

**UCAPAN PERDANA MENTERI DI MAJLIS
JAMUAN PERSATUAN PERUNDING MAJIKAN-
MAJIKAN TANAH MELAYU (MECA) DI HOTEL
HILTON, KUALA LUMPUR PADA 25HB JULAI,
1974**

Y.B. Senator Tan Sri S.O.K. Ubaidullah, Pengerusi M E C A, Dif-dif yang terhormat, Tuan-tuan dan puan-puan sekalian.

Terlebih dahulu sukalah saya mengucapkan terimakasih kepada seluruh ahli-ahli M E C A kerana sudi menjemput saya berdua ke majlis jamuan malam ini.

Nampaknya sudah menjadi tradisi kepada M E C A mengadakan majlis seperti ini berikutan dengan Mesyuarat Agung Tahunannya, yang mana pada hemat saya amatlah baik sebagai memulakan tahun kerja baru. Saya sendiri merasa sunggh beruntung kerana Majlis ini memberikan kesempatan untuk bertemu dengan ahli-ahli M E C A untuk mengetahui lebih dekat kedudukan para majikan dan masalah-masalah yang dihadapi mereka. Seperti pernah saya katakan dulu, Kerajaan adalah satu-satunya majikan yang terbesar di negara ini dan oleh itu kesempatan bertukar-tukar fikiran seperti ini sangat berguna dan berfaedah bagi diri saya.

Fellow Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Tonight we once again join members of M E C A in their traditional annual dinner following a very successful Annual General Meeting last week. My wife and I are indeed delighted to meet you all in such a congenial atmosphere and I am sure judging from the radiant faces I see around here, you are all able to put aside—at least until tomorrow—the sorrows and woes of the Employer. Indeed, if I may take the point made by the Chairman just now in his lyrical conclusion, there is something for the Employer to look forward to in the next world.

Ladies and Gentlemen.

I wish to sincerely thank Tan Sri Ubaidullah for all the kind things he said about me just now. But I must add that all that we have been able to achieve, both at home and in international arena, reflect the unity of purpose and the unqualified support of

the people—including yourself for the Government which I lead today. I am very grateful indeed for the trust and confidence you have shown me, particularly in your support for the New Economic Policy, and our free, neutral and active foreign policy.

As your Chairman rightly indicated, it is in the field of international relations that we have achieved the greatest success and thereby putting Malaysia in a highly respected place in the comity of nations. My visit to the People's Republic of China has tremendous long-term benefits to our country as in the same way the gathering of Islamic Foreign Ministers in Kuala Lumpur is both very significant to us as a member of the Islamic fraternity and highly beneficial in terms of political action and trade relations. I am indeed most thankful to you all and can confidently hope for your support in the coming years.

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Since we last met on a similar occasion, many things have taken place in the country and some of these, for instance, the current inflation or inflationary trend are likely to stay on for some time no matter how much we may dislike it. I am happy to say that in its effort to combat inflation, the Government has been able to obtain the support of all groups in the country, particularly with regard to the Temporary Special Allowance for the lower income group, M E C A came out in full support to implement the scheme. Similarly, other measures taken by the Government have brought about the desirable effects of reducing the impact of the inflation on our people.

I am happy to note that M E C A itself is gaining strength with an increase of membership to nearly 500—in fact, only one short of that figure. That in a way reflects the rapid momentum of industrialisation in the country today which bears testimony to the growing confidence among investors, at home and abroad, of our political and economic stability.

Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am also very much heartened by the support expressed by your Chairman with regard to Government's policy on basic minimum wage. The fundamental issues here are very clear—firstly, we are not a fully monetised society and secondly we are still going through the process of industrialisation and seeking to attract

investment to create more job opportunities. It would not be realistic for only one section of the community i.e. the workers' group to demand for basic minimum wage while a vast section of our padi farmers and fishermen are on subsistence level economy. I sincerely hope the stalwarts of the labour movement—Encik Zaidi, who is my fellow guest here tonight will see the Government viewpoint and explain it to his colleagues in the MTUC.

Further on this point, I hope both the responsible labour movement and the Employers Group would endeavour to jointly find a reasonable solution to any problem that may arise from time to time in respect of industrial relations. The incidence of strikes last year which resulted in the loss of over 40,000 man-days is most unfortunate especially when the Government is striving so hard to meet the target of the Second Malaysia Plan. It is therefore the joint responsibility of labour leaders and employers to help Government in curbing labour unrest and by doing so maintain the interests of the workers as well as the industry. This will certainly contribute to achieve our aspiration to establish a just society as envisaged in the Rukunegara.

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Coming now to the talk of the day, I am sure it is common knowledge that this Election Year and the speculation is further buttressed with the adoption of the new Constituency Delimitations by the Dewan Rakyat a few days ago. Just now Tan Sri Ubaidullah referred to the formation of the Barisan Nasional and, lest I be accused of making this occasion an election campaign, I would only say that the Barisan Nasional as it is today reflects a complete spectrum of views on Malaysian politics and is therefore the ideal vehicle to carry through our long-term objective of national unity which alone will ensure peace, happiness and prosperity of our people and our country.

Tuan Pengerusi, Tuan-tuan dan Puan-puan.

Dengan kata-kata itu, saya akhiri ucapan ini sambil berdoa semoga M E C A akan bertambah maju jaya dan makmur bahagia di masa-masa akan datang.