

PERDANA DISCOURSE SERIES: "SOCIAL RE-ENGINEERING"

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PERDANA LEADERSHIP FOUNDATION PUTRAJAYA

Prologue: Some Points on Social Reengineering

- Reengineering is about change that is fundamental and radical. It is about "starting over". Hammer & Champy (1993) defines reengineering as "the fundamental rethinking and radical redesign of business processes to achieve dramatic improvements in critical, contemporary measures of performance, such as cost, quality, service and speed."
- Therefore, social re-engineering is continuous event or process of improvement within a society in view of a perceived improvement in their quality of life: a continuous process of catching-up with the issues as they happen. It requires diligent education and re-education of people, keeping them updated of the changes to the system, threats to its stability, and required operational procedures. Hence, there must exist a person or a group of people (normally those in power or about to be in-power) that master-mind, plan and execute the agenda in order to fulfill pre-determined objectives normally thought to benefit some or all members within a society. Social re-engineering does not happen naturally or it is not a self-organising event. There must be some elements of intervention associated with it. It has a motive, it has a designer, it has one or several architects, and it definitely has a bunch of executer and followers.
- Malaysia's experience on social reengineering falls into two parts: pre-independence and post-independence. Pre-independence social re-engineering was more a colonial intervention; the colonist implemented a policy that divided labor geographically by race. Social reengineering in Malaysia after Independence or after 1970 was a structured attempt by the government to improve the socio-economic status of the nation through the five year development plan i.e.
 - i) the proclamation of Rukun Negara and the National Economic Policy (NEP) for the period from 1970 to 1990,
 - ii) the National Development Policy for the period from 1991 to 2000 and
 - iii) the National Vision Policy (2001-2010).

Keynote Speech:

Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad

ASSALAMUALAIKUM wt and a very good morning to everyone.

Yang Berbahagia Dato Seri Ibrahim Shah
Yang Berbahagia Tan Sri Wan Zahid
His Excellency the Ambassador of Iraq to Malaysia
Ladies and Gentlemen

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to talk on a subject that concerns everyone of us - Social Re-engineering. When you say social reengineering, it implies that this is something deliberate. Something that is done by us out, out of our consciousness and of the need to reengineer, the need to change. Normally, society would change over a period of over time. Society is never static. But changes takes place naturally probably in response to the environment, probably in response to the intellectual capacity of members of the society and also other influences, for example, foreign invasion or vast immigration of people into any society, there will be changes - changes in the social structure of the society as a response to changes in the environment - various kind of changes in the environment.

But we are going to talk about reengineering - the conscious effort to reengineer society - the social structure of society. That implies that we know that there is something wrong somewhere, something inadequate about our society which has to be corrected. So that we can enjoy the best from living within this society.

Now we all know that Malaysia is something of a unique country. It is a multiracial country. It is not only multiracial - it is multi-religious, multilingual, and multicultural. And also the distribution of wealth among the different racial groups is not balanced. The distribution is not balanced and these things tend to break up society - to cause society to be broken into groups which may, unless properly managed, which may result in confrontations and violence even.

In almost every multiracial country you see these happening- even slight differences in religion can bring about confrontations and disruptions and the society becomes unstable. You see this happening in Northern Ireland where the people are the same, they are all white people, all ethnic Europeans, they are Christians but they have certain different interpretations of Christianity. One group is Protestant, the other group is Catholic and because of these differences, they have been fighting each other, destabilizing northern Ireland for so very long and there don't seem to be an end there despite efforts being made from within and from without. And the same thing happens of course in some of the Arab countries, and in Lebanon where the Arabs of Lebanon are divided into Muslims and Christians. And because of the differences in religion, they have a civil war which lasted many years resulting in the destruction of the country. Now of course the country has been, the war has stopped, the civil war has stopped. The country has recovered somewhat. Then again, recently, they assassinated the man who rebuilt the whole of Lebanon - Hariri. Rafiq Hariri was killed in a bomb explosion and now they are back to square one as they say now we don't know who is doing what but what we do know is that there are bombs exploding in Lebanon today. And the same thing is seen in Kashmir, we see the same thing even in Pakistan because of the

differences between the Syiah and the Suni and all these things of course tend to destabilize the country. Now Malaysia has got all these numerous differences - three different races, each adhere to three different religions - the Malays being Muslims, the Chinese being largely Buddhist and the Indians being largely Hindus. Although we do find some Christians among the Indians and the Chinese. Of course the Malays cannot change their religion because if they change they would not be Malays because constitutionally, we are defined as Malays only if we are Muslims and Muslims don't allow for apostasy. So the Malays remain Muslims, the Chinese sometimes convert to Islam; the Indians sometimes convert to Islam.

The problem with interracial marriage as a solution to our problem is not available to us as much as we would like because of the difficulty in interracial marriages because of the religious insistence of Muslims that whoever marries a Muslim, men or women must become Muslim. So the forces in Malaysia would not lead to a unification of the nation but to a separation of the different races with their beliefs, etc. So in this kind of situation, we are very conscious of this kind of situation, we find it difficult to create assimilation, to create an identity that is Malaysian. What is a Malaysian person? It's really difficult to really define because of these differences but the remarkable thing about Malaysia is that despite all these differences, we have very few interracial conflicts. In 1969 on May 13 there was this race riot in Kuala Lumpur. Quite a number of people were killed. More than 100 people were killed. And the world predicted - Time Magazine, Newsweek, predicted that that was the end of Malaysia. And strangely Malaysians themselves including Tun Dr Ismail said that democracy is finished in Malaysia. But you see today, we are relatively stable.

