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Dr M has no intention to be Senior Minister or advisor

EXCERPTS of the question and answer session with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at a luncheon forum organised by the Oxford and Cambridge Society of Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur yesterday:

Far Eastern Economic Review journalist Lorien Holland: Looking back at your 20 years as Prime Minister, what are the best changes you have made and the worst?

A: The best changes were made by the first Prime Minister (Tunku Abdul Rahman) who decided when we became independent that while we should accept the free market system, we should also have some elements of a centrally-planned economy, namely, we should have state enterprises.

We should be pragmatic and I think as the result of this pragmatism, Malaysia stands among the best.

What mistakes have I done? A lot of mistakes if you ask my enemies but if you ask my friends, they will say I have done nothing wrong at all!

It's not really my mistake but it's something I thought was good but the response was not so good. I had set out to achieve equality between the races. In the process, we had to take affirmative action and perhaps it was a little bit overdone.

And as a result, we have people who are a little laid-back and not willing to make effort. The sense of security created by the Government was perhaps a mistake.