

Penyampai : TAN SRI ABDUL HALIM BIN ALI
Tajuk : THE DINNER WITH MR. ALVIN TOFFLER
Lokasi : HOTEL SHANGRI-LA, KUALA LUMPUR
Tarikh : 30-10-1996

1. Most of us have read books written by our distinguished guest, Mr. Alvin Toffler or at least are aware of best sellers like Future Shock, The Third Wave and War and Anti-War. Some might have heard him speak before. Those of you who had neither read nor heard of him before, do not despair, for we are very fortunate that despite his very busy schedule, he has consented to be with us this evening. I am certain that the time Mr.

Toffler has so graciously sacrificed will not be in vain as we will be able to benefit from his knowledge and experience.

2. The dramatic political, economic and technological changes that have taken place in the international scene especially over the last decade, have brought about major transformations in the way governments are managed and business transacted all over the world.

3. On our part, we have adopted Vision 2020 which establishes our goal of becoming a developed nation by the year 2020 - a developed nation set in its own mould of racial tolerance, and strong adherence to religious and cultural values. Vision 2020 has given the focus and direction to all Malaysians, to set bigger goals for greater achievement. As a developing country, Malaysia has had to make efforts to keep up with radical transformations in the world order. There is keen awareness of the need on the part of the public and the private sectors to change, to be more competitive and resilient in the world market place. The importance of administrative competence of the public service and the entrepreneurial ability of the private sector in sustaining the nation's comparative advantage and its competitive edge in the global market is also well realised. The need to stay ahead compels all of us in the civil service to be aware of changes not only in organisational concepts and strategies but also in global economic and political development.

Only with good understanding of the changes and trends in global economic and political development, would we be able to recommend to the government the right policies and strategies that would safeguard the nation's interest. Only with a deep knowledge of the issues would we be able to defend our positions abroad. I stressed this only to highlight the fact that as our economy becomes more globalised, as it is bound to be, our involvement at the international level will even be more advanced than it is today.

4. In Malaysia, the government sector work in parallel with their counterparts in the private sector under the Malaysian Incorporated Policy to achieve common goals of development and progress.

Using Malaysia Incorporated as a concept and privatisation as a vehicle, this unique collaboration of private and public sectors has brought unprecedented success and prepares Malaysians for a quantum leap into the new millennium.

5. As we are all aware, Malaysia is situated in the Pacific region which is the fastest growing region in the world. Envied by many countries, our position in the region have given us an opportunity to grow in tandem with the growth of the region.

Malaysia is an attractive place to invest in. Its sound infrastructure, coupled with its political stability, continues to attract a steady stream of investors from all over the world. This has greatly benefitted the country. Our capabilities in manufacturing quality products have been widely accepted in the international market place. On the other hand, we are also encouraging our private sector counterparts to seek new investment opportunities overseas, as a means of expanding their business as well as to place themselves strategically in emerging markets. Impressive success has been achieved but there is still a lot to be done. Malaysian SMIs have to be nurtured to be more aggressive in pursuing opportunities in the global market. More entrepreneurs have to be developed to take up new challenges.

6. Mr. Toffler's visit to Malaysia is most timely coming at a time when the country is going through such development that we in the public service are sometimes hard put to cope with the changes and challenges they bring about. While we are quite confident of what we need to do, there is at the same time the nagging fear that the rapid advancement of science and technology might still leave us behind in terms of the mastery of new skills and administrative techniques.

7. Knowing what the future is going to be would certainly be extremely useful in drawing up the appropriate policies to meet these challenges.

Therefore the presence of Mr. Alvin Toffler among us and his readiness to address us today could not have come at a more appropriate time. His vast experience in management, and insight into global corporate development and emerging trends in science and technology make him more than preeminently qualified to talk to us of the economy and the business of the future.

8. An introduction on Mr. Toffler has been circulated to all our guests tonight. So without further delay and on behalf of us all, I have the pleasure and privilege of welcoming Mr. Toffler and to request that he should take a peek at his crystal ball, and to share with us what he sees in store for Malaysia in specific and for the region in general.

With great pleasure I would now like to call upon Mr. Toffler to deliver his address.