There is, I mean, not the kind of harmony that you would like to see but there is obviously harmony. We work together, we play together. We may return to our own homes and be separated again but frequently we go out at nights and have dinners together and now we don't care whether we go for a Chinese dinner or a Malay dinner or a Western dinner or dinners in any of these ethnic restaurants that you find in this country. We can sit together and eat together. Actually Malaysians cannot sit at the same table simply because the Malays object if you serve pork, for example. And any products from the pig if you put on the table, it is quite likely that a Muslim Malay might get up and walk out. He would not eat at the same table. On the other hand, the Malays love beef and you know the Indians don't take beef. So the three of us cannot really sit at the same table but for some unknown reasons, we have found a way to sit at the same table, eat together, talk and joke among ourselves and not feel so much the differences between us. So these are some achievements. I don't know whether we can see it was re-engineered quite consciously or whether it was just happens. More likely we all realize the need to be tolerant, to make adjustments, to accommodate other people - to accommodate people who have different religion from ourselves, who have different customs from ourselves. Of course sometimes, we breach the customs - the customs of the other group but the other group is tolerant enough to put up with it. So we don't have the kind of confrontation and violence that you see in most other multiracial countries. So we must praise Allah for that that we are a tolerant group of people and as a politician I hate to say this it might give compliments to politicians - I'm no longer a politician maybe I should, I can do it now. It all started of course because some politicians decided to overlook the differences and to come together. A long time ago in 1952, a group of Malays, ah I think it's all right, I would be very nervous and I won't be able to think because this thing will surely spill over. Thank you. When I need some water I will ask for it. Thank you.

Well, as I was saying, in 1952, there was to be a municipal election in Kuala Lumpur. At that time, the Malays were members of UMNO, the Chinese were members of MCA and the two were not the best of friends, let's say that because as you know the Malays had fought hard against the Malay Union and the Chinese felt that the Malay Union would give them a better place in this country. So politically, they were not together but these people - leaders of MCA and UMNO - they did not into the politics rather they looked into how to benefit each other by overlooking the fact that they were Chinese and Malays. Members of the MCA, members of the UMNO under Tun Ong Yoke Lin, Col. H. S. Lee, Datuk Yahya as leaders of the KL branches of their parties decided that they should contest the elections together as a kind of coalition. Unofficial and it was meant only for that election without the knowledge of national leaders like Tunku Abdul Rahman.

The principal was very simple, in a constituency, where the majority of the voters were Chinese. There would be a Malay minority. The assumption is that the Chinese would be split into two, almost equal numbers split into two and the Malay votes would determine who would win in the Chinese constituency that is in the Chinese constituency. In the Malay constituency, where the Malays are the majority, there would be a minority of Chinese. Now assuming that the Malays are split into two, and then the Chinese vote would determine who would win. It was a very simple theory and it worked. It worked so well that the multiracial parties as represented by the INB of Dato' Onn and the socialists, etc they were a multiracial but they lost to this racialist party which had decided to work together. Now because it worked so well, then the politicians they extended it at the national level and today what we have the same principal working through the Barisan Nasional.

So it was almost accidental the way we found a solution to our social problem, economic problem political problem and having achieved that, we have been able to keep the country as stable as possible and I think this is something which we should be grateful for for Tuanku Abdul Rahman - for accepting this approach to the problem and that approach has worked very well for Malaysia so much so that people are amazed. When they come to Malaysia, they don't see a Malay running after a Chinese and stabbing him or fighting breaking out in Bintang Walk or whatever. You see them walking together, working together, playing together although they may speak in different languages and they have different beliefs, etc. In Malaysia, this is something that has amazed foreigners to the extent that i've been invited to many places and one of the questions invariably asked or asked me to speak about was how do you achieve racial harmony in Malaysia and how we achieve it of course we plan with the political need to work together and that political need has now spread into the economic area, into the social area but we must admit that we have not achieved a true nation in the sense that we can say that we are Malaysians and we are not Malays, we are not Chinese, we are not Indians, we are Malaysians, we are not Muruts, or Bajaus or Ibans or whatever, we are just Malaysians. We have not come to that stage although Malaysians have Chinese origin.

When abroad, when asked whether they are Chinese, they would say 'yes, but we are Malaysians'. You see they have to point out that they are not China Chinese, not Taiwan Chinese, not Hong Kong Chinese, or even Singapore Chinese. They are Malaysian Chinese. So they do have that identity identification with the country but not to the point of forgetting that they are Chinese. The Malays also think that they are Malays and they will still talk about Ketuanan Melayu and etc but and it's.

The same with the Indians especially the women, they wear the Sari, the Chinese they would wear the Malay Baju more often but I think sari is dress of the Indians and they don't really change. Maybe sometimes they wear skirt.. But otherwise they feel very much Malaysians whenever they are abroad. The strange thing is that when they come home, then they would feel more Indian, or more Chinese or more Malays. But when abroad they are Malaysians. Now how do we engineer these things? It is not just a question of race. It's the question of the kind of society we want to live in. What kind of society do we want to live in? We want to live in a society where there is equality in all areas among the Malays, Chinese and Indians - no special treatment for anyone. That's the kind of ideal that we want to see but that ideal will not be achieved until the fear of being placed in an inferior position of any race can be overcome.

If we can overcome that fear, that when there is this equality of everything, equality of treatment that this may not result, that that fear that this may result in some race finding themselves at the bottom of the rung and some race finding themselves at the top of the rung. This fear is in them. The fear of the Malays that the Chinese would dominate the economy - this is a very real fear - Chinese economic power. On the other hand, the Chinese fear the Malays because of their political power. There are more Malays; more indigenous people than there are Chinese. So the Chinese fear the political dominance of the Malays, the Malays fear the economic dominance of the Chinese and the Indians fear everybody. You see in Malaysia, the Indians should not even have a single representative in parliament because there is not constituency where there is an Indian majority. If the Indians want to be in greater, to become a Member of Parliament, he must seek the support of the non-Indians. And in the Barisan Nasional, there is a mechanism for that and it has been successful so we would still have Dato Samy Vellu and his colleagues in cabinet because of this arrangement. But on their own, if they come out as an Indian party - Indians for the Indians, they will never make it, so they have to be friendly with the Chinese and with the Malays in order to get their support. So they fear both. The Chinese fear the Malays, the Malays fear the Chinese. They say it in many words but somewhere there is this fear.

