

UCAPAN PERDANA MENTERI, DI PERASMIAN PERHIMPUNAN AGUNG TAHUNAN PARTI GERAKAN, DI HOTEL MERLIN, KUALA LUMPUR, PADA 26 MEI, 1979.

Saya mengucapkan berbanyak terimakasih kepada Parti Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia, terutama kepada Presidennya Dr. Lim Chong Eu, kerana sudi menjemput saya dan memberi penghormatan untuk membuka Mesyuarat Perwakilan Tahunan Partinya.

Pilihanraya Umum telahpun selesai pada tahun lepas, dan Barisan Nasional telah diberi mandat yang menyeluruh oleh rakyat supaya mentadbirkan negara ini selama lima tahun. Di Pulau Pinang, Kerajaan Barisan Nasional adalah diketuai oleh Ketua Parti Gerakan.

Kemenangan Barisan Nasional dalam Pilihanraya Umum tidak sekali-kali melalaikan kita semua daripada tanggungjawab kita kepada rakyat. Sebaliknya kita melipatgandakan lagi usaha kita terhadap pembangunan negara dan pertumbuhan ekonomi. Ini adalah terbukti daripada tindakan dan tambahan peruntukan berikutan daripada Kajian Separuh Penggal Rancangan Malaysia Ketiga. Dalam perkara ini, Parti Gerakan adalah terlibat dan menyempurnakan tanggungjawabnya, terutama berkenaan dengan pembangunan di Negeri Pulau Pinang. Di peringkat Pusat, Menteri dan Timbalan Menteri daripada Parti Gerakan telah bekerja dengan kuat dan bersungguh-sungguh di kementerian-kementerian. Begitulah juga dengan Ahli-ahli Parlimen dan Dewan Undangan Negeri daripada parti itu. Semangat dan minat ahli-ahli Parti Gerakan untuk berkhidmat kepada Barisan Nasional dan negara amatlah membanggakan. Parti Gerakan tidak kurang daripada parti-parti yang lain yang memberi kekuatan kepada Barisan Nasional. Dengan semangat yang begitu kuat yang telah ditunjukkan oleh ahli-ahli Parti Gerakan, tidak ada sebabnya yang Parti itu tidak boleh bertambah berjaya lagi di masa-masa hadapan.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today's Annual General Assembly of the Gerakan is the first to be held by a component party of the Barisan Nasional since the massive general elections victory last year. Every component party in the Barisan Nasional should therefore seriously analyse the victory and find ways and means to improve its performance so that the Barisan Nasional may further strengthen its position as the ruling party. At the same time, it must use the mandate to intensify its efforts in the



Gambar menunjukkan Y.A.B. Datuk Hussein Onn dan rombongannya ketika berada di Great Wall of China dalam lawatan muhibbah ke China pada 2-9 Mei 1979.

coming years to fulfill its promises. The Barisan Nasional must continue to dedicate itself to the achievement of peace, stability, prosperity, social justice and a better life for all Malaysians. This has been our pledge and we must honour it.

As you are aware, Barisan Nasional was formed to lessen politicking amongst the various political parties. The political stability which has been achieved has enabled us to devote more time and energy to the task of national development. This has benefitted the people. The component parties must continue to work together at all levels. We cannot afford to work at cross-purposes as this will be contrary to the very concept of forming the Barisan Nasional.

It is imperative that the component parties should continually examine their contributions towards the achievement of the objectives of the Barisan Nasional. They should constantly evaluate their role in the Barisan Nasional. They should ask themselves whether they have really and adequately served the greater interests of the Barisan Nasional. The collective strength of the Barisan Nasional depends upon the effectiveness of each and every component party. This should be the primary consideration.

In the multi-racial society each community invariably makes its own demands. Very often these demands are competing. In such a case unless there is a machinery for resolving them, there will be endless conflicts and perhaps chaos. Fortunately for us, through the wisdom of our leaders and our people the Barisan Nasional was formed to provide this machinery. Through it, vital issues are discussed and determined.

