

25/05/2001

After all they shoot horses, don't they?

Seri Menanti

Dear Sir,

THE Communist Chinese Government just shoots them like animals, well, by the firing squad. In some parts of Africa they are paraded and humiliated until they show some real remorse and repent. In many democratic Western countries they are sacked, then charged. If they are found guilty they are thrown in jail like any common criminal.

In the medieval ages the lords looking after the king's largesse would have their property confiscated and then they would be thrown into the dungeons and left there until they died. As late as the last century, some European countries paraded the culprits on the street smeared with tar and chicken feathers, to show to the people that they had committed a heinous crime.

Well, in this country there is still compassion, if I may say so. The punishment meted out to those found involved in corrupt practices is still more lenient and tame, compared to other countries, and other times.

In this country it has always been a tradition to weed out the "destroyers of the country's moral, social, political and economic fabric" by asking them to get the hell out of the system without creating any fanfare.

Now, whether or not our way of doing things is better than that of the Chinese, the Europeans, or the Africans, is not the question here, but the fact that we are dealing with the problem much more seriously than before is of paramount importance here.

Kudos to Umno, for being firm in its decision to disqualify and suspend many Umno members from holding party positions, when they were found to have been involved in money politics. The decision made by the party's highest body, the Supreme Council, to endorse any Umno disciplinary committee decision to disqualify members using money to win is also laudable.

This shows that the party is serious about combating the "phantom menace" of money politics, which if unchecked, will definitely destroy Umno. Umno is a political party, which has been responsible in equipping the Malays to enter the 21st Century.

Lately, many Umno members are still unclear with the concept of what is the meaning of holding party positions, or what it means to be leaders for the community.

Many still believe holding a party position is a passport to squander the country's resources, to abuse the system for personal gains and to run amok while in power.

Well, I believe the buck now stops, really stops, at Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's office door.

An Umno vice-president said the sincere efforts by Dr Mahathir to stamp out corruption within the party and the Government must be heeded.

"It must seriously be heeded at all cost. It is still not too late to do something about money politics. What Dr Mahathir does is to condition the people about the danger of money politics by weeding out those involved in money politics and corruption," said Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

In the past those accused of corrupt practices had always been vindicated when they presented their case to the party's disciplinary board. Somehow, these corrupters managed to use their wit and convincing lies to convince party leaders that they had been maligned. I believe

those lies and connivance were getting too heavy to bear and something had to be done.

As Dr Mahathir said corrupt practices among Umno members is like diabetes, the only thing to do is to amputate some toes and parts of the Umno body for it to survive again as the only party that counts in looking after the Malays' interests.

The decision not to allow Umno division heads to be involved in business is a good decision that should have been made a long time ago. Why did it take so long! Well. I was told that Umno members could come to their senses and could set their priorities right.

Unfortunately it was just wishful thinking among the Umno leadership when they found out that many division heads, and would be division heads, had abused their positions by dwelling on money politics.

Now we will be able to see how Umno will fare with money politics being reduced, and division heads not allowed to get involved in securing government contracts. There may be some of them who will leave the party since they are not able to make millions by being refused government contracts. But for those who have left for this reason, it is a blessing in disguise.

For those who believe in staying and deciding to be the sentinels for the Malay community, they may be rewarded in some other way, I am very sure of it.

Meanwhile, I have the feeling that many more Umno leaders will be purged from the party, and the sooner the party leadership does it, the better for the Malays, Umno and the country.

For Umno members who have been purged, if they threatened to leave the party then they should be allowed to do so. Umno must not allow members to hold the party for ransom, for this is not negotiable. Given the sincerity to resolve the general malaise that now exists within Umno, the party leadership must make further efforts to ensure that those responsible for exploiting the party for their own profit be censured, forever and ever. After all, they shoot horses don't they!