Now the solution to this is to remove this fear and this fear politically can be removed very easily. Just say everybody is equal politically, everybody has the same right politically. But in the economic field, it's not so easy to equalize the strengths of the different races. To equalize, you must bring up the Malays to the level of the Chinese and they can compete with the Chinese. It is already happening now that they can compete with the Chinese. In fact, they have been successful. I'm glad to say that they are several Malay business people who have actually bought Chinese companies and turn around Chinese companies. Now that is a remarkable achievement - something that was not thought of as possible before but it has now happened. I can name them but I don't have to name them here. But the fact is that it has happened. But if this things keep going on - the capacity of the Malays to compete with the Chinese, it is very obvious, very real, then the fears of the Malays can be got rid off - they would not feel that fear and the Chinese for their part can easily feel comfortable because to give political power to the Chinese is by the stroke of a pen.

And then there is the field of education. Unfortunately, despite the help given by the Government, there is still a disparity in terms of the levels of education between the Chinese and the Malays and the Indians. For some reason or other, the Malays are still behind. Not as far behind as before. In my days, when I went to the university, out of

the 77 students who were in my class of 1947 - my class doing medicine and dentistry, out of the there were seven Malays. At the end of the year there were only four Malays, so now we have hundreds and thousands of Malays in the universities. Some of them do very well, some of course do not do so well, and we could do better.

There are today in some universities, as many as 70% of the students are girls. What happen to the boys? Where are they? Are they stupid? I don't know. I feel like concluding that they are stupid. That's why they are not in universities but maybe they are wiser than me - they avoid going to university; there's better life outside the university. But when you see the number of girls, you should see the same number of boys simply because in any human society, the number of girls and the number of boys are about equal - about the same - 50:50 - God made us that way.

You look in any society, a lot of people don't notice this but actually there are in any society 50% boys, 50% girls. How this graph comes about, I don't know. Some people produce boys some people produce girls. I've got more girl grandchildren than I have boy grandchildren so but when you add up, on the average; it should be 50:50. So if there is certain number of girl students in the university, there should be the same number of boys in the university but we don't have that. And the people affected are unfortunately Malays. So in the field of education, we have made considerable advance but by comparison to the other communities such as the Chinese and Indians, the Malays are still behind. They need to catch up. They work hard in order to achieve their true potential. I believe they have the same potential as anybody else but because they make no effort, so their potential will not just come up by it. You have to ... That's with regards to education. Then there is this problem of value systems with respect to social structures. What really determines the kind of person that we are with the value systems that we live in and we practice not just live in but we practice? We must believe in good value systems that can contribute towards our success. And we find that the value systems of the Malays, the Chinese and the Indians differ.

You know how the Indians describe their children, at least one of their children must become a doctor even if you have to go to Ukraine, you go to Ukraine. Even if the university is in Algeria, then you go to Algeria because of this pride by their family. - that is their pride, their belief, their value system forces them be sure that their children achieve a level of education that they are proud of. They are proud of the educational achievement of their children. They are also proud of other achievements. They teach music, for example, to their children. And they send them ???? ??Money on ...In order to raise themselves from the level that they are in. That is Indian value.

The chinese, they have different value systems but the emphasis is on material success, worldly success. The Chinese normally live in a competitive environment. They must do well otherwise they will be seen as failures, they will be poor, they will be left behind.

Now what is the Malay value system? Strictly speaking, it must be an Islamic value system. There is a little bit of the old Malay balance of you know . Malay saying, biar mati anak, jangan mati adat. Very wise saying. Now where's your adat? Nobody could carry on your adat so if we have children then we can have the adat.

Sometimes you see these wise sayings are not really wise. So let's rethink this too. We are in reengineering - let's reengineer. Now is there something wrong about Islamic

values that hold back the Malays. Is there something wrong with that? Now this is not the world

Muslims they seem incapable of having a good government. They are always fighting each other, assassinating each other and doing all the wrong things. But in Malaysia of course we have such incident to a certain extent but the failure of the Malays is also something that is equated with some factor in Islam which holds back the material, earthly success of the Malays. But I would like to differ. I would like to say that it's not Islam at all. Islam is not a negative force. Islam is a very positive force. What is negative is the interpretation of Islam. Now over 1,400 years, there have been very many interpretations of Islams. As there are in Christianity too.

The Christians now they are broken up into Protestants and Catholics, Calvary, Methodist and now we have a lot of new Christians, born again Christians and all that. They have been divided up but Islam too has undergone that same division over 1,400 years. The division is of course between the Syiah and the Suni. The Syiah would have about 12 different imams, the Suni would have three or four and then there are different sections /// the alawaid// the Jews and of course we have the Al-Arqam also. Here in Malaysia we have Al-Arqam. Lot of people believe Al-Arqam are true Islams. But these are results of interpretations by ordinary human beings. These are not prophets. They are not in any way of the same stature is Prophet Mohamad. We can accept what prophet Muhammad conveys to us as the message from Allah. But would we say Nik Aziz pronounce be equivalent to what Prophet Mohamad pronounce, would we? To say if you vote for PAS, you go to heaven. Who has been there to verify this? Anyone? No. Nik Aziz is like me. Maybe he speak a little bit more Arabic than I do. I can read the Quran like anybody else. But he is an ordinary person, an ordinary human being. He's not free from faults. So his interpretation is not necessarily an Islamic interpretation. You know the ... Muslims These are the people who studied the Hadis and even between them there are differences. What is accepted and verified by Bukhari maybe rejected by Muslims, rejected by Tarmizi or the others. So these are human beings who are learned but not free from faults and yet we tie ourselves to them - to their interpretation of Islam. And we tie our belief to their interpretation. If they are wrong, then we are wrong. Now I feel that in many instances they are wrong. So in that case what do you do? I'm not a preacher but I read the Quran in English and Malay.

