

05/12/1999

Don't accept duo, MCA told

Esther Tan

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - It would be foolish for any Barisan Nasional component party to accept the two Assemblymen who quit Gerakan on Thursday, Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik said today.

"We have a strong Government and we have enough members in the BN. If these people want to be independent politicians, let them. They should not be a source of friction in the BN," he said in response to the MCA's willingness to accept the two.

MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik had reportedly said that the party would accept former State Assemblymen Lim Chien Aun (Bayan Lepas) and Lim Boo Chang (Datuk Keramat) to prevent them from joining the opposition.

The two Lims left the party, after successfully defending their seats in the election, citing a lack of confidence in the State Gerakan leadership.

"I know it is MCA's right to take in anyone it wants. But for the sake of the BN, I hope it will do the right thing and follow the wisdom of (Prime Minister Datuk Seri) Dr Mahathir (Mohamad)."

He asked the two men to think over their decision carefully.

"They are being influenced by power-brokers who want to destabilise the BN."

Asked to name the "power-brokers", Dr Lim said: "You can see them ... they are surfacing in the Press."

Dr Lim also said at the Press conference he had not received party vice-president Dr Goh Cheng Teik's resignation letter.

Goh, the former MP for Nibong Tebal, said yesterday he was resigning from the party in support of Chien Aun and Boo Chang.

Dr Lim denied blaming Goh for the BN's defeat in Nibong Tebal. Rumour had it that Goh was upset at not being allowed to defend his seat.

Dr Lim said he had explained to Goh earlier that he had to make way for younger members.

"We have to be mature, disciplined and responsible. I was a deputy president for two terms but not given the chance to stand as a candidate for a long time."

The Gerakan leadership is trying to "rejuvenate" the party by replacing the old with the new. The younger members should lead the party into the new millennium. Unfortunately, he said, some members could not accept these changes.

(END)