

12/05/2000

Umno's struggle still unfinished

TRANSLATION of Prime Minister and Umno President Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's speech at the Umno General Assembly.

THIS year the Umno General Assembly is held to coincide with Umno's birthday to remind us of the party's struggle and its 54 years' history. During this period, a lot of achievements have been made. We have defeated attempts by the British to seize the rights of the Malay as the true owners of the Malay States and the Strait Settlements, and with that we managed to retain our rights over the Malay States.

We, Umno, have succeeded in formulating special strategies of co-operation between the various ethnic groups in the Malay States so that each will recognise the other's rights, and with that, ensure the success of our struggle to liberate and develop our nation.

Beginning with the Federated Malay States which replaced the Malayan Union, we were able to create a bigger Malaysia together with Sabah, Sarawak and Singapore. No force was used to unite these States - only diplomacy and negotiations were used by the ruling Government which was then regarded as new and inexperienced in the field of negotiations which involved sensitivities relating to parochialism, race and religion.

When we found that Singapore and its leadership were no longer compatible with the spirit of the Federation and inter-racial tolerance, without much problem we gave Singapore its independence.

When Malaysia was formed we continued to face the problems of inter-racial relations as each race lived separately and was involved in different economic functions, and as a result, differences existed in respect of wealth, culture and world view.

In 1969, racial riots erupted, something which had been predicted by foreign observers. These doomsayers were pleased with the May 13 riots as they believed that Malaysia would be destroyed, unstable and unsafe. According to them, it would not be possible to build and develop Malaysia. The Malays who held power through Umno would rule like tyrants who would confiscate property belonging to the non-Malays. According to them, Malaysia had no future. Like other countries which had gained independence, the natives would destroy all that was said to have been built and developed by the colonisers during their time.

But, once again Umno has proven its wisdom. Nobody's property was seized, instead the New Economic Policy (NEP) was introduced and by enlarging the economic cake, the bumiputeras gained their share without robbing the rights of non-bumiputeras.

As a result, rapid and continued development took place in an environment of peace and harmony. Bumiputeras and non-bumiputeras reaped much benefits. Prosperity was evident everywhere, something which was beyond everyone's expectations. Those who predicted that Malaysia would be a basket case were amazed at what they termed as the Malaysian economic miracle.

This development brought vast changes among the Malays and other bumiputeras. Firstly, the people who used to live in the villages with its own values and traditions have now migrated to towns in droves.

Life in the villages and towns differs greatly. In the villages we are under the scrutiny of our parents, families as well as our neighbours. So we hold strongly to our traditions and culture. We are careful about our behaviour. We respect our parents, families, neighbours and village

leaders. They know us and vice versa. We safeguard our honour and that of our village. We do not show off our capabilities, and we are not pompous and arrogant.

But, village folks may not progress and prosper or become rich. In Malaysia no landlords own all the land which are leased to the villagers. In Malaysia, villagers own land which are usually small and sufficient to provide for the needs of their own family only. It is impossible for anyone to become rich in the villages.

The limited village income means controlled expenses. Money is used prudently, and not spent for purposes other than to sustain a living. If there is a feast, the villagers will co-operate with one another to reduce expenses. Thus the spirit of neighbourliness prevails.

But when the NEP was implemented, the Malays, particularly the children of rubber tappers and padi planters were given the opportunity to further their studies, become high-ranking Government officers, professionals, businessmen and entrepreneurs, Class 'A' contractors and corporate figures. Their income increases. They no longer return to the villages, instead they become urban dwellers, with all the sophistication.

They have more freedom in towns. No longer are parents and neighbours around to oversee their behaviour. In towns, they do not even know their neighbours, so they are likely to ignore what the neighbours do. Urban people are free to do what they please. It is not necessary to respect anyone. Because of this, the original values of the Malays deteriorate and are no longer practised.

They appear unable to cope with prosperity and wealth. The large amount of money that they have is not regarded as investment capital but is spent carelessly with no regard for the future. Money can buy anything. Money can buy influence and popularity. Money means power. And money for the urban Malays, thanks to the NEP, is easily available.

It is clear that the success of the NEP which leads to urban migration of the rural Malays, and which makes them more prosperous and need no longer scrounge for a living, able to spend more than their needs, has brought about new values for the Malays.

There are people who suggest that Malays be a little rude. This suggestion has been well received. But why be a little rude? Just be downright rude. And so the views that it is unnecessary to feel obliged to the benefactors gained acceptance. There should not be any feeling of gratitude, these same people suggest. There should be no sense of indebtedness to those who have helped us. It is not wrong to condemn and ridicule them. We need only be grateful to God. Our blessings and fortune do not come from people. If it does not come from one person, it may come from someone else. Therefore we need not be thankful to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). If it is not him, it would be another individual who would bring the message of Islam. Therefore, we need not glorify Prophet Muhammad. Suffice for us to be grateful to God only.

These are among the values of some urban Malays now. And these values are further eroded by politicians with vested interests. Don't be thankful, say these people. If we are in power, we will give you the same and may be more. Therefore, reject those who have helped you. Instead bite the hand that feeds you.

Use whatever means you can to instil hason-pen letters, the press, Internet, all these can be used. Call them with disparaging labels because in this way we can incite greater hatred against certain individuals. Label them as Mahazalim, Mahafiraun. Do we like tyrants, pharaohs? Of course not. So just hate those who are labelled Mahafiraun or Mahazalim. There is no greater satisfaction than the feeling of hate. Therefore the politics of development is replaced by the politics of hatred. Hate him

and vote for me!