And I look at what I read and I find it's very positive. If they become negative, it's because of misinterpretation. Now, let's look at the idea that if you study Lincoln, you'll get merit for your afterlife. Dapat pahala untuk akhirat. Kalau kita belajar agama. If you study religion, then your place in heaven is much more likely. But if you study science, mathematics, you study astronomy, or whatever, would your place in heaven be guaranteed? Now these people, not Prophet Mohamad, not the Quran, not the Hadis, but these people that these other subjects would not merit consideration for your afterlife. In other words, they are of a lower grade. Maybe they are secular subjects which gain you nothing at all which happens to be the teachings of some of these people - not all, some of these people say that if you don't study religion then you are on your way to hell.

So if you tell Malay, that if you want to go to heaven, you study religion, you become hafiz. You can recite the Quran without looking at it and you go to heaven. But if you study science, you will go to hell. You ask the Malay which one do you want to study and they will tell you this "I want to memorize the Quran because I want to go to heaven.

But this is what these people tell you. What does the Quran tell you? In the Quran, there are two types of verses. One is very specific. There is no two ways you can interpret it. The other one is made up of parables, stories, which you have to interpret and you can interpret stories in many ways.

If you read some of the novels that are written, you can either enjoy it or dislike it depending upon your interpretation. So what happens? You look at the Quran and you read. I say it's positive because I find that the Quran ask you to study, Iqra. You know where the first message received by the prophet was Iqra. And this man cannot read. He was asked to read. He must study and learn to read but when you read something, what do you get? You get better informed, you get better knowledge. You become clever. And when you share Iqra. You don't Iqra? Only in religious matters. It doesn't say. The Quran doesn't say. It just says Iqra - read.

That is why the early Muslims straightaway translated the works of the Greeks, the works of the Persians, the works of the Indians, the Chinese; into Arabic because they wanted to read and they became very knowledgeable. They were the prominent scientists at the time when the Europeans were very backward. That's the meaning of read but these people make an interpretation saying that read means read the Quran, read the Kitab written by Sheikh so and so. And so you find that the Malays are reluctant to study anything else other than religion and you see armies of them going to Al-Azhar university staying there for fourteen years and still not graduating because Al-Azhar doesn't mind; they can stay there forever. Some of them come back from Al-Azhar not able to speak a word of Arabic. I can speak better Arabic than they do. So this is because they interpret reading as reading only religion Quran but there is nothing to prevent you from studying other subjects.

We must acquire knowledge and you have to acquire knowledge through everything, through geography, history, mathematics, science, you know the word chemistry comes from the Arabic word Alkemi. It's an Arabic subject developed by a Muslim Chemist. Physicians like Ibnu Sina - they were the ones who identified diseases and treated diseases - why? Because at that time they don't have anyone to tell them, "Look this is not going to guarantee your place in heaven". They were not. Now, will they go to heaven if they study? I think they would. I think to study other subjects would be part of ibadah and if they would accept that as part of the value systems, then you would find Muslims will apply themselves seriously to study all these other subjects. Now why should you study other subjects? Why is it that I say the Quran wants you to study other subjects. Now among the things in the Quran which is very clear is that the Muslims must have the capacity to defend the Ummah.

They must be able to defend, not to attack other people but if the Ummah is attacked, then they must have the capacity to defend the Ummah. And in Islam if you have no capacity, then you are 'sinning'. You are sinning because you don't follow the injunctions of the Quran. Now in order to defend the Ummah, during the time of the prophet, they must have war horses, spears, bows and arrows and things like that during the time of the prophet. I believe they have war horses, the spears, bows and arrows and they were able to defend the Ummah because the enemies also had the same weapons and at times the Muslims develop Machines, etc.

They invented fish/machines and many other weapons in order to defend the Muslims and this is because they learned about the art and the science of defending - the art and

the science of making weapons. Why? Because the Quran enjoins upon them to be able to defend the Ummah. Now today, today are you going to have war horses, bows and arrows and spears to defend the Ummah? Obviously the word that is more important is 'war horses' or the weapons of the time of the prophet but rather the ability to defend

The ability to produce the correct weapons to defend yourselves. Today the Muslims cannot produce the correct weapons because they have not studied science, they neglected science, they neglected mathematics, they neglected everything and they are busy memorizing the Quran in order to go to heaven. So we are in this state because we have not followed the injunctions of the Quran to study. That to study science and to study mathematics is as important or perhaps more important than your study of religion. Your study of the various writings of the various sheikhs and imams and all that who are mere men - they are not prophets. That is why today the value systems which is supposed to be Islamic is not Islamic at all. It is the value system that is spread by the interpreters of Islam, learned though they may be but they are still ordinary human being and they can be wrong. But if you go back to the Quran and the verified Hadith, you will find positive instructions there on every issue including justice. You know this Hudud law, you only take the procedure of determining of whether the person is guilty or not. Just the procedure.

And the procedures include having four witnesses who are people of good character. That's what it stated. But the Quran also stated that when you judge, judge with justice. That is more important. You must be just. So if two men, 1 Chinese, 1 Malay, go deceiving, stealing things, you cannot chop the Malay hand and leave the Chinese hand free and he serves two months jail and the Malay goes around with one hand. Would that be justice? No it would not be justice. If it is not justice, would that be Islamic? It cannot be Islamic because it is unjust, obviously unjust. I give you another example. A girl is raped. She of course recognized the rapist but she couldn't produce four witnesses.

According to these people's interpretation of Islam, because she makes an accusation without the four witnesses, she is guilty of perjury, guilty of making a false statement and therefore punishable by the 80 strokes of the rotan. Is that justice? The person who is raped is punished and the rapist gets away. Is that justice? If it's not justice, it's not Islamic. That's why we cannot go along that way. Of course if there are four witnesses, well and good. Well, what are the four witnesses doing looking at the person being raped and not helping. You know the origin of this law was because the wife of the prophet was accused with something to do with somebody else and the prophet couldn't prove otherwise. But where are the witnesses? You make an accusation against my wife but where are the witnesses? So there are no witnesses and therefore you cannot accuse her or condemn her. But here in these days the girl knows and yet she is going to be punished and if she gets pregnant, it's evidence of zina.

