but Malay nationalism and Islam are inseparable.
- Obviously Islam is not an obstacle to progress. The stumbling block to our success is our own created culture, which we perceive as relevant to Islam and identifiable to the Malay identity.
- What a waste if we only read the Quran as just another of our religious obligation, without even bothering to understand its meaning.
- Islam is not just a ritualistic religion, which must be performed without taking into account the objectives behind the performance of the rituals.
- Enmity and the split among Muslims today was due to wrong religious emphasis, by giving priority to the form and not the substance.
- We must not forget that those who cover their aurat too commit sexual crime no less than those who do not. This was because we only stress on the need to cover the aurat and not the prevention of the crime.

- Muslims are weak not because of Islam, but because we only focus on only half of what the religion preaches, that of confining only to form and not the substance.

- If Muslims and their leaders from other countries are amazed at our moderate approach in Islam, why do we need to be extreme, knowing too well that this approach has hindered progress and caused countless problems to many Muslim nations.

- It is no guarantee that the interpretations and teachings of Islam by those knowledgeable in the religion and Arabic language are accurate, true and non-conflicting.

#### CULTURE

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- Is it not possible to change the Malay culture to suit the progress and achievements once enjoyed by Muslims of the earlier era?

- Our struggle is not yet over and would not be over in the near future because we are chasing a moving target that will not wait for us.

- We can succeed if we are willing and work hard to change and formulate a progressive culture.

- If we really want to be successful because worldly achievement is equally important with the well-being of the world hereafter, if we really want to be a developed race because we value our dignity, if we really want to achieve progress because we want to be the real master; then we have to ensure that we are capable and have the means of becoming the master.

#### KNOWLEDGE AND EFFICIENCY

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- To be the master we need to have extra qualities. We need to possess knowledge and efficiency.

- If we wish to have the command of knowledge and efficiency of other races, then we must be ready to learn their languages.

- A true nationalist is one who strived for the betterment of his own race and capable of competing successfully with other advanced races.

- True nationalist are those whose race is respected because of its ability to beat others in all fields.

- To have command of other languages does not make one less nationalistic or patriotic than those nationalist who are confined to their mother-tongue.

- What will happen to the Muslim community if their knowledge is restricted only to religion, jurisprudence (usuluddin) and feqh?

- A community dominated by only the religious people will be a weak and stagnant community.

- Those who prefer to see their children only become religious scholars and ignore the security and well-being of the masses are not adhering to the true teachings of Islam.

- It would not make a political party or a government less Islamic if they emphasise on the need for Muslim children to seek knowledge which would help strengthen and safeguard Islam and its society.

- When we plan the MSC, (Multimedia Super Corridor) we are actually trying to save Muslims to face the challenges of the present and future era.

- Without the knowledge in information technology and its applications to strengthen Muslims and their religious faith, we will not only be left behind but would also expose ourselves to attack on our ways of life, our religion and our culture.

- If we are not brave enough, if we do not believe in the truth and

conviction of our struggle, if we are engrossed with wealth and materialism, if we are involved in corruption, if we allow people who use religion to act wildly, then our 51 years of struggle for our religion and race will be futile.-- BERNAMA

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