These are some of the changes that have taken place among some Malays and bumiputeras as a result of Umno's success in improving their economic lot. Should Umno discontinue the NEP so that the Malays will regress, be remorseful and once again unite?

Remember, Umno's success in uniting the Malays in the mid-20th Century was because the Malays felt threatened when confronted with the danger of losing their country and identity. This external threat forced the Malays to close ranks through Umno to defend themselves. They no longer regarded themselves as someone from Kedah, Perak, Penang, Johor, etc. For the first time they were unanimous in regarding themselves as Malays. Only as a united Malay race will they be able to save themselves and what they inherit.

If in the past Umno succeeded in uniting the Malays, can it not do the same now? Actually we do not know. Maybe yes and maybe no. But whether this is possible or not, we must try. That is the spirit of Umno. We should not be easily discouraged or admit defeat. We are responsible to the Malays. Whether or not the Malays will acknowledge this, this responsibility is ours to bear. If we fail after trying, we must try again.

Actually we have started to do this. If changes in Malay culture result in gradual deterioration, then steps must be taken to create and instil a new culture that can resist temptations and overcome challenges of being rich urban Malays.

Obviously the strongest shield is Islam itself and its noble values. Unfortunately the culture which prevailed when Prophet Muhammad brought Islam to the Arabs had already been ignored by most Muslims. Brotherhood in Islam is no longer practised by the Muslims. Everywhere they are at loggerheads with each other and are willing to collaborate with the enemies of Islam to defeat their fellow Muslims.

In Malaysia this has begun to happen. There are Malays who allow themselves to be influenced by the enemies of Islam, so that the efforts to develop and regain the glory of the Malays and Islamic civilisation could be prevented.

Islamic experts like to blame Western Orientalists when discussing the failures of Muslims. They alleged that certain groups were created by the British and the Jews to divide the Muslims and prevent their progress. Their teaching that this world belongs to non-Muslims and the hereafter is reserved for Muslims is much welcomed by the enemies of Islam. They know that this belief among Muslims will cause them to be preoccupied with all kinds of beliefs and activities allegedly enjoined by Islam to the extent that they do not have time to achieve progress in this world. With the emergence of factions having conflicting views on the religion, enmity among Muslims ensues, leading to their self-destruction. Their enemies encourage and glorify splinter groups among Muslims, to attack the leading group which forms the majority. All efforts by the leading majority group to promote Muslims would be branded un-Islamic. Preoccupied with defending their Islamic credentials, the majority group could not focus on the development of Muslims. In the end, efforts by Muslims to master all aspects of knowledge and skills to enable them to compete with other races will fail. Numerous attempts have been made by Muslims to improve themselves, but they have failed because of opposition by splinter groups which were influenced and supported by the enemies of Islam.

Today, in Malaysia we see how encouragement and support is given to the splinter party to oppose the Muslim majority party. Although we know that the Western media and certain quarters detest Muslims whom they portray as terrorists, still they try to show Pas as a moderate party which should be

supported by non-Muslims to topple the Umno-led Government. It appears as if they would like to see Pas set up an Islamic State in Malaysia. Is it true that they like an Islamic State? It is highly possible that they do, because they believe that if the country is governed by what they term as Islamic fundamentalists, there will be uneasiness among non-Muslims and will retard Malaysia's development and progress, and weaken it until it is recolonised. If because of efforts by the enemies of Islam the support for Umno dwindles, then Umno would not be able to focus on the development of Malays/Islam, even, probably Umno may try to be more Islamic than Pas, reject what Pas labels as secular so that Malaysia continues to be backward, weak, no longer able to criticise the West and their apparatus when they commit injustice to developing nations. Today only Malaysia is willing to criticise the West. Surely they will feel relieved when Umno is busy quarreling with Pas until they forget the injustices done on Muslims in Bosnia, Kosovo, Sudan, Iraq, Iran and others.

Umno's task is to try to bring the Malays to return to the brotherhood and unity as preached by Islam so that the agenda of those who hate the Muslims will fail. For this, the splinter parties of Islam must be made to realise that they have been exploited by the enemies of Islam. In its efforts to create the awareness among these splinter parties, Umno must uphold the truth. Explain, tell the real situation. This is easy as we are on the side of truth. Only those who do not uphold the truth will use all kinds of falsehood, will cheat and lie. Only those who do not uphold the true teachings of Islam will condemn other Muslims, will lie and abuse other people. Only those who are immoral who will continue to lie even when their lies are exposed.

God willing, if Umno persists to voice out the truth, ultimately, a small number at least will open their minds and will reject falsehood and accept the truth. This is clear in the Surah Al-Isra, verse 81, which states that: "Truth has (now) arrived, and Falsehood perished: for Falsehood is (by its nature) bound to perish", and Surah Ali-Imran, Verse 105, which states that: "Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: They are the ones to attain felicity."

Islam does not only enjoin us to be brothers but requires us to have other values which can mould a character that is resilient and able to resist negative values that most of us have and to prepare ourselves to face the challenges of the 21st Century.