She should be sentenced to death. Is that justice? Is that Islamic justice or is that justice at all? Obviously it's unjust so it cannot be Islamic. So if you go back to the Quran, you will find the Quran very correct and very positive about things and in terms of learning and having good values, the Quran provides with the best value systems. It urges you to be able to defend yourselves, urges you to acquire knowledge, urges you to have all kinds of capacity, urges you to be always fair in inheritance law, etc. All these things are very positive things in Islam but what we are practicing; the values that the

Malays hold today are not really Islamic values. They are actually the results of wrong interpretation by these people who claim that they are very learned.

They are the ulama. People like me cannot say anything. We have to accept it without question. Because they are the ulama. If you go back to the origin of the word ulama it comes from the word 'Halim'. 'Halim' means learned. Well, I may not be learned in that particular subject, i'm learned in medicine, you know. And if they get sick, they come to me. They wouldn't come to me if I'm not learned in medicine. I am ulama m... So the Malays would be able to achieve the same material gains on this earth and in the next life by acquiring knowledge and working hard in order to uplift the level of development of the Malays. When that is done, when the Malays are as well developed, as progressive as capable as the Chinese and the Indians, the fear will disappear. The fear of the Chinese will disappear. At that stage then when there is no fear of the Chinese of the Malays on the part of the Malays of the Chinese and the Indians fear nobody, then we would achieve our social reengineering. It's a tough thing. It will take time but that is the thing we must try, we must all try to do. So I will stop there I think.

Thank you.

**Text for Introducing Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad
by
YBhg Dato' Seri Prof. Dr. Ibrahim Abu Shah
Vice-Chancellor of UiTM**

**ON THE SECOND PERDANA DISCOURSE SERIES,
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25 MAY 2005**

Assalamu'alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh and Salam bahagia

Yang Amat Berbahagia Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Tan Sri, Dato,

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

1. On behalf of the organizers, the Perdana Leadership Foundation and the Universiti Teknologi MARA, I wish to warmly welcome Y A Berbahagia Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, our 4th Prime Minister of Malaysia and all of you to this Second Perdana Discourse Series on *Social Reengineering*. I deeply appreciate your presence here today, to share with us your thoughts and views on the topic, focusing not just on broad perspectives of contributions by all our four Prime Ministers, but also to share some possible future perspectives of the issue in focus.
2. I am particularly grateful that Tun has agreed to deliver the Keynote address in our Second Series of Perdana Discourse. The first was successfully held last year in the month of August. Subsequently, we will be congregating again in three months time discussing various other themes. During his tenure as our longest serving Prime Minister, there were numerous overall developments and achievements in Malaysia. The 22 years of his service spoke for itself; with his farsightedness and vision, Malaysia has experienced a tremendous growth in all aspects: social, technological, economics, environmental and political. Today, we are here not just to reflect on what Tun Mahathir had done to propagate Social Reengineering in Malaysia, but also what the other three former premiers had contributed in policies, strategies and actions towards reengineering our society. I believe many of us here can be of great source in shedding some lights on the topic that will be discussed, i.e. Social Reengineering.

3. Tun is an individual that doesn't need an introduction, but I would like to say a few words about him: Weighing from how he speaks his mind, be it during interviews or in his writings, he is a simple man, but his thoughts are very well structured and advanced.
4. Trained as a physician, he is a person that strives on a systemic thinking: the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Although at some point he looks at things deductively: that is from general to specific; but at some other time he is a person of an inductive thinking. In short, he is a well-balanced man. That was what has made him unique in his character and style as a leader. He is fit to be our benchmark in the search for the towering personality. The way he deliberated on the issue of National Unity during the first Perdana Discourse last year was rather poised, relaxed and intellectually conveyed.
5. Juxtaposing social reengineering at his side, it made us realize that he himself, during his time as the Prime Minister was the one acting as the architect, the believer and the executer for a lot of radical and fundamental change within our social context; like in 1981, the first year in office he introduced the concept of punch card, that performance can be measured, quality and productivity are two aspects that Malaysian should embarked in every endeavor, later came the idea of instilling the "can-do spirit" in every Malaysian. That it is ok to think big, and he showed the nation the power of vision and the way of realizing it. Kuala Lumpur was transformed from the low dense city in 1981 to the modern city, now. Malaysia was not known internationally back then, but during his tenure Malaysia flourished despite a few hiccups. His 22 years has brought about the centrality of his leadership to focus on industrial & technological driven approach.
6. Social re-engineering is a term that describes any radical change or continuous event of improvement within a society that happens at a very fundamental level. Social Re-engineering does not happen naturally or it is not a self-organizing event. There must be some elements of intervention associated with it. It has a motive, it has a designer, it has one or several architects, and it definitely has a bunch of executer and followers. To get a better picture of what Malaysia has experienced so far, we are grateful to have with us today YABhg Tun Dr Mahathir

Mohamad to shed some light on this issue, for us to pass on to the future generation.

7. With that note, I have a great pleasure to now invite The Honorable Tun Mahathir Mohamad to deliver his keynote address on this Second Perdana Discourse Series: Social Reengineering...please Sir.

**SPEECH BY Y.BHG TAN SRI NIK MOHAMED YAACOB
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PERDANA LEADERSHIP FOUNDATION
FOR PERDANA DISCOURSE SERIES: SOCIAL REENGINEERING
25 MAY 2005**

Y.A.Bhg Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Former Prime Minister of Malaysia and the
Honorary President of Perdana Leadership Foundation

Y.A.Bhg Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali

Y.Bhg Tan Sri Dato' Dr Wan Mohd Zahid Wan Noordin, Chairman of the Board of
Directors, UiTM

Y.Bhg Dato' Seri Professor Dr Ibrahim Abu Shah, Vice Chancellor, UiTM

His Excellency Dr Kadoum Al Rawi, the Ambassador of Iraq

Y.Bhg Tan Sri(s), Datuk(s), Professors, Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

A very good morning to all.

