

20/06/1998

Johor MB agrees fully with contents of `brave speech`

UMNO supreme council member and Johor Menteri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman described the Umno president's address as a "brave speech", informing party members on the approach used by western imperialists to stamp their influence on countries in the region.

"Party members must understand the forces operating around us and we should think of the long-term, not short-term interest of the nation," he said.

Ghani said the attempt to dominate this part of the world had been reinforced by the "forces" operating globally in the form of their push for globalisation, liberalisation and deregulation of the global system.

This, he said, had been enhanced by the role of the international media which had projected in a negative way the events in this region.

"Therefore, the president's speech calls on Umno members to know exactly how the international imperialistic system would want to dominate our part of the world.

"I agree with Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad that we should fully understand what is happening - that our earlier colonialists are showing their colours," Ghani said.

He believed that Umno members understood the Umno president's message, were patriotic and wanted the dignity and sovereignty of the country protected.

"They should take the president's advice that we must be careful and safeguard ourselves from being influenced by vested interest of the western system."

Selangor Menteri Besar and supreme council member Datuk Abu Hassan Omar said Dr Mahathir's address to the general assembly had outlined necessary measures members needed to adopt to overcome the current economic situation.

He said Dr Mahathir's warning that leaders should be careful in using concepts such as globalisation and liberalisation should be heeded to ensure that the country was saved from the onslaught of so-called "neo-colonialists".

"These people could destroy us later," he said.

On the issue of cronyism, Abu Hassan said the Selangor Government was adopted policies on providing economic oppportunities to those who needed assistance.

Umno Terengganu, in dismissing charges of nepotism and cronyism being practised by party leaders, asked those who could not withstand the hardship resulting from the economic problems to leave the party.

Kuala Nerus Umno divisional chief Datuk Abdul Rashid Ngah, when tabling the resolution in support of the presidential address, said Umno did not need these people.

He added that Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, Datuk Hishammuddin Hussein and Mokhzani Mahathir were chosen as leaders in Umno because of their ability and not because their fathers were Prime Ministers.

"Do we say Prophet Muhammad practised nepotism and cronyism simply because the former caliphs Abu Bakar Al Siddiq was his father-in-law and Osman Affan was the son-in-law?"

Abdul Rashid said Dr Mahathir should continue making visits abroad.

"On our part, we will `look after` Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim. Umno members are everywhere, including in Cherok To' Kun," he said when

referring to Dr Mahathir's speech of his hesitance to travel abroad at a pre-council meeting on Wednesday.

"Umno will continue to remain strong and any reformation and changes to be made are to strengthen it."

He also reminded Umno Youth chief Datuk Ahmad Zahid Hamidi of the contribution of senior Umno members.

"These rusty nails which hold the planks tightly are the reason why the younger generation can walk across safely. These nails are also poisonous."

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