

UCAPAN PERDANA MENTERI DI PEMBUKAAN
SIDANG KHAS MIC DI DEWAN BAHASA DAN
PUSTAKA, KUALA LUMPUR PADA 7HB JULAI,
1974

Y.B. Tan Sri Manickavasagam, Tuan-tuan dan Puan-puan.

Terlebih dahulu sukalah saya mengucapkan ribuan terimakasih kepada Jawatankuasa Pusat MIC, khususnya kepada Tan Sri Manickavasagam,¹ kerana sudi menjemput saya untuk berucap kepada sidang khas MIC hari ini dan memberi saya kehormatan yang istimewa ini.

Saya mengambil kesempatan ini mengucapkan tahniah kepada tuan-tuan dan puan-puan atas inisiatif mengadakan satu sidang khas untuk membincangkan soal-soal yang bersangkutan dengan ekonomi negara, istimewa kedudukan rakyat dari keturunan India. Bulan Mei yang lalu, MIC telahpun mengadakan Seminar Ekonomi dan telahpun membuat keputusan-keputusan penting untuk pertimbangan Kerajaan.

Seperti yang dikatakan oleh Tan Sri Manickavasagam sebentar tadi, banyak yang telah dicapai dalam sidang khas ini mengenai masalah-masalah yang kita hadapi sekarang, terutama sekali cara bagaimana masalah-masalah ini boleh diatasi. Inilah yang sebaik-baiknya yang diharapkan daripada ahli-ahli Parti kita dalam Barisan Nasional, dan tidak semata-mata menyalakan perasaan yang meluap-luap kerana saya percaya segala masalah yang kita hadapi itu dapat dipecahkan untuk mencari penyelesaian yang wajar dan sempurna.

Tuan-tuan dan Puan-puan.

Saya sangat puashati dengan kemajuan yang dicapai oleh MIC semenjak dibuat langkah-langkah penyusunan semula tahun lalu. Lebih-lebih lagi saya sukacita ahli-ahli Parti pada amnya menerima serta memberikan sokongan penuh kepada pimpinan baru setelah Tan Sri Manickavasagam mengambilalih daripada Tun Sambanthan dan memimpin MIC selama setahun yang lalu. Inilah sebenarnya harapan saya pada masa itu dan saya turut

¹ Presiden Kebangsaan MIC.

berterimakasih atas kesediaan tuan-tuan dan puan-puan menerima nasihat saya dalam hal ini.

As I was saying just now, I am extremely satisfied to note the progress made by MIC since its reorganisation last year. I would like to thank all members for their readiness to rally around the new leadership under Tan Sri Manickavasagam as I advised, when he took over from Tun Sambanthan. It is as a result of your support and co-operation that MIC has made so much progress during the past few months to consolidate your position and gear it in preparation for the forthcoming elections.

Last week at the UMNO General Assembly, I told UMNO members to be ready prepared for the elections. It is important that all the component parties in the Barisan Nasional should rally together and co-ordinate our election efforts on the basis of the common platform that we have already agreed. As you would have known by now, we have also decided that the Barisan Nasional will be using the Scale of Justice or Neraca as our new symbol, replacing the Alliance Sailing Boat. I hope our people will understand the meaning and significance of this symbol particularly in the context of our effort to build a just society in which every Malaysian has a rightful place. The Barisan National is well on the road towards achieving this objective.

Tuan-tuan dan Puan-puan.

Dalam ucapannya yang panjang lebar tadi, Tan Sri Manickavasagam ada menyebut tentang kedudukan rakyat dari keturunan India dan kesulitan-kesulitan yang mereka alami pada masa ini. Saya faham benar perasaan dan sikap tuan-tuan amnya dalam hal ini. Dasar kita ialah hendak menolong rakyat daripada semua kaum yang mundur supaya mereka dapat tempat yang sempurna dan kita dapat selesaikan masalah ini. Akan tetapi patutlah saya ingatkan bahawa menurut pengalaman kita selama ini perkara yang pokok bagi kita semua masa ini ialah bagaimana kita harus menyelesaikan masalah-masalah negara pada keseluruhannya, bukan dengan tujuan menjamin kepentingan sesuatu kaum atau golongan tetapi menjamin "survival" kita sebagai suatu bangsa. It is important that we should look at our problems in the overall national context. Although I can very well understand that your Seminar has focussed its attention on the problems of the Indian community, we should not lose sight of the heart of the matter