Welcome to the Perdana Leadership Foundation.

1. The Perdana Discourse Series is part of the Foundation's aims to collect, preserve, develop and disseminate information on Malaysia's past leadership. The Foundation was set up in 2003 just for this purpose – to find out more about Malaysia's past leaders, to analyse and research their policies, strategies and approaches to nation-building, and to stimulate more debate and research in this area by making all this information accessible to the public. You may ask why it's important in the first place that we find out more about the contributions of our past Prime Ministers. Part of the answer is that it was the the policies and initiatives of these leaders that have shaped Malaysia into what it is today – an economically thriving, socially harmonious and politically stable country, highly respected in the world arena. It is also by learning from our past leadership – their mistakes as well as successes – that future leaders of Malaysia can chart a better course for the country.

2. Another strong factor that led to the setting up of this foundation is the queries that our fourth Prime Minister often received on Malaysia's blueprint for success:

other foreign leaders want to know how Malaysia successfully transformed its economy from being agriculture-based to one that is industrial-driven, how Islam is managed in a multi-ethnic and multi-religious environment, and how Malaysia handles its race relations.

3. The answers to these questions lie with the policies and direction that Malaysia's Prime Ministers have adopted. What Perdana Leadership Foundation intends to do is to house these answers under one roof for further study and research.
4. This year, the foundation has a host of programmes lined up:
 - Our library is continuing with digitizing documents, speeches and audio video materials on all our Prime Ministers, all of which will be made available through the library's website.
 - The Perdana Discourse Series will continue with two more this year, after this one today.
 - We are also offering research grants to qualified scholars for in-depth study of Malaysia's past leadership.
 - In September, the Foundation will be the patron for the Global Leadership Forum which will feature speakers such as Neil Armstrong, the first man on the moon, Air Asia CEO Tony Fernandes and, of course, our former Prime Minister, YABhg Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.
5. We hope that through these programmes, we will be able to encourage more active interest in Malaysia's nation-building past. Ladies and gentlemen, I welcome you once again to the Perdana Leadership Foundation. I hope that you will leave today's discourse event with the seed of a greater curiosity to find out more about this country's leadership history and with a greater sense of awareness and responsibility of the role that you play in shaping the nation's future.

Thank you. Enjoy the Discourse ahead.

PLENARY SESSION

GROUP: 1

GROUP LEADER: Sumithra Rajendra

FACILITATOR: Raihana Saad

SCRIBE: Hazrina Zainul Azizdin

GROUP MEMBERS:

1. Mohd Radzian Abdul Rahman
2. Hanizah Abdul Latif
3. Prema Peruman
4. Salahuddin Hisham
5. Yeap Teik Bu
6. Hj Mansoor Hj Ahmad
7. Assoc. Prof Dr. Mohd. Ismail
8. Albertus Lim
9. Faiz Hussain
10. Syed Mohd Jala Loi Lail
11. Ralph Yew
12. Sharifah Zubaidah
13. Hafiz Ahmad Zehnun
14. Azhan Hasan
15. Sumithra Rajendra
16. Hazrina Zainul Azizdin
17. Azealea Dzulkefflee
18. Sakinah Al-Mubarakah Muhamad
19. Azriah Azian
20. Zanariah Johari

POINTS

- Group Consensus on the Meaning of Social Reengineering
- Contributions of the Past Premiers on Social Reengineering (reflecting on their thoughts) as a response to the keynote & discussion session
- Current Issues on Social Reengineering
- Possible future mechanisms to further improve our Society

Group Consensus on the Meaning of Social Reengineering

- Complete change from current mechanics
- Component change : improving on existing mechanics
- Both with the common goal of progressing towards a better and developed society
- There is a demand for social reengineering
- Realization by society of the need for change

Current Issues on Social Reengineering in Malaysia

- Interracial fears and suspicions
 - At all levels, politics, econs and social
- Polarization at every level of society
 - I.e. seperation between national and vernacular schools
 - Boarding schools catering only to Malays

- Mistrust between races at the professional level
- Malaysian attitude
 - Rude and selfish
 - Refusal to accept constructive criticisms
 - Refusal to acknowledge reality

Possible future mechanisms to further improve our Society

- Main focus :Education
 - Reduction of polarization at every level
 - Multipronged approach in education for different target groups
 - Standardized national education from the ground level
 - I.e.: kindergarten
 - More emphasis on philosophy and humanity studies rather than only quantitative sciences/materialism

GROUP: 2

GROUP LEADER: Cheah Wee Leong

FACILITATOR: Azreen

SCRIBE: Shazelina

GROUP MEMBERS:

- Khairun Nisa Mohamed
- Mohd. Hasli Hasan
- Ahmad Najib Ariffin
- Suresh Kumar
- Safinah Yaakob
- Felix D. Janois
- Mohamad Sulaiman
- Kok Hee Poh
- Nantha Kumar
- Jason Lee
- Mathavan A. Chandran
- Dr. Collin Abraham
- Andy Ho
- Cemkar Singh
- Logandran
- Ng Eu Gin
- Tengku Harith Aziz

POINTS

- Group Consensus on the Meaning of Social Reengineering
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Group Consensus on The Meaning of Social Reengineering

- A redefinition of “Social Re Engineering is needed” since the current definition is outdated.
- Proposal: “ We need to look at what is needed and what is relevant in today’s world, basing it on where we want to be in the future and setting our goals”
- The goals of national unity and eradication of poverty set by the leaders of the past are still relevant, however the implementation of the policies to promote unity and eradicate poverty needs to be reviewed.
-

Contributions of the Past Premiers on Social Reengineering

- Tun Abdul Razak’s “Red Book” – Rural Development Programme where proposals came from the bottom up.
- NEP has performed its role successfully in the post 1969 period.