It cannot be denied that through the collective efforts of the Barisan Nasional, every community in this country has benefitted. The increasing prosperity and well being of all the communities — Malays, Chinese, Indians and others — are due to the joint efforts of the component parties in the Barisan Nasional. In this respect each and every one of the component parties in Barisan Nasional can justifiably be proud.

It is a fact of life that people tend to take for granted the benefits which they enjoy and magnify their dissatisfaction for the things they don't have. In our society this assumes racial overtones. The benefits enjoyed by a community is assumed by another community to be at the expense of its own. Unless promptly checked, this attitude has a disruptive effect on relations among the communities in our country.

It is the responsibility of leaders to remind the people, particularly those of their own community of the benefits they are enjoying. Instead of competing with opposition in exploiting dissatisfaction, we in the Barisan Nasional should highlight the gains that each community has derived from our partnership in the Barisan.

It is distressing to hear discordant voice attacking the New Economic Policy. I would like to remind the critics that the New Economic Policy is vital to the stability of this country. It was evolved following the tragic events of May 13, 1969. The turmoil of May 13 was the outcome of a breakdown in consensus among our people. There was no consensus among our people. There was no consensus then among the major racial groups on what was fair and just. The situation was exploited by irresponsible elements. When order was restored, political, community, religious and other leaders in the country consulted each other to evolve a new strategy for the survival of the country. It was then that the New Economic Policy was formulated. It represents a new consensus upon which we can build a united and stable nation. It may be that in the implementation of the policy some people may have been adversely affected. Through the consultative machinery of the Barisan Nasional we try to resolve any problems, that may arise.

There are naturally areas of conflict; some have been resolved within the framework of the Barisan Nasional, while others cannot immediately be resolved but need time, patience and the spirit of give and take. Every one of us has something to be unhappy about. Should one then succumb to one's emotion and lose all hope of the future? Will this help solve our problems? Through the machinery of consultations which is inherent in the Barisan Nasional, we have been able to discuss and give due consideration to the problems and interests of all the communities. Solutions to major problems have always been the results of consultations with the leaders and representatives of political parties. The Gerakan, the UMNO, MCA, MIC and other parties, have all benefitted from this consultative machinery.

We have been accused of adopting the procedure of consultation and the spirit of give and take as a means of perpetuate communalism. These critics want a Malaysian approach and so far they have not been successful. Why? Because they have ignored the present-day realities of our country's politics. Any approach that fails to recognise the racial imbalances and inequalities will not succeed. The Barisan Nasional recognises these hard realities too well. No other approach can achieve what we have achieved so far. We must therefore continue

with it until such time that the people or a majority of them are ready to accept a new system.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We achieve our independence because of the spirit of cooperation and compromise of the various communities. We enjoy our independence because of their farsightedness. The foundations of our country's unity peace and prosperity were laid by the generation of Malaysians before us. We are still a young country. Each succeeding generation of Malaysians must continue to build and add to the foundations. It is our sacred duty to build our country's future. If the present generation of Malaysians cares only for its own community, then we shall lose the future.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Gerakan is no less important to the Barisan Nasional than the UMNO, MCA, MIC and the other parties. The real strength of the Barisan Nasional lies in the collective strength of all its component parties. Each has its role and effectiveness. The Gerakan in its own way has contributed in no small measure towards the political stability and economic development of the country, particularly in the State of Penang. It is ably led, and in its President, Dr. Lim Chong Eu, I have a sincere friend and colleague upon whom I can depend for support and advice. The same can also be said with regard to the other leaders of Gerakan. The strength and effectiveness of a political party do not depend solely upon the size of its membership. The quality of its leadership integrity and high principles are factors which also be taken into account. The Gerakan does not lack all these. I am sure the Gerakan will continue to play its useful role in the Barisan Nasional. However, big or small a role it plays, will undoubtedly contribute towards the development and well-being of our country. Ladies and Gentlemen, I now have great pleasure in declaring open the 5th Annual General Assembly of the General Assembly of the Gerakan.