

24/11/1999

Perceived errors must be judged against broader good BN has brought

Datuk Seri Yuen Yuet Leng

TOWARDS the end of an interview by the BBC with Chin Peng broadcast in 1997, the secretary-general of the Communist Party of Malaya explained the reasons for the failure of their armed struggle which started in 1948 and ended in 1989 with the signing of the peace accord in Haadyai, South Thailand.

Chin Peng, when asked by his BBC interviewer, said: "The mistake is that though we lived in Malaya, we didn't understand the real situation in Malaya. Malaya is a small country with multi-racial, multi-cultural backgrounds. So how to unite the people - this is a very complicated problem."

These words of Chin Peng revealed belated wisdom which took the CPM 40 years to realise and after a struggle which took so many lives on both sides.

Our early leaders Tunku Abdul Rahman, Tun Tan Cheng Lock and Tun V.T. Sambanthan had the vision, foresight and ability to mutually accommodate and compromise.

This brought about a government which has been voted back into power again and again since 1957, not without good cause.

Our present Prime Minister has guided this country with his characteristic dynamism, vision and determination to take Malaysia to greater heights, beyond our expectations, not only within the country but also internationally.

Above all, he brought about a new awareness that developed countries need to consult developing countries for a fairer distribution of wealth and opportunities if the spirit and essence of globalisation is to be sincerely achieved.

Perceived errors or malpractices must be judged against the greater and broader good that the Barisan Nasional Government has brought to our country.

Voting day is fast approaching. Do we want a change of government or a change in governance?

In the realities of the world today no handicap is given to new governments and when such generosity is extended it usually has its own agenda, declared or otherwise.

In the midst of personal frustrations, real or otherwise, subjective or objective, it is easy to be emotional.

We want to progress towards better standards of living and yet preserve our quality of life.

Vote wisely if we want to preserve the fruits of our struggles.

If changes and improved governance in areas of weakness are not seen in the next five years, then those who have registered in April, like me and many others, will know where we should cast our votes the next time around.

If I could, I unabashedly admit I would still vote for BN, not to please Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, but because the BN and the PM, in this time frame, are together still the best bet in the higher interests of the nation.

More Chinese should now have the courage to stand up to be counted during this election. You know where your votes should go. Whatever our race or religion, we must first be truly Malaysian.

I had been advised by a few not to write too much or there may be

unpleasant consequences in the future should Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim make a comeback.

I pray he hopefully has gained more wisdom from his present tribulations - as Chin Peng had done re the CPM's struggle against the Government.