Current Issues on Social Reengineering in Malaysia

- Perception and assignation of races as “weak” and “incapable” need to be changed
- There should be more focus on economics (i.e. enlarging the pie) and less on race-based politics.
- Racial profiling (esp. in filling forms) needs to be eliminated
- Current wealth distribution is still inequitable esp. between the rural and urban population

Possible future mechanisms to further improve our Society

- Greater emphasis of education methods and vocational skills which are not based on race but on ability
- “Malaysian first, race second”
- Decision-making should be based firmly on research done on the issues, rather than formulation of policy first. Less top-down decisions.
- Poverty line set by decision-makers to be reviewed from RM559, and differentiated between families in rural and urban areas.

GROUP: 3

GROUP LEADER: Azlan Adnan

FACILITATOR: Muhammad Faiz Arshad

SCRIBE: Sherrie Razak Dali

GROUP MEMBERS:

- PM Zehah Mansor
- Ramlah Mohd Nor
- Azlan Adnan
- Adiba Shareen Al Ayubi
- Azli Razali
- Mohd Nor Azharin
- Khairush Syakiran Has-yan Bin Hashim
- Khaizan Sharizad Abd Razak
- Kenny Kueh
- Joe Kan
- Noorzan Hj Mohd Noor
- Edzuan Bin Zakaria
- Noor Diyana Yahya
- Khairul Adnan

POINTS

- Group Consensus on the Meaning of Social Reengineering
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Group Consensus on The Meaning of Social Reengineering

- Radical change
- Recognizing a problem and taking an action to rectify the problem
- Not equalize but enrich the performance gap

Contributions of the Past Premiers on Social Reengineering

- Implementation of the NEP
 - Eradicating poverty
 - Eliminating disparity
- Language policy
- Increase no. of universities

Current Issues on Social Reengineering in Malaysia

- 1969- wake up call
 - polarization
- Generalization of race and attitude of society- taboo
- Societal denial
- Education
- Open discussion
- Family instilling good values
- Lack of exposure
- Myopic view of education
- Lack of acknowledgement in schools

- Teachers workload

Possible future mechanisms to further improve our Society

- Rewarding intellectuals
- Embracing change, diversity and dissent
- Implementation of enhanced education skills and education
- Provide more informed choice/transparency

GROUP: 4

GROUP LEADER: IBDILILLAH ISHAK

FACILITATOR: NAZRI ABDUL HAMID

SCRIBE: IDA AZERIN RAZALI

GROUP MEMBERS:

- Wira Sofran – UM
- Trudy R. Ganendra – IEM
- Ismail Sidi – UiTM
- Mohd Fairuz A.Ghani – UNITEN
- Nurul Nadia Mardeen – UIA
- Satya Narayanan - Lucent
- Mohd Rizal Abidin – UiTM
- Ibdilillah Ishak – PROMUDA
- Wong Min Ney – UKM
- Zaleha Ali – ASLI
- Ida Azerin Razali – PROMUDA
- Dr. Zairil Azhar Zaludin – UPM
- Suresh Yegambaram - IEM

POINTS

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Group Consensus on The Meaning of Social Reengineering

“Gradual changes of society to achieve ‘National Objectives’ ”

Contributions of the Past Premiers on Social Reengineering

1st Premier: “Father of Independent”

Introduced ‘Social Contract’, united the 3 major races to get to the establishment of Malaysia.

2nd Premier: “Father of Development”

Poverty eradication of at the rural areas.

3rd Premier: “Father of Unity”

Enhance Foster better

4th Premier: Father of Modern Malaysia

Global & ASEAN – communications and participations

Current Issues on Social Reengineering in Malaysia

1. Corruption
2. Fear of “Others” communities/races
3. Unequal distribution of wealth
4. Education levels & Communication
1. capabilities of Malaysian
5. Racial Polarization
6. Moral values

Possible future mechanisms to further improve our Society

1. Corruption – ‘Reinforcing the value systems across the society’. Transparency & Strengthen the enforcement and proper reward systems.

2. Fear of “Others” communities / races -
Equality & Merit Systems

3. Unequal distribution of wealth –
Taxation

4. Moral Values –
Compulsory Community Service

GROUP: 5

GROUP LEADER: Romil Shamsudin

FACILITATOR: Badariah

SCRIBE: Khor Cheng Seong

GROUP MEMBERS:

- Mohd Nizam Abdul Ghani (UNITEN)
- Ooi Beng Cheang (TV3)
- Emily Tan (MIRC)
- Kelvin Chong (PROVIN)
- Baayah (UiTM)
- Choong Mee Fatt (AUAM)
- Zubir Rada Krishnan
- Bahariah Bt Bahadom (UiTM)
- Chua Teck Boon (PROMUDA)
- Mohd Sourfi Mohd Radzi (MMU)
- Sonia Nasim Hamayon (UiTM)
- Raja Shahrman (Bank Negara Malaysia)
- Khairul Faiz bin Morad (Monash University)

POINTS

- Group Consensus on the Meaning of Social Reengineering
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Group Consensus on The Meaning of Social Reengineering

A continuous, unnatural, and non-equilibrium transformation of the society to provide

- fairness and stability
- unnatural—requires initiative
- non-equilibrium—artificial, un-spontaneous efforts

Contributions of the Past Premiers on Social Reengineering

Tunku Abdul Rahman

- Political power sharing
- Social harmony

Tun Abdul Razak

- New Economic Policy (NEP)
- Rukun Negara

Contributions of the Past Premiers on Social Reengineering

Tun Hussein Onn

- Permodalan Nasional Berhad
 - unit trust investments
 - problem: “Ali Baba” investment
- Rukun Tetangga