Among the most important values are discipline, self-control from negative behaviours especially restraining our base desires. All Islamic religious observances require self-discipline. We may not fast, give alms, perform our haj and pray without discipline. Our movements in performing our religious obligations require discipline. We should not wait for rewards. Disciplined people will perform good deeds for simply because they are good.

Discipline requires us to control our desires for the sake of what is good. Believe me, sooner or later, we will gain from our good acts.

When we refuse the bribe we get today, for fear of its impact on the fate of our future generation, this shows that we have self-discipline. Only people who are disciplined are able to reject bribery for the sake of race, religion and nation.

An army ordered to march forward surely knows that they might be killed, but as members who are disciplined, they will still follow orders. With discipline, they may achieve success for themselves, even their nation. But if they go against orders, it is highly likely that they will be defeated, their country defeated, and they themselves destroyed by their enemies. Without discipline, a race may not be able to maintain its

independence.

Malays who desire continued progress, to build a brighter future; Malays who wish to redeem and maintain their dignity must be disciplined, must control their desires, and be willing to make sacrifices for the sake of the future of their race, religion and nation.

Besides discipline, there are many other values propagated by Islam which must consciously be practised. While we claim that we uphold strongly to the teachings of Islam, many among us look for bomohs or witchdoctors to attain success. Witchdoctors cannot ensure our success. The work that we do, our kindness, our caring attitude, our good records - all these will ensure our success. But there is no guarantee that we will succeed, despite all the good that we do and this must be accepted without feeling frustrated. Only God determines our success or failure. Only God holds power over us. As such pray to Him and stop using witchdoctors.

Another value in life which I hope we Malays will try to acquire is that portrayed by Datuk Azhar Mansor.

In 1999, Azhar succeeded in sailing solo around the world. This is not something that just anybody is willing or able to do, be it Malays or other people in the world. Surely there must be exceptional qualities in Azhar. If more Malays have these qualities, they will certainly be able to face any challenges with greater determination and courage, undeterred by failure, but will rise and try to overcome again and again until one succeeds.

But the perception of some Malays of Azhar's success is that it is not because of his special qualities. They ask whether Azhar possesses special magical qualities.

In the old days, magical power included the help of ghosts and poltergeists. Now they believe that certain verses of the Quran will give them power to overcome dangers and ensure success.

We Muslims must recite the doa (prayers) to seek God's help but we know that God will not help us if we do not help ourselves, as stated in Surah Al-R'ad, verse 11, which says, "Verily never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change it themselves (with their own souls)". To recite the doa alone will not enable Azhar to sail round the world. He needs to acquire the knowledge and skills of sailing - how to use the various equipment and how to look after his own safety. In certain waters the temperature is so low that if he falls he could survive for only five minutes. It is impossible for anyone to rescue him. The waves were so strong that at times they reached 60 feet high. If we do not know how to look after our safety, we will perish.

No friends were around to help Azhar in case of sickness or exhaustion. No one to talk to. He was alone. When we are alone, we hear and see all kinds of things. Only strong faith and solid determination ensured the success of this sailor of ours.

For 192 days and nights, he sailed alone until he arrived back in Langkawi.

I am not suggesting that we possess these values and qualities that Azhar has. But at least we should be aware and understand that God helps only those who help themselves. Recite the prayers and learn those verses, but acquire the knowledge, directly or indirectly related to whatever we endeavour. Mastery of such knowledge should not be underestimated simply because we as Muslims can seek help from God. We have to accept that those who could not ask for help could also be successful, in fact more successful than we are in this world. But if we want to be an astronaut who can walk on the moon, then we need to have certain skills. The failure of Muslims is because they believe since God has made them the chosen people, the best of God's creatures, they believe that they do not need to

strive hard because everything will be given to them by God. Just remember that even though God could enable Prophet Muhammad spread Islam merely by saying the words Kun, fayakun (Be, and it will be), yet the Prophet had to face numerous challenges and travelled across deserts to carry out his tasks. And the Prophet was more knowledgeable, and more loved by God.

Actually culture, values and the qualities regarded as essential to the Malays can make them the new Malays, Malays who are able to control their desires and avoid negative values which overwhelm them after they leave their villages and enjoy life in the urban areas. The new Malays are those who hold strongly to Islam and practise noble values such as discipline and fully believing that God will help those who help themselves, and learn to acquire those knowledge that could make them successful. The new Malays will lock their cars before leaving them to God.

There are those who portray the new Malays as drunkards, womanisers and gamblers. We know that this is not the new Malays that we mean. This is the creation of the devil who tries to ensure that the Malays will fail.

Umno as a party which champions the rights of the race, religion and nation is responsible for increasing the number of the new Malays. But as the saying goes, "charity begins at home". Therefore a start must be made with the leaders and members of Umno so that they become the new Malays before anyone else. When they succeed to overcome their desires, to discipline themselves and to imbibe values and qualities needed to become the new Malays, only then will Umno be qualified to spread the new Malay culture among other Malays. God-willing, Umno leaders and members will qualify.

Since the Eastern bloc, i.e. Russia and its communist ideology was defeated, all nations have begun to concentrate their efforts on economic development. We believe the Western bloc, having frequently emphasised human rights and market economy, will help the development of economies which have already accepted their systems and ideologies.

