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## The unmasking of Pas

SEVERAL inferences can be drawn from Pas president Datuk Fadzil Noor's action in calling upon Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer and briefing him on the country's internal affairs.

That it reveals the colonial mentality of Pas is an understatement. But more worrying is that Fadzil's thoughtless and reckless action assaults the nation's sovereignty. It insults our parliamentary democracy's integrity. It betrays the very people who voted Pas members as their elected representatives. It renders Pas' claim to patriotism hollow.

It has been argued that Fadzil, in his capacity as the Opposition leader, has the right to make courtesy calls on foreign governments. But this will not wash with the public. The Opposition's role does not include making representations to foreign governments.

This begs the question: Why would Pas want to pitch its tent with United States' most allied ally, Australia? The answer lies in Pas' bellicose vision to assume the political throne by garnering external support through utterances of soundbites soothing to Western ears such as "democracy", "transparency" and "human rights". It is an image-building exercise to depict a pro-Western ideals stand that it claims is compatible with its political goals.

We see it as an attempt to engage politically with Uncle Sam and his allies who are critical of the Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad-led Government and make no pretences that they would like a pliable leader in his place. We have no doubt that any dialogue, no matter how one labels the engagement, would only open the door for the US and her lackeys to exercise "peaceful intention" to crusade for human rights and greater democracy. Worse, it emits the message that political morality and patriotism are disposable abstractions.

The question that the public cannot afford to ignore is: Does Pas have the moral legitimacy to discuss domestic issues with foreign powers? Surely not. Its role, function and accountability as Opposition leader should be done in Parliament, not in the shadows of Australia's foreign office. Parliament is a forum where the Opposition can raise issues; air grousers; present oppositional views and alternative policy options. It should exercise its function as an alternative government in waiting in Parliament, not on foreign soil.

Pas' seduction of foreign powers shows it has no confidence in its ability to take part in the cut and thrust of adversarial politics. If Pas has no faith in the dynamics of the nation's parliamentary democracy, then it has no business to be in Parliament. It is paid by the tax-payers to do its job in Parliament, not tete-a-tete with aliens who care nought about the nation's interests.

Pas will consort with anybody as long there is political capital to be made. Its Janus-like status is apparent. Its willingness to thrive parasitically on external forces shows it will avert its gaze from brotherhood, faith and kin when it is in its interest to do so. Australia is America's satellite state, the latter being Israel's staunchest supporter. In courting Australia, Pas is putting itself into America's orbit - an indirect collusion with the powers it proclaims to wage its jihad against. It is an action antithetical to its ideological framework. But perhaps, today's Pas is more than willing to move the ideological terrain for the sake of political expediency.

Pas should remember the lesson bequeathed by Thucydides in the Peloponnesian War. The Melians waited for their "civilisational allies" to come to their aid when besieged by the Athenians. The allies did not turn up and the Melians perished, their world laid to waste.

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