

ADDRESS BY THE PRIME MINISTER ON THE OCCASION OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MCA AT THE FEDERAL HOTEL, KUALA LUMPUR ON 25TH FEBRUARY, 1979.

Y.B. Dato Lee San Choon, Presiden MCA, Y.A.B. Tun Tan Siew Sin, Y.B. Tan Sri Omar Yoke Lin Ong, Ahli-ahli Central Committee MCA, Y.B. Menteri-Menteri dan Timbalan Menteri, Y.B. Ahli-ahli Parlimen, Para Tetamu Kehormat, Tuan-tuan dan Puan-puan sekalian.

Saya mengucapkan berbanyak terima kasih kepada Y.B. Dato Lee San Choon, Presiden MCA, kerana sudi menjemput saya ke Majlis Perayaan Ulangtahun yang ke 30 tertubuhnya MCA, dan memberi penghormatan kepada saya berucap sepatah dua kata kepada hadirin yang mulia ini. UMNO telah lama berjuang dan bekerjasama rapat dengan MCA sebagaimana juga ia telah berjuang dan bekerjasama rapat dengan MIC.

Kemerdekaan tanahair kita telah bersama-sama dicapai oleh UMNO, MCA dan MIC. Pembangunan dan kemajuan negara kita telah bersama-sama diusahakan oleh UMNO, MCA dan MIC, dan kebelakangan ini, bersama-sama dengan parti-parti lain dalam Barisan Nasional.

UMNO, MCA dan MIC bolehlah dikatakan sebagai "Tiga serangkai dan tiga sekawan" dan sekarang ini "Tiga serangkai dan tiga sekawan ini" telah disertai oleh beberapa kawan yang lain dalam Barisan Nasional.

Tuan-tuan dan Puan-puan sekalian,

First of all, I would like to congratulate the MCA on the 30th anniversary of its founding, and to thank its President, Dato Lee San Choon, for inviting me to address this distinguished gathering.

It is true to say that after the Second World War, political development in Semenanjung Malaysia was spear-headed by the UMNO, MCA and MIC. Almost from the very beginning, these three political parties have worked and fought together; they have gained victories and suffered defeats. They could aptly be called "The Three Musketeers of Malaysian Politics". They are now joined by other musketeers in Semenanjung Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak.

You will recall that the MCA was founded at the time when the country faced with an armed communist insurrection. Under the leadership of the MCA, the Chinese population closed ranks and rallied to the defence of the country. Its leaders and members were threatened with death and bodily injury by the communist terrorists; many were injured and killed. If we follow the history of the MCA, one fact stands out very clearly, and that is that the MCA has never chosen the easy and popular way out of a national problem. It has shown this quality of leadership many times before; this admirable quality many times recently. I wish to acknowledge here, so that it will be known to all the people, that this same admirable quality is also being shown by all the other component parties in the Barisan Nasional. It makes me proud to work with them.

The Barisan Nasional has had many trials and tribulations. It has gone through some turbulent times and it has survived. The most important reason for this is that the leaders of the component parties in the Barisan Nasional are patriots of the highest order. They always put the national interest first before party, communal or sectional interests. Their over-riding watch-word is UNITY ——— unity within the Barisan Nasional and unity among the people.

The MCA, like the UMNO, MIC and others, is always vulnerable to unscrupulous, chauvanistic and racialistic groups like the DAP AND THE EXTREMISTS. Racial and sensitive issues are continually being exploited by these groups. They do not care whether the continual exploitation of these issues will bring about racial conflicts which will be far more serious than what we have experienced before. To them the ends justify the means.

However, in spite of the attempts by these disruptive groups to sow dissensions and racial animosity among the people, the country under the leadership of the Barisan Nasional continuous to develop and prosper. I have said and I will say it again that the Barisan Nasional will carry out the promises it made in its 1978 Election Manifesto. In fact, we have started implementing them. I have said that this country belongs to us all, irrespective of our racial origins. There are more good, loyal and patriotic citizens in this country than there are bad, disloyal and selfish one; there are more moderate and reasonable citizens than there are extremists and unreasonable ones. With these advantages, I cannot see why the future of this country cannot be promising and bright.

The future and the destiny of our country are in our hands. So far, we have guided our country tenderly, cautiously and wisely. Our leaders of the past have laid the foundation of our country. The responsibility of the present and future leaders is to build upon that foundation, with patience, tolerance and wisdom, an edifice which will fulfill the hopes and aspirations of our people. I have every confidence that this will be done.

Coming back to the MCA, permit me to say that as it has survived for 30 years, it will survive another 30, no matter how hard the DAP may try to destroy it. In time, the people will see the DAP in its true colours ——— crooked, unscrupulous, chauvinistic, divisive and devious. There are now within the rank and file of the MCA a new breed of men and women from all walks of life. These men and women do not live in the past; these men and women do not think only of wealth; they are concerned with everyday life —— their means of livelihood, their children's education; employment and necessities of life. The MCA of to-day is a new and invigorated MCA, in keeping with the changing moods of the people. We, the other component parties in the Barisan Nasional, wish the MCA every success in the future. Happy anniversary and will there be many more.

Thank you.