

Bapa Malaysia was the greatest Muslim
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This letter comes in the wake of the horrid insult to Islam by Zulkifli Nordin and fascists on both sides of the political divide. If only Bapa Malaysia were here. Almarhum Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra, Malaysia's Father of Independence and first prime minister was the greatest Muslim leader of his time.

MCPX

That's my honest and sincere opinion as a Malaysian. He was honest about his shortcomings and did not pretend that he was a genius or a saint. He was not too religious but understood the spirit of Islam far better than those who are pious yet judgemental towards others.

He believed that Malaysia should advance towards a Western-style democracy in stages, based on the collective maturity of Malaysian society. He was multi-racial to the core and did not believe that any one community should dominate the others.

He believed in the liberation of women from male chauvinism, slowly but surely. And he believed that while the country should develop, a balance should be struck between material growth and conservation. Tunku Abdul Rahman believed that piety was secondary to humanity and that the true, practising Muslims were the ones who practised universal human values as clearly spelt out in the Quran and the Traditions of the Holy Prophet (Sunnah or Hadis).

He believed that those who did not speak Arabic ought to get hold of proper translations of holy scriptures such as those written by Muhammad Asad (Leopold Weiss) and not narrow, literalist ones.

He was fully supportive of religious freedom, even though he always reminded Malaysians to be tactful and diplomatic when talking about issues concerning faith in their multi-ethnic country. He hated those who were 'holier than thou' and who condemned others who did not agree with their ways to hell. He always believed that no human can call another human a hell-bound person.

It was always his belief that those who preached religious superiority to others were the enemy of God and apostates of the highest order. Likewise, those who championed their faith yet ruled oppressively. T

Throughout his lifetime, Tunku Abdul Rahman spoke out against bigotry and male chauvinism especially by those who practised it in the name of God. He likened them to the devil and considered them the collaborators of the Zionists.

It was his belief that true Muslims embraced the intellectual tradition of the West since the European people developed their intellectualism from the traditions of Islam. The more Westernised in spirit, the more Islamic the person would be, he believed. Nevertheless, he was not a blind admirer of all things European.

He was against crass Europeanisation of Muslims - same-sex-marriages, legalised drug-taking, legalised prostitution, legalised nudity, excessive violence in the arts, blood sports and open swearing.

It is true that Tunku Abdul Rahman was pro-Western in his foreign policies, but he belonged to a different generation. The communists were avowed exterminators of princes and it was only natural that he looked up to Britain and America as the protectors of the non-communists.

There is nothing wrong for Islamic people to express pro-Western thought because the most progressive Muslims, as Tunku Abdul Rahman found out, were found in Europe and America. Tunku Abdul Rahman, in his last decades, was sad about the state of his beloved Muslim world.

He remarked that tyranny had become the community's new 'faith', be it the tyranny of Shah Reza Pahlavi of Iran or that of his Neo-Kharijite Shiite successor Ruhollah Khomeini. He believed that a total reconversion to Islam was very, very necessary, by every member of the global Muslim community. And that the free world should trustee every badly-governed nation to make sure that tyranny did not set foot in any land.

He was a great admirer of Singapore and considered it a Second World country which was most worthy of emulation, even though he detested the arrogance of the Singaporean leaders who loved making fun of Malaysia and its indigenous people. To him, a liberal and democratic Singapore and by extension Malaysia, was the ideal Islamic state on earth.

Despotic rule in too many Muslim lands had distorted and destroyed the purity and sanctity of the faith and only Muslim thinkers with the true Ghazzalian spirit as found in Europe and America got it right.

There are many people who agree with Tunku Abdul Rahman today. And their numbers keep growing by the day. But those with money should pump more resources into their pockets and strengthen their voices. With greater resources, the true Muslim can vanquish the false one.

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