But now we know that the Western bloc is as bad as the communist bloc in their oppression and in replacing legitimate Governments with their own puppets. The only difference now is the manner and approach. If in the past, colonisation involved the use of military might, today the power of the economy is used. Only by making the targeted countries poor to the extent of having to beg for help, colonisation can be achieved. Today many countries are supposedly free and independent, but in reality they are colonised by foreign powers.

In Malaysia, efforts to overcome the economic attack from foreigners are made more complicated because we have to balance the economic position of the various races. The Malays and other bumiputeras hold a very small percentage of the economic wealth compared with their numbers.

The Government has formulated and implemented the New Economic Policy which was successful in increasing the percentage of economic control by the Bumiputeras. The Government's privatisation policy also helped to create a small number of bumiputeras in big business activities.

But the efforts and policies of the Government have not been totally successful because the bumiputeras themselves did not give the necessary cooperation. They are too choosy that most of the work areas have not seen bumiputera participation. It is very sad that while we insist that 90 per cent of local building materials be used, 95 per cent of workers who erect large and sophisticated buildings in Malaysia are made up of foreigners. It is not that these foreigners are more skilled nor the work more complex for us to do ourselves. That no locals are involved is because we look for easy jobs and we are after quick wealth.

In the history of many civilisations, as soon as their citizens were reluctant to do work which involved hard labour, or were dangerous, and

left these work to mercenary foreign workers, these nations became powerless. Their civilisations soon collapsed. This was what happened to the Roman Empire and also the Islamic Empire. When the Turks handed the defence of their country to paid foreigners, the Ottaman Empire collapsed.

Important work that requires skills must be done by our own citizens. Malaysians are made up of three major groups. The NEP has asserted that the identification of race with economic functions must cease. But if the bumiputeras themselves are not interested in doing certain jobs, then the eradication of identification of race with economic functions will not be achieved. If the identification of race with economic functions remains, then the distribution of wealth among the races will not be equitable and the NEP will not be achieved.

I admit that there are bumiputeras who work really hard to be successful in their projects and business, but the number involved is small. Because of the small number, obviously they have more opportunities. As a result they are accused by foreigners of being the cronies of the Government and these accusations are supported by some of our own people. Whoever is given the opportunity by whatever means is regarded as a crony. To avoid such accusation, bumiputeras cannot be given any opportunity even if they are qualified. So those who become rich and successful businessmen will only be non-bumiputeras. But this will cause the bumiputeras to feel disappointed and they will hate the Government and other races.

Today we still find that our towns do not reflect the NEP. bumiputeras are not interested in retail business which requires their direct involvement even if this can push them up to the middle-class level. As a result, many new towns are populated and their shophouses owned by non-bumiputeras only. There is no racial interaction in these new towns.

Various efforts have been made by the Government, including the introduction of the franchise system. But the number of those interested in the franchise system is small. The Malays have still not learnt about the need to invest capital for buildings and other overhead costs. They avoid these expenses by building stalls by the road-side. Even if they do make profits, they do not use their profits to move to a better premise which must be bought or rented in order to improve their business, to upgrade their business status, enlarge and set up new branches. If they make big profits, they just spend it.

For as long as the Malays and other bumiputeras are not keen to go into retailing, willing to be prudent in their management, willing to save their capital in order to expand, then towns in Malaysia will not reflect our multiracial composition. it will instead show the failure of the NEP.

In Malaysia, the Chinese can be models of business for the bumiputeras. Even though they live in the urban areas and on average are richer, they are able to cope with urban living and to handle their wealth. It is not wrong for us to learn from them. We will not be less Malay if we emulate the efficiency of the Chinese in coping with wealth and life in the cities.

I realise what I have exposed here will not go down well with many Malays. I will not be popular. The opposition will use this to further damage my image as well as that of the party I lead. But I did not become a leader for the sake of popularity. What is the use of being Prime Minister, if the result of my leadership is my people continuing to be weak, demoralised, unwilling to work and confront life's challenges and using religion to dress up only and not for guidance to seek goodness in this world and the hereafter.

It is true that we have achieved a little success. But we now see how the interest to ensure the success of the NEP is waning. The Malays are beginning to feel safe with the little progress that they have achieved so

that they no longer want to improve their performance, or to continue their efforts at the current pace. Most of them are bored with these efforts and are actually hampering the attempt to improve themselves. They are more keen to condemn the NEP because they claim it benefited cronies of the leadership. They know that the NEP, with its benefits of providing scholarships, matriculation classes and science education, Mara, loan funds for business and students, various subsidies, licences, 'AP' (permits for car imports), special price reductions of houses and privately-built shophouses for Bumiputeras, low rentals and numerous other facilities reserved for the bumiputeras have helped the bumiputeras tremendously, including the critics of the Government themselves. But it is most unfortunate many have chosen to deny these efforts under the NEP and supported those who wish to see the Malays continue to be poor and be the deprived in their own country.

There are Malays who insist that in Islam there should be no difference in treatment based on race. So they chose to align themselves with the non-Bumiputeras who are not in favour of the NEP by accusing that the NEP only benefits cronies and families of the leaders. They want to see that big-time businessmen and entrepreneurs are made up only of non-Malays.

This group teaches people who have benefited from the NEP not to acknowledge or be grateful of the benefits of the NEP. It is extremely sad to see that people who have gained from the help they receive now try to deny others the same help.