Contributions of the Past Premiers on Social Reengineering

Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad

- Look East Policy
- Vision 2020
- National Development Policy (NDP) (1990)
- National Car Project (Proton)—good for acquiring technology but fails in strategic planning to sustain competitiveness

Current Issues on Social Reengineering in Malaysia

- Defects in current education system
 - Too many race-based elements
 - Lack of wholesome education—producing all-rounded students
- Formation of independent, voluntary organizations—for monitoring purposes
- Greater interaction in communities, e.g., www.shahalam.com.my
- Improve work culture
- Competitive remuneration and job satisfaction—halt brain drain
- Education starts from home
 - a) Instill good values
 - b) Parents to be educated
- National education policy
 - A new language (non-race-biased)
 - Unity / unifying tool
 - English
- Consistency of syllabus over long-term
- Subsidy reduction—learning from hard experience
- Educational scholarships—only deserving, needy ones
- Sharing of knowledge between all races
 - e.g., Open memberships of commerce-based societies
- Increase community interactions, e.g., www.section2.com.my
- Community service as part of scholarship requirements
- Protectionism for Small-and-Medium Industries (SMI)

GROUP: 6

GROUP LEADER: Syahrizal Samsudin

FACILITATOR: Fatayal Anshori

SCRIBE: Ahmad Husaini

GROUP MEMBERS:

- Diyana Sulaiman
- Eliza Jamal
- Nazrain Zakaria
- Megat Zulhaizi
- Mohd AZhari Mustafa
- Edmund Chien
- Mohd Hendra
- Alia Ridzuan
- Andrew Pang
- Syahrizal Samsudin
- Wan Jauhari
- Anuar Suun

- Feriz Omar

POINTS

- Group Consensus on the Meaning of Social Reengineering
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Group Consensus on The Meaning of Social Reengineering

- “social reform to shape a society that unifies all races, improves the quality of life and has a vision and clear objectives”

Contributions of the Past Premiers on Social Reengineering

- United people with different ethnic background and social position to gain independence
- Diminish identification of race according to economic functions
- Better wealth distribution (NEP)
- Enhance economic standing of the country
- Created a vision for the creation of a Malaysian Identity (Vision 2020)

Current Issues on Social Reengineering in Malaysia

- Poverty
- Wealth distribution and perception
- Rising crime
- Frequent abrupt changes in education
- Meritocracy

Possible future mechanisms to further improve our Society

- Transparent governance (KPI)
- Freedom of the media
- Separate ethnic and national identities
- Long term planning for education policy

Panelists:

1. Tan Sri Datuk Arshad Ayub

Tan Sri Datuk Arshad Ayub has an extensive civil service background, having joined the government sector in 1951. He was the first Director of MARA Institute of Technology, now known as Universiti Teknologi MARA. He was also the Deputy Governor of Bank Negara Malaysia, the Deputy Director General of the Economic Planning Unit (EPU), and Secretary-General of the Ministry of Land and Regional Development, among the varied positions that he has held in government. Additionally, Tan Sri Datuk Arshad was member of the National Development & Planning Committee and served on various regional development authorities.

Tan Sri Datuk Arshad is a B.Sc (Economics) graduate of University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, United Kingdom, and has a diploma in business administration from the Management Development Institute (IMEDE), Switzerland as well as a diploma in agriculture from the then College of Agriculture, Serdang (now Universiti Putra Malaysia).

Tan Sri is now Chairman of PFM Capital Holdings Sdn Bhd and serves on the Board of Directors for several public listed concerns, including Kulim (M) Berhad and KPJ Healthcare Bhd.

2. Tan Sri Ramon Navaratnam

Tan Sri Ramon Navaratnam was educated at the Victoria Institution, Kuala Lumpur and at the University of Malaya in Singapore where he obtained B.A.(Hons) in Econs. He obtained his Dip. In Public Administration from the Royal Institute of Public Administration in London in 1963 and then his M.P.A. (Econs) from Harvard (USA) in 1969. He obtained an Honorary Doctorate of Laws from Oxford Brookes University (UK) in 2000.

He joined the Malaysian Civil Service in 1959 and held several posts in his long career of 27 years in the Malaysian Treasury where he became Deputy Secretary-General of the Treasury. He was promoted as the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Transport in 1986. He served as Alternate Executive Director of the World Bank in Washington between 1970-1972. After retirement from Government in 1989, he was appointed Chief Executive Officer of Bank Buruh from 1989-1994.

Tan Sri is now the Corporate Adviser of the Sunway Group, Deputy Chairman of Sunway University College, Director of Monash University, Director of the Asian Strategy and Leadership Institute (ASLI) and Executive Director of Sunway Construction Bhd.

3. Datuk David Chua

Datuk David Chua is the Managing Director of DC & A Group Sdn. Bhd. He has a wide and varied experience in the Housing and Property Sector. Besides being an entrepreneur, he has taken a keen interest in socio-economic affairs and political developments and has rendered voluntary services to organizations representing these interests.

Datuk Chua is presently the Deputy Secretary-General of the Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia (ACCCIM). He is the Joint Secretary General of Malaysian-China Business Council (MCBC). He is a member of the Advisory Panel, Ministry of Home Affairs.

Datuk Chua also assumed numerous key and senior positions in Trade Associations, Chambers of Commerce and Industry and Government appointed positions including a former advisory Board Member of Dewan Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur (DBKL). He was appointed to the National Economic Consultative Council (1990- 1991) and again reappointed to NECC II (2000 - 2001), and elected Deputy Chairman of NECC II.

4. Mr. Iqbal Hafiedz b. Ahmad Bazari

- A Law student from Universiti Teknologi MARA. He also represents Universiti Teknologi MARA in many debate contests in Malaysia. He has extensive experience in the Debating Arena, having been selected to represent UiTM in various National and International Tournaments, such as the World Universities Debating Championship in South Africa, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur, The Australasian Debating Championship in Australia and The All-Asian Debating Championship in Bangkok, Thailand. She has also participated in various National Competitions all over Malaysia.