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First order, then law facing Pas-deviants nexus

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THE Government's constant search for solutions would not end any sooner. But first order, then law.

I am reminded of Michael Fay's case who was convicted, fined and caned (reduced from six strokes to four following President Clinton's appeal) in Singapore for vandalism and mischief.

Would Clinton, the Western media and Western human rights activists and groups have bothered if Fay was a black American? Would the Western media, human rights groups and what have you, taken up the case if it had been Salleh, a Malay teen from Kok Lanas?

Whatever the Government does against the Al-Ma'unah, both the opposition and the Western meddlers would want to know why the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, did what he did.

Dr Mahathir should treat these Western meddlers as Lee Kuan Yew, who will be calling on him in less than 20 days' time, always did. The matter in the case of Al-Ma'unah is simple: a crime against the state and punishment. Criminals, agitators and the enemies of the state and those with intent to topple the Government had to be taught not to repeat or would think twice before repeating their crimes and attempts.

For sure, some of the Al-Ma'unah members are courting excuses to die as martyrs or syahid. Last Friday, hundreds of pro-Pas students at the University of Malaya staged protests against two pop concerts at Stadium Negara and called for jihad to protect the sanctity of Islam (what against pop concerts?). A poster reads "Andai kita terkorban nanti, percayailah syahid menanti kita - Heaven awaits martyrs".

They called for the shedding of blood to impose their minority will on the majority and Malaysia is only half-Muslim. Imagine if these people ever come to power and yet the DAP loyally strives hard to present Pas as a tolerant party whose existence is good for the working of parliamentary democracy.

The Malaysian Government must learn from Singapore how to deal severely with any religious group which is out at first to destabilise society, then start a revolution, capture the government and lastly round up their enemies and ministers - shoot or hang them. Then a theocratic state rules.

What happened in Grik and Sauk was disgraceful. What was exposed by Dr Mahathir is very disturbing and frightening. That Al-Ma'unah members, many of whom are Pas members, were ready to die as martyrs, according to their narrow perception of jihad, in their attempted and failed attack on the Batu Caves Hindu temple and the Carlsberg brewery in Shah Alam.

Pas, Al-Ma'unah and other satellite organisations, from their utterances and statements had indicated that they are not on all fours with our present form of Government they want instead an Iranian-type of government, a system rather popular with young Islamists and Pas members.

A militant Islam and theocratic nation is the luxury only of a nation with a huge majority of Muslims can afford. Malaysian Muslims cannot indulge in such a luxury because Malaysia is only half-Muslim.

The majority of moderate Muslims and other Malaysians are happy with the present mode of government in respect of religion and politics, nothing more nothing less, otherwise either way it will spark trouble.

What is occurring in Malaysian politics is very, very dangerous. The direction of which is predictable unless it is checked drastically and fast. Its development imperil national security, inter-racial and

religious harmony which can eventually lead to the disintegration of our melting pot.

There is no doubt that Pas politics of hate which starts early - from its kindergartens to the civil service corridors and even in the private sector - has borne fruit. The politics of Al-Ma'unah movement and that of the other satellite organisations is perhaps an extension of an irrational extremism (which unfortunately to many misguided people) and militancy within Pas itself.

There are slaughters being carried out in the name of religion in Maluku islands and in Algeria. The Government must act now rather than later to stop similar situations ever happening here.

The terrorists, using Islam as a cloak, had jeopardised the security of the nation, committed torture and murder. They deserve to be dealt with severely under the Malaysian law, and if necessary, even be detained under the Internal Security Act (ISA).

My colleagues and I were detained under ISA in 1976 (admittedly by an ambitious politician - "Ghulam" - who had thought detaining me and my friends would catapult him into the Umno leadership in 1978) and I knew what was like to be in a political prison for five years, two of which were in solitary confinement - deprived of even the most basic things and rights, degraded, assaulted and even tortured in some cases.

Still, I believe the use of ISA and other emergency regulation is not only justified but called for if the Government feels it is absolutely necessary to arrest the dangerous trend that will, if unchecked with haste, turn this beautiful country into Maluku islands and worse, an extreme theocratic nation.

Pas, which openly advocates and does Al-Ma'unah, turning racially delicately-balanced Malaysia into an Islam nation in the fashion of either Iran or Afghanistan, and at best Saudi Arabia, won overwhelming control of Terengganu and regained Kelantan very easily in the November 1999 general election, also won 27 seats in Parliament - its largest harvest since its inception in 1951.

Pas now wants to capture the central government. If it cannot do so through elections, and it knows it cannot, however, its militantly-indoctrinated young members and sympathisers will strive to cause a civil strife and even commit assassinations. Our multi-racial and moderate values and lifestyle are now under seige, which is evident everywhere.

I must be fair. Pas' indulgent attitude towards the Al-Ma'unah group is true to form which after all, as Dr Mahathir had observed, is the direct consequence of Pas' active overt and covert campaign of hatred against the Government, especially through Friday prayer sermons and religious lectures.

As Dr Mahathir had said, the level of gravity is high - to them, action speaks louder than words. The government must not play down the gravity of the situation. Speak up and act fast and boldly.

Now, Malaysians, including Malay-Bumiputras have seen what Pas and Al-Ma'unah feel about them (unless you are one of them) by what they do, rather than what they say, no matter how sweet to the undeaft ear.

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