We have seen how during the economic crisis that plagued this region, racial riots erupted in certain countries with glaring differences between the economic wealth of the races. But thankfully, in Malaysia, even though the equitable balance between the races is not fully achieved, racial riots did not take place. Because of this we are able to recover our economy much more easily. The attempts to organise riots by certain quarters were not well received by the people. Such are the many benefits from the NEP.

We have yet to overcome this economic imbalance between races, but today we are faced with a new challenge which is worse, that is globalisation or a borderless world. Globalisation with its total freedom for capital and goods to move across borders will supposedly bring wealth worldwide.

But we have seen how money, when exported and traded freely outside the country has within weeks, impoverished the country and its people. If because of globalisation foreign goods are allowed in without any barriers, then our local goods will be forced to compete with imports. Because our total production is small, and consequently our cost is higher, we will lose in this competition. Industries, banks and our businesses will lose and will be forced to close down or be sold to foreign multinational companies.

We have seen how companies and banks in the neighbouring countries have been crippled and forced to be sold off to the Westerners. If we allow these multinationals to cross our borders, can we avoid the same fate from befalling us? We will become only workers in foreign firms. They will pay us a higher salary for this will enable us to buy their products which we are forced to import. There will no longer be national industries. There will be no more NEP. There will be no more privileges for Bumiputeras in the economic field.

Maybe there are many among us who wish to earn higher income to live a more comfortable life. But even if we are paid a higher salary, our status will be nothing more than slaves to them. Actually we will be colonised.

When they have dominated all our economic activities, they will interfere in our politics and they will determine who should form the Government of our country. We have seen this happening in other countries

where they will install or bring down the Governments as they please. Attempts have been made to topple the present Government in this country.

Can we save ourselves and our country from facing this fate? I am confident we can, if Malaysians, particularly the Malays, are united and ensure the total success of the NEP while trying to forge harmonious relations among the various races in Malaysia. When we imposed foreign exchange controls and controlled the exit and entry of foreign capital, they predicted that we will collapse. Today many among them are forced to admit that our method is effective and has enabled us to recover quicker. Actually those who criticised and ridiculed us have been forced to retire early and the currency speculators lost substantially and can no longer trade in currency. In the meantime our economy has grown rapidly.

Our views on globalisation were initially regarded by them as being stupid. But today they are beginning to accept that globalisation need not necessarily be defined according to their terms. Globalisation can be modified and adapted to the needs of developing countries. I am confident in time they will accept, if not fully, at least partially, our views on this.

But we cannot wait for this to happen. While we try to maintain our barriers as much as we can, by protecting our economy, we must also learn to master Information Technology, E-commerce, K-economy, computers and the Internet as well as the new commercial methods that have been created and that will be created.

All efforts at protecting the economy and our freedom will depend on a strong, powerful and efficient Government. The big mandate given to the National Front during the 1999 general elections will be used wisely to recover and develop the economy, to pursue the objectives of the NEP, to formulate policies and to find approaches to protect the interest of the country and its people; to fight for a new economic order and new and just international financial structures for all, rich or poor, and to ensure that globalisation will not erode Malaysia's independence. In these efforts the Malays must stand united. There is no room for vengeance. Successful Bumiputeras are not the enemies of the Government so long as they do not use their wealth to destroy the country's economic agenda.

It is UMNO which introduced democracy in Malaysia. Before colonisation, feudalism was the system of Government in the Malay States. British colonisers introduced autocracy where the people did not have the right to be involved in politics, let alone rule through elected representatives. Everything was determined in London and executed by their bureaucrats living here.

UMNO rejected feudalism and autocracy and chose democracy, Government by the people through their elected representatives. Democracy is not a fool-proof system or one that is easily implemented. We had no experience at all before independence. Many countries which achieved independence at the same time as we did failed to uphold the democratic system. Many had to abandon democracy and chose military or autocratic rule.

But Malaysia succeeded in practising democracy. Even though the Government had the right to rule for five years with each election but in 42 years, we have had 10 general elections. The Alliance and the National Front are not afraid to give back to the people the mandate to rule so that they can evaluate and decide who are qualified to rule the country. Allah be praised, in all the elections that we had, the people have chosen the same party. If the Government of our party is not able to fulfill its promise to preserve peace and security, to try to reduce the economic gap between the races, to develop and protect the Constitution of the country and restore national honour, then certainly we will not be given a fresh mandate again and again.

If the people could see the reality and make appropriate assessments of our performance, obviously they will continue to support us. But today the opposition parties are taking the opportunity from this democracy to spread lies, to incite hatred against our party and to prevent the people from seeing the truth. If the majority of the people reject the truth, the opposition is convinced that all benefits and development will no longer be appreciated, and the National Front will not be chosen again as the Government of this beloved country.

Since Pas was created, its strategies have been focused on inciting hatred for Umno because they claim Umno is not Islamic. Even early on Pas had considered Umno members as infidels. Even though there are people who were influenced by such falsehood by Pas, until today Pas has not been able to obtain enough votes to rule this country. True, Pas succeeded in capturing Kelantan and Terengganu, but a State Government is different from the Federal Government.

The objective of Pas is to run the Federal Government. For this Pas is willing to do anything. If Pas is required to embrace its arch enemy, the DAP; if Pas members have to campaign for the DAP, or to hold up the Rocket while chanting "Allah is Great", Pas is willing to do so. Certainly if making allegations that are contradictory to the teachings of Islam, such as that God uses foul language, Pas is Islam and Islam is Pas, then other matters are trivial to P. The important thing for Pas is to win the general elections.

