

DAP's gamble that failed



Mr Lim Kean Siew . . .
"DAP test run a blunder"

PENANG, Sun. — The DAP propaganda that the Pengkalen Kota by-election was a test run for the 1983 general elections was a blunder, Penang MCA chairman Lim Kean Siew said here tonight.

"By claiming it to be a test run the DAP, in fact, threw open the question as to whether they would take over the Penang Government losing on the results of the Pengkalen Kota election itself," he said.

"They were hoping to claim, had they won, that their victory in the 1983 elections was a foregone conclusion. But they lost. And this led to their turmoil."

Mr Lim, who was the victorious Barisan Nasional candidate in the Pengkalen Kota by-election was speaking at a forum, "Pengkalen Kota and its implications for 1983," organised by the MCA Youth

Bukit Bendera division at Wisma MCA in Transfer Road.

He said the implications for 1983 were obvious. The DAP or opposition may have had a head start in many years of support given to opposition but this monopoly of opposition cannot be claimed by the DAP.

"They did not build up this opposition. The opposition was built up by others. They have only tried to inherit it."

Mr Lim said the MCA had won the by-election through its call for Chinese unity within the multi-racial context of the Barisan Nasional Government.

The second platform on which the party fought the by-election he said, was to ask the people to vote for the Barisan Nasional if they wanted progress.

"The significance that the Chinese of Pengkalen

Kota had shown was that they were not prepared to lose Chinese leadership in the State. They were not prepared to continue in the futility of empty opposition without any hope of progress or development," Mr Lim said.

To counter the MCA's call for progress, the DAP used education as an issue. "But this issue fell on damp ground because the Government had shown its decision to help and protect Chinese primary education," Mr Lim said.

"Education has always been a main platform in the DAP campaigns both inside and outside Parliament. This time they failed."

"For a long time also, the DAP has attempted to play race against race."

"They have attempted by propaganda, to appear as champions of the Chinese when in fact they are

run by a hot patch of disgruntled ambitious failures, not particularly good in anything except playing on unhappiness and dissatisfaction."

"The Pengkalen Kota by-election has demonstrated that the Chinese will not be attracted by such trashy propaganda and fall into such empty traps."

Mr Lim said the people would choose the right candidate in the right party.

"If the candidate is not known the choice can only be that of the party. On that basis, the unfortunate boast of Lim Kit Siang (the DAP secretary-general) and the post election turmoil within the DAP have exposed the dismal truth that the DAP, by itself, cannot claim to be the people's choice."

The Pengkalen Kota voters Mr Lim said, had in-

dictated that, given the right issues and right candidate, they could easily vote against an ineffective moribund opposition.

They had shown that they would use their intelligence and reasoning power and choose someone they felt could benefit the constituency as a whole.

"Had Lim Kit Siang not stated that the by election was to have been the pre-run into the 1983 elections, his propaganda failure would not have been so badly exposed" he said.

"But he chose that line and he must be prepared to accept its failure."

Mr Lim said the by-election showed clearly that the MCA could have the support of all the classes of the Chinese.

"All things being equal, with a body of good men left alone to carry through our promises and with support from the other parties within the Barisan Nasional, there is no doubt that the future of the MCA in the State is assured at least for the 1980's," he said.

"After that it will depend on our performance, integrity and calibre."