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AWSJ article is full of ill intent

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JUST as I thought our country has seen through all manner of foreign-inspired bad-mouthing, the Asian Wall Street Journal came up with an article on June 2-4 which seemed designed for no other reason than to be destructive to Malaysia by being both provocative and outrageous.

The title of the piece, "Malaysia's Suharto", was patently designed to inflame by seeking to paint anew our Prime Minister as a copy of Indonesia's long-serving President - a President many, including the AWSJ, had praised before only to discard and vilify as the epitome of all things evil with the onset of the Asian economic crisis.

This letter will definitely be derided as coming from a Mahathir apologist but I think the time has come to meet fire with fire. It is an apology only if you also think the AWSJ's article is an apology for the usual quarters you would expect such skewed opinions from.

For one thing, it is an insult to all Malaysians that the system of party and general election the country had only recently reaffirmed its faith in should be compared to that which existed under Suharto's Indonesia.

Worse, in comparing our Prime Minister to Indonesia's former President, the AWSJ was alluding that Malaysia's system needs an "overhaul", similar to what Indonesia is now going through.

I think if Malaysians need proof of foreigners' ill intent, this has to take the prize.

Of course, we all know the point the AWSJ is trying to make - that more democracy is good for any country. But to point to Indonesia now as a model for our country to follow? It would have been easy if Suharto were still in power for those such as the AWSJ to continue to pin all blame for that country's continuing troubles on Suharto.

But now that Suharto is no longer around, when are we supposed to stop blaming him and start thinking deep and hard if or when a "new" Indonesia can be created which will be better than before? And at what incredible costs?

What, can anyone tell me, is so "creative" about the so-called "creative destruction" of Indonesia's "crony capitalism"? Is the destruction of a whole new generation of newly poor and destitute Indonesians the price we have to pay so that the middle-class the world over (Indonesia's tiny one included) can have a good night's sleep over the fact that "human rights" are finally restored to the world's fourth most populous country? What utter unconscionable rubbish!

Rest assured, I will continue scanning the AWSJ in this self-appointed role to at least warn my fellow countrymen not to swallow wholesale what the foreign Press says about us.