The misfortune of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim is a blessing to Pas. Although the Pas leadership knew earlier of the immorality of Datuk Seri Anwar, and they used to insinuate this when Datuk Seri Anwar was an Umno leader, yet when he was removed from the Government for the same reason, Pas closed one eye and pretended to rally support for Datuk Seri Anwar.

The removal and charges against Datuk Seri Anwar are claimed to be an injustice. To use Datuk Seri Anwar's supporters, Pas in the removal and charges against Datuk Seri Anwar are claimed to be an injustice. To use Datuk Seri Anwar's supporters, Pas immediately collaborated with the Keadilan Party and willingly joined with people who once ran down or were against Pas' alleged objective, which was to set up an Islamic State.

Pictures of Datuk Seri Anwar's black-eye were posted by Pas at the last general elections to show how unjust the Government was. Even though they knew that the black-eye was not due to the Government asking Datuk Seri Anwar to be assaulted, but Pas still blamed the Government. Pas is not sympathetic to Datuk Seri Anwar because of his black-eye, or for being found guilty and imprisoned. What Pas saw was the opportunity to exploit the fate of Datuk Seri Anwar to get votes.

If Datuk Seri Anwar and his supporters believe Pas will appoint him Prime Minister if they win, then they are day-dreaming. Unless Keadilan Party won more seats than Pas and DAP, it is most unlikely that Pas will accept Datuk Seri Anwar as the Prime Minister.

Is it possible for the Keadilan Party to win more seats than Pas? In the 1999 general elections, Pas ensured that Keadilan was given constituencies that were difficult to win. As a result, Keadilan managed to win only five seats, and became only a small partner in the opposition Front.

Keadilan claims that it is fighting for justice, for the rule of law. Actually Keadilan upholds injustice and rejects the rule of law. The first and the top priority of the party is to exempt Datuk Seri Anwar from the country's law so that he will not be charged, put on trial, found guilty or imprisoned.

It is the principle of the rule of law that nobody should be above the law. In Malaysia, even the Rulers are not above the law. Everyone in Malaysia, be it Rulers or the people, are equally subjected to the rules

and laws of the country. Many Umno leaders have been charged in courts and punished when they were found guilty.

Nobody in a country in which the rule of law is practised can say that he is innocent before charges are made against him. Accepting the rule of law means that we are willing to accept the process of law. To claim that one is innocent before facing the process of law is an injustice. Nobody has the right or the qualification to pass sentence of not guilty on himself. To do so is to subscribe to the Internal Security Act (ISA) which allows detention without trial. If Datuk Seri Anwar is detained under ISA, certainly Keadilan and its supporters in the country, foreign journalists and countries which boast of being democratic will condemn Malaysia and pressure for a court trial to be held. But when Datuk Seri Anwar was charged in court for abuse of power, defended by nine lawyers, tried in an open court, given a long time for this trial and allowed to make political statements, was free to meet anybody he wished besides various other privileges, Datuk Seri Anwar and his supporters alleged that the trial was unfair, that the judge conspired with the Prime Minister as well as levelling other baseless charges. Justice for them means that if Datuk Seri Anwar is charged in court, he must be found not guilty. If found guilty, this means the judge has conspired with the Government. Is this what they mean by rule of law?

To allege that everything is a conspiracy or the work of specific individuals with evil intentions cannot be the basis for refuting charges in court. If conspiracy can be accepted as the basis why charges cannot be made, then nobody can be charged in court and the rule of law cannot be practised.

In principle, whether conspiracy exists or not, if a crime has been committed and the evidence submitted clearly has convinced the judge, then the accused can be found guilty. Conspiracy is not a reason to legitimise crime.

In the first case that has been resolved, far from promoting justice, Keadilan fought for injustice, injustice towards the victims of Datuk Seri Anwar's crime. That these victims are not supporters of Keadilan and cronies of Datuk Seri Anwar do not mean that they have no right to justice. Keadilan's struggles are also unjust to those ordinary people who have committed a similar crime and brought to courts, found guilty, punished and jailed. Favouritism in prosecuting a person is something very unjust. To absolve those who are very important or those loved by certain quarters is even more unjust.

When he was found guilty in the first case, supporters of Datuk Seri Anwar found the court's judgment as unfair. Foreign media and leaders of the West arrogantly accused the Malaysian Government of being autocratic, undemocratic, and disregarding the rule of law. It is obvious that only a not guilty verdict could be acceptable to Keadilan. What is the use of the rule of law if only the acquittal verdict is acceptable. It is better not to have any trial at all. What is therefore the meaning of the rule of law?

The first court case was politicised. The allegations against Datuk Seri Anwar were not rebutted by him. Instead everything was attributed to a conspiracy by the Government, especially the Prime Minister, who was alleged to want Datuk Seri Anwar's downfall.

Is it possible for a conspiracy that involves numerous people, involving the victim himself, i.e. Datuk Seri Anwar, many police officials, public prosecutors and their officials, a judge, driver and many others? Is it possible for a conspiracy that involves numerous people from different levels of society to be kept a secret from the public for that long? In Malaysia, secrecy is impossible. But a conspiracy by the Prime Minister

who supposedly did it to destroy Datuk Seri Anwar, to charge him in court and later find him guilty was not known to everybody? The accusation of conspiracy is only to pull the wool over the people's eyes as to his wrongdoings. If there is proof of conspiracy, a police report could be made and those who conspired could be charged.

