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Mahathir-US
DR MAHATHIR ACCUSES US OF INCITING VIOLENCE

MELBOURNE, May 20 (Bernama) -- Former Malaysian Prime Minister Tun Dr Mohamad Mahathir last night accused the United States of inciting violence.

"You know, with their behaviour, their treatment of (Iraqi) prisoners and all that, they are the ones who are inciting violence," he told Australia's Special Broadcasting Services (SBS) television's "Dateline" current affairs programme.

He said this in reply to a question from SBS interviewer Mark Davis that could Dr Mahathir agree that he had used inflammatory language that could be used to incite killings and violence, things that Dr Mahathir himself did not subscribe to.

Dr Mahathir disagreed he promoted violence. "The Americans feel that they are so powerful that they can ride roughshod over anybody...must we suffer because we don't have the military strength that America has?"

"We are very unhappy because (of) what America had done to increase terrorism," he said.

Dr Mahathir accused Australia of not saying "a word against Israel".

"Basically, you (Australia) are supporting state terrorism, and to me, bombing and rocketing innocent people amounts to terrorism. So if you support that kind of thing, then you qualify to become a terrorist state also. You must condemn it."

Dr Mahathir also turned his wrath on Prime Minister John Howard. "He's the greatest supporter of what is done by (US) President (George W.) Bush and he (Howard) doesn't seem to care for the opinions of people in the region."

Dr Mahathir said he wanted "to be very friendly" with Australia. "I have nothing really against Australians, but I find remarks being made and reports being published about Malaysia as being very unfriendly."

He said that even after former Prime Minister Paul Keating calling him "recalcitrant", he was "very friendly" with Keating.

Dr Mahathir said he thought he could get along fine with Howard. "But then, Howard decides to be very critical of Malaysia and he has this idea that he should be the deputy sheriff to oversee that we behave, and all that.

"That kind of thing we do not regard as being very friendly, so I don't see why we should make any effort to be friendly (with Australia)."

-- BERNAMA

NDC KHY RM