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NOCs! NOCs! Who's there?

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Dear Sir,

MANY Malaysian leaders, especially Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, have voiced concerns over the possibility of enemies from within, out to create chaos and confusion in the country. The enemies are out to destabilise the country for economic, political, and social reasons.

Why, some may ask, do these enemies want to cause Malaysia, for example, any great harm or hardship? Well, it is all about control, especially of the minds and hearts, natural resources and other items found to be valuable to them.

A country like Malaysia - small it may be - has potential to create problems to the international order just by being itself, or for being too independent vis-a-vis the strong norms and constraints of the world order in which we are supposed to subscribe to.

In this case, we are still in the Western sphere of influence, as opposed to the other "bloc".

This is just like when the children get too independent, and many methods will be employed by the parents to restrain or curb their child's independence. Some strict parents will resort to not too subtle methods to control the child, such as using canes and leather belts as deterrents so that the child does not get out of line.

In the case of developing countries like Malaysia, too strong a leadership spells trouble for any negotiations, bilateral talks or any other suggestions that may appear to be lop-sided or just a one-way street.

How is this being done!

Well, it has been revealed that intelligence organisations such as the Central In-telligence Agency (CIA) have thousands of intelligence officers believed to be serving as Non-Official Covers, or NOCs. A CIA retiree in a recent investigation disclosed this to an independent body out to uncover the extent of CIA involvements in spreading its power to control and destabilise any country that it deems uncooperative.

According to this investigation some familiar firms in the US' corporate hierarchy are involved in sponsoring NOCs overseas. These corporations are giants such as RJR Nabisco, Prentice-Hall, Ford Motor Co, Procter & Gamble, General Electric, IBM, Bank of America, Chase Manhattan Bank, Pan Am, Rockwell International, Campbell Soup, Sears Roebuck and many more.

The investigation says some smaller companies have also been known to be taking part in the NOC programme.

Shipping lines, mineral and oil exploration firms and construction companies with international operations, like the Bechtel Corp, often house NOC agents.

Unlike most CIA officers who are stationed abroad disguised as state department employees, military attaches or other government personnel attached to the US missions overseas, NOCs operate without any obvious links with the US Government.

NOCs are known to approach locals who otherwise would not come into contact with any US embassy official. Approaches by US embassy officials on Malaysian individuals and organisations sometimes are too close for comfort.

I am sure there are many Malaysian organisations and individuals who are part of the NOC programme with secret overseas accounts to be checked once

in a while. Using their business covers, NOCs also seek to recruit agents in foreign governments' economic ministries or gain intelligence about high-tech firms in computer, electronics, and aero-space industries. They also help track the development of critical technologies.

Although it is hard to determine among Malaysian organisations or individuals who are being recruited under the NOCs programme, it is not difficult to detect them. Most of them appear to have the entire lifestyle and means to survive. They are those identified as people or organisations hostile to the present regime or government.

NOCs recruits easily justify their *raison d'etre* by saying that they are doing something so right, while deep in-side they know they are doing it for the money.

NOC officers often pose as American businessmen in friendly countries, from Asia to Central America to Western Europe. There, they also recruit agents from the ranks of foreign officials and business leaders, pilferers of secrets and even conduct special operations and paramilitary activities.

The investigation also reveals NOCs frequently stay five, ten or more years in one place. During that time, the NOC is truly "out in the cold". Their contacts with control officers in the CIA station are strictly limited; they do not have access to embassy files; and they must report through secret communications channels and clandestine meetings.

NOCs came to reality with the inception of the CIA in 1947. A good example of NOC operation was when IT& T was involved with the CIA in overthrowing the democratically elected government of Salvador Allende's Chile.

The only thing that can really stunt the development of Malaysia is the fact that there are some among us who will sell and forsake something so dear such as our sovereignty and freedom for a few hundred thousand ringgit.

So long as a larger segment of us are aware of the existence of the NOCs working as a Trojan Horse within our midst, this is a start to flush these scums out of our system.

Also a word of warning for the Government: There possibly exist among the ministries of NOCs from various countries. You just have to be a lot smarter to identify them. The sooner the better!