The conspiracy by Datuk Seri Anwar to topple the Prime Minister is very much public knowledge. A lot of information has been passed on to me on Datuk Seri Anwar's conspiracy and I also knew he was the culprit who made Zahid Hamidi to hurl accusations at me, but I still wish to see Datuk Seri Anwar take over my place because I had decided to quit after 1998.

A conspiracy as big as that alleged by Datuk Seri Anwar when he was on trial for his first case is impossible to happen. His removal was not due to conspiracy. He was sacked not because of my politics or that of Umno. He was sacked because of his low morals which made him unsuitable to become the Prime Minister of Malaysia. Can I remain silent and allow this kind of person to become the Prime Minister of this country?

The people who were truly angry with me, with Umno, should think, be fair and listen to both sides without becoming too emotional or biased because of an individual whom they think has been victimised. Malay politics should be rational because we struggle for the Malays, religion and nation. If we are wrong in our politics, then we all will face dire consequences. I urge all Malays not to be easily influenced by those who have vested interests and who like to talk ill of other people. These people are hypocrites. If we follow them, we will be destroyed, our future will be doomed and will soon find ourselves recolonised and looked down upon.

Actually the Prime Minister has the right to sack any member of the Government anytime without giving any reasons. Many ministers have been terminated without any allegation of conspiracy. Therefore, what is the use of indulging in a conspiracy. In actual fact it was Datuk Seri Anwar who brought misfortune upon himself by making the police report with the hope of using the police to ban the book "50 Reasons Why Anwar Cannot Become the Prime Minister", After successfully abusing his power to frighten Umno and Azizan, Anwar hoped to use the police to ban the book. Unfortunately for him this approach failed.

Pas succeeded in using Datuk Seri Anwar, Keadilan and the DAP to fish for votes in the 1999 general elections. But this does not mean that Umno and its members did not contribute to the deteriorating performance of the party. The success of the Malays because of the NEP has brought changes in their culture and values. Today, we find that the materialistic and greedy attitude has replaced the Malay spirit among most Malays.

Umno members have also forgotten the Malay national spirit. They have also become greedy.

Their participation in Umno is more often due to wanting to hold posts and enjoy certain benefits. There are some who wish to gain wealth the easy way. As a result, they always struggle intensely to become leaders in Umno at all levels.

If the fight for positions or posts will break up the party, resulting in a dislike of the party among the people, this is alright. The important thing is not the party, not the race, nor the country but self-interest. Because they fail to become a candidate, for instance, certain Umno leaders and their supporters are willing to ensure the defeat of the party candidate.

The fact that those not selected as candidates once won with the support of party members including the new candidate is not appreciated at all. Because this time one is not picked as a candidate, there was anger to the extent that one is willing to help the opposition. I admit that not all

did this. There are many who put party interest above personal interest. Many of them gave the party high priority. But I regret that there are people who do not support the party out of frustration. Among those chosen and who have won, there are many who have apparently been keen to serve the people but there are others who are easily bored with having to attend Parliament. Constituencies are neglected and invitations by supporters are not entertained. Maybe what is written in the book "Getek" is rather extreme but there is much truth in it.

There are quite a number of people who are actually fed up with Umno's elected representatives and leaders. Umno is now having a contest for the Supreme Council. We should be trying through our actions, moderation, and humanity, to restore support for our party. But we do not seem to care for what people think of us. We continue to pursue our self-interests.

It is true that not all candidates use money. But there are candidates who do so. What is the use of popularity that is bought? Can we be satisfied if we are chosen through corrupt means and not because of our qualifications.

While some candidates do not want to buy support, there are delegates to this General Assembly who solicit support for a price. These people are just as bad as those who give out money to gain support. Don't they realise that the money they get is haram, no less haram than the proceeds of selling illegal goods?

To delegates attending this General Assembly, remember that if you choose someone who bribes you with money, you are actually a traitor to the people, religion and nation. The corrupt leader that you choose will definitely fail the cause of our struggle for the people, religion and nation. It is our children and grandchildren who will suffer. Our people, religion and nation will be destroyed.

Therefore, I appeal to all those delegates here to reject all candidates who use bribery to gain support for whatever posts, or use other means which could blacken the image of the party and race during campaigning. I also want to remind delegates and candidates that membership in the Supreme Council does not guarantee a place in the Government, even if they are already in the Government.

I know what I say here will incur the wrath of some delegates and candidates towards me. But it is better that I incur the wrath of the delegates here rather than cause the people to hate Umno, and consequently to reject it. Corruption and greed must be exposed and eradicated. Corruption and greed can destroy our nation. All plans to develop the Malays and other Bumiputeras will fail if corruption and greed become part of our culture. Everything will be ruined if corrupt individuals become the Prime Minister or members of the Cabinet. Directly or indirectly, the delegates will determine whether the corrupt and the greedy will lead our nation. The destiny of the race and the nation rests on the delegates. I am confident and I believe that the delegates will not shirk their responsibility. Therefore, please reject the corrupt and the greedy.

Umno's struggle is noble and honourable. We promise to develop and advance the race, religion, and nation. The party's Constitution clearly states this.