which is the prevailing economic imbalance we inherited from the colonial era. We are all agreed that the amelioration of these imbalances is indeed an urgent task today. In this connection, no one can deny that the framework we have laid out in the New Economic Policy is the best solution to our national problems. I am very happy we are in full agreement with this and as Tan Sri Manickavasagam said just now, the MIC is fully committed to the aspirations of the New Economic Policy. If I may emphasise again, we will pursue these commitments with all earnestness and sincerity, and particularly ensure that every Malaysian irregardless of his origin will have equal opportunity to improve himself in the vocation of his choice. There is no doubt in my mind that we will be able to achieve successfully this realistic objective.

Tuan-tuan dan Puan-puan.

Saya suka juga mengambil peluang ini berucap sedikit berkenaan dengan negara kita dan kejayaan-kejayaan yang telah dicapai dalam beberapa bidang selain daripada kejayaan yang dilihat dalam pelaksanaan Rancangan Malaysia Kedua seperti yang diterangkan dalam Kajian Penggal Pertengahan atau Mid-Term Review.

Dalam usaha membuka peluang-peluang pekerjaan baru, tidak kurang dari 350,000 orang telah mendapat pekerjaan, samada di bidang awam ataupun di bidang swasta. Begitu juga dalam lapangan perindustrian, nyatalah dasar perindustrian yang kita jalankan sekarang ini akan membawa hasil yang baik serta meningkatkan lagi perusahaan dan perindustrian di negara ini. Our efforts and particularly our export and investment drive overseas is beginning to pay off in the light of increasing interest among overseas investors and increasing demand for our products. We have been enjoying a steady upward trend in the world price of our traditional products and we hope this situation will be maintained.

However, our peak of success is in our foreign policy which reached its climax in the establishment of diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China. My visit to Peking last month was very significant in the sense that we are the first ASEAN country which has relations with the superpowers namely United States, Soviet Union and China. As you know, I had a very satisfactory meeting with Chinese leaders particularly Chairman Mao and Premier Chou who showed deep understanding of our

problems and our aspiration. I am very happy that the decision we made in establishing diplomatic relations at this present phase of our development has the support of every Malaysian.

I am extremely gratified with the honour given to me by the I.L.O. to address its recent Assembly in Geneva, during the presidency of Tan Sri Manickavasagam. Malaysia's prestige is further enhanced by our recent success in hosting the Fifth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers. We are not only praised for the efficient manner we organised the Conference but our visitors were also very impressed with the social and economic progress of the country as a whole.

Tuan-tuan dan Puan-puan.

Serentak pada hari ini juga, sahabat-sahabat kita dalam Malaysian Ceylonese Congress mengadakan Sidang Perwakilan mereka. I would like to place on record our appreciation of the part played by Malaysian of Ceylonese origin in the progress, development and unity of our peoples. In actual fact MIC in one. Sebenarnya kedua-dua pertubuhan ini mempunyai hasrat dan tujuan yang sama, dan saya sangat menghargai segala sumbangan yang telah diberikan oleh ahli-ahli pertubuhan dalam usaha kita memupuk perpaduan serta membina negara yang makmur, stabil dan maju. Barangkali ada baiknya kalau difikirkan pada masa sekarang ini arah dan haluan perkembangan dan kemajuannya, terutama bagaimana tenaga kedua-dua pertubuhan ini boleh disatukan supaya menjadikan lebih kuat dan teguh untuk menghadapi cabaran-cabaran masa hadapan.

Akhir kata, saya sekali lagi menyatakan penghargaan dan terimakasih kepada seluruh ahli-ahli MIC atas penghormatan yang tuan-tuan berikan kepada saya hari ini. Saya suka memberi jaminan Blueprint yang dihasilkan oleh persidangan ini akan dikaji sehalus-halusnya dan setakat mana yang boleh akan kita laksanakan.

I can assure you that the Blueprint which Tan Sri Manickavasagam presented to me just now will be studied in depth and we will endeavour to implement its recommendations within the framework of our policy. Once again, I wish you all success and, God willing, with the support of all, Barisan Nasional will continue to lead the people to higher peaks of achievement in the coming years.