There are no promises, nor is it the objective of Umno's struggle to make anybody powerful or wealthy. If any one becomes a leader, or becomes rich, this is only because it is impossible to advance the Malays without a powerful leader or successful Malay individuals who are successful and rich. Islam accepts the fact that there will be people who are poor and those who are rich, those who are given power and those who are not. In Surah Al-Nisa, verse 32, Allah states: "And in no wise covet those things in which Allah Hath bestowed His gifts More freely on some of you than on

others." We cannot possibly make all Malays into powerful leaders or rich people. But we can reduce poverty, reduce the gap between the rich and the poor. We can increase the number of the middle-class so that the gap between the rich and the poor is not too extreme. We can increase the per capita income and other indicators that can prove that our race has advanced, that we are able to stand as equals with other developed races in the world. But we cannot make all the people equal in terms of position, power or wealth. There will be among us who will be relatively poor and unable to gain positions they desire; there will be leaders and followers.

If we cannot become the Prime Minister, even though we are qualified, we have to accept the fact that there is only one such position. Therefore, qualified or not, if a person has been chosen, then there is no place for the others. Even if we rotate the post there will be those who are interested and yet unable to attain it. If we are interested to the extent that we are willing to use money, to ruin the party, the race, religion and nation, what we will gain subsequently is dust from the destruction of our race and nation. Is becoming the leader of a disgraced society the objective of our struggle?

Umno members should realise and understand Umno's struggle and our responsibility as members. Having 2.8 million members is pointless if we cannot rely on their commitment and loyalty. Many have become members of Umno without understanding the aims and history of Umno's struggles. Membership does not mean reaping direct personal benefits from Umno. Membership means we believe Umno's struggle will bring success and progress to the race, religion and nation.

These ideals will surely be personally rewarding even if it means just restoring our honour. But we have seen how the success of our struggle has benefited the people, our religion and our nation.

As such, if we ensure the continued success of our people, religion and nation, we will definitely have more to gain. A corrupt person may desire something for himself but a race that is full of corrupt people will forever be disgraced and eventually destroyed. The corrupt among the people will never sustain their wealth. There are many examples of countries in this situation.

Even though many of you may be bored with the poem Perjuangan Yang Belum Selesai (Unfinished Struggle) the fact remains that Umno's struggle is far from over. In fact, Umno's struggles and that of the Malays need to be intensified.

We are facing bigger challenges now. The challenges that we face are not merely external, but also internal, from the Malays as well as from Umno. If we are not conscious and vigilant there is a big possibility that we will not get what we pursue but instead lose what we already have.

We inherit the independence of our nation from the pioneers of Umno. We are grateful for this heritage. But will our children and grandchildren be thankful to us if our nation and race are not resilient, are weak, backward, insulted and enslaved by others?

I have been given the trust to lead Umno once again. I am grateful to Allah the Almighty and I thank all of you who have accepted the advice of the Supreme Council for the posts of President and Deputy President not be contested. If not for the bitter experience in the past, such a contest could be held. But we are concerned about the negative effects of money politics and greed and the unwillingness to accept defeat. Many still do not understand the ways of democracy and the need to close ranks and support the winner. We need to learn the ways of democracy and enhance our maturity in practising them.

Democracy is the creation of Man to overcome problems in society. But it

is not free from defects. Therefore the results of practising democracy are not always positive. Do not be obsessed with democracy to the extent that everything is practised because it is legitimised by democracy. Extreme democracy has resulted in many negative things. Many countries could not be governed and developed because of the attempt to practise everything deemed democratic.

So beware. Democracy is for our own good, but we should not be sacrificed for the sake of democracy. Once again do not be hoodwinked by the West. Do not be too obsessed with their ideologies without considering the consequences. Democracy is good but its benefits are more important. We practise democracy because of promises of its goodness but we should not sacrifice ourselves and the good cause that we have struggled for due to being obsessed with democracy, especially the liberal Western democracy.

For 54 years, Umno has tried to advance our race, religion and country. We have used our hands, mouth and heart to awaken and lead the Malays towards the righteous path, towards independence and development and towards redeeming our honour.

Thank God, we have more or less succeeded. But unfortunately this success has undermined the good qualities in us that can lead to the civilisation that we have built being ruined even before we reached the pinnacle.

This bad omen comes from the inability to cope with success and prosperity. It is apparent that our base desires are defeating the good values which we once had and which had helped us to succeed.

We have tried to restrain our desire as best as we can by following the teachings of the religion so that we use our hands, mouth and heart. We have also sought guidance from God for all of us, our leaders and followers so that we uphold the truth and reject falsehood and do good deeds.

Despite our efforts, today in conjunction with the 54th Anniversary of Umno, the party which is led and made up of Malays, the people who have made Islam the basis of their nationalism, let us pray to God and seek his Blessings:

Oh God, protect us from the devil and iblis and from our temptations; Protect us from our enemies. Give us faith, the strength to continue our struggles for our race, which is also part of Your ummah, the struggle to advance our race, religion and nation and as part of our efforts to restore the glory of Islamic civilisation; Oh God, give us your guidance so that we are always rational in our decisions and considerations. Protect us from the influence of evil temptations; Protect our race and nation from the evil intentions of Your enemies and our enemies; Oh God, give us success because all that we do is for You; Oh God, bless our struggles and give us victory in this world and the hereafter.

(END)