

Fear and loathing in Putrajaya

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"A government big enough to give you everything you want is a government big enough to take from you everything you have."

- Gerald R Ford (The only American president to have served as vice president and president, without being elected by the Electoral College)

COMMENT "I am very disappointed that the very people whom I have helped by providing business opportunities and caring for their welfare have sabotaged me," moaned Mohd Ali Rustam, the former chief minister of Malacca. He is not the only one.

For the so-called winners of the much-disputed general election, Umno, and rest assured Umno is the only winner; the next big struggle is the internal conflict that would see a clash between the various power groups to determine who controls the gravy train.

As it is, the puppet master Dr Mahathir Mohamad has been carefully placing his proxies in strategic positions for the eventual Night of the Long Knives, which would see the end of the Najib administration.

NONE Nobody of course takes recently sworn-in Prime Minister Najib Razak's offer of "reconciliation" seriously for two reasons.

First, he obviously has no real intention of any form of reconciliation since he has made it clear that Umno propagandists like Utusan Malaysia are merely furthering his own narrative of Chinese ungratefulness and as such are immune from the "peace and stability" (sic) measures of the Umno state. The second, he is a lame duck prime minister.

Umno partisans are seething that the main reason why there are any Chinese or Indian members of parliament is because of Umno-Malay support.

After all, the numbers bandied about by the DAP - at one time it was 80 percent of the Chinese voting public supports DAP - and the shift of the Chinese vote was indeed a tsunami for Umno, which needed the fig leaf of MCA participation to project an image of 1Malaysia.

This is why I endorse Chua Soi Lek's stance of not participating in the Umno regime. This move on his part may be code for "you made your bed, now lay in it" kiss-off to the Chinese community, but it does inadvertently hasten the political and ideological demise of the racial power-sharing formula as propagated by Umno which eventually would have an effect no matter the Election Commission malfeasance on the voting patterns of Malaysians.

NONEMeanwhile my favourite Umno politician, the honourable gentleman from Rembau, Khairy Jamaluddin, opines that the MCA should participate in the coalition "because it would further aggravate the situation". What situation is that? If the Chinese abandoned MCA then surely with people like you in Umno who knows "the Chinese psyche", then their communal preoccupation would be taken care of, right?

Zulkifli and Kit Siang

In addition, how is this so-called process of reconciliation ever going to take place when a so-called moderate like you equates Lim Kit Siang with an "ethnocentric" radical like Zulkifli Noordin?

As anyone who reads my articles knows, I have my issues with the DAP as any rational person (who has not drunk the kool aid) would with any political party, but in what reality are you living in when you compare the rhetoric and actions of someone like Lim Kit Siang to the race and religion posturing of a hack like Zulkifli?

The former (is it too soon to refer to him as such?) MCA president's stand is far more morally justifiable than that of MIC leader M Saravanan who not only endorsed the Utusan piece but also went further and suggested that the government not help the Chinese who rejected the coalition in Sunday's polls. As anyone can see, the MIC is earning its scraps from the table.

Hey Hindraf, how is that MOU (I have a feeling that piece of paper will turn into an IOU, when the new potentate takes over) working out for you, now that the MIC is back in play?

Najib is a lame duck prime minister, who not only has to guard against the wolves in his party but has to do so without the support of the non-Malays, unlike Mahathir who relied on their help when he faced his Umno demons a couple of decades ago. I guess in Mahathir's case, it really is 'Melayu mudah lupa'. Where do you think the agenda of Hindraf is in all of this?

In my previous piece I wrote, "it all goes back to the simmering class tensions within the Malay community that Umno has managed to keep a lid on by its use of

gerrymandering, creation of instant citizens, racial/religious fear-mongering and of course, the handout culture". Mahathir, architect of these tools of nation-building, is erecting the banner to which all the right-wing forces in Umno will eventually flock.

NONENow, Mahathir and Umno are very well aware of the split in the Malay community that is why Mahathir's "greed" narrative concerning the plurality of Malay voices jostling to lead the country, is worrying to him and Umno.

When Mahathir says that the Chinese community "rejected the hand of friendship" extended by the Malays, he actually means extended by Umno. As it is, all this talk of reconciliation is most probably the dog whistle call to Umno provocateurs to sniff around a disorientated PAS with offers to forge a Malay/Muslim unity government to defend Islam and 'Ketuanan Melayu'.

With the loss of moderate voices in PAS like Mohamad Sabu and Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad, the influence of the so-called Erdrogans may wane. As it is, PAS spiritual leader Nik Aziz Nik Mat, the venerable warrior who views any partnership with Umno as anathema, stepping down from his menteri besar post is a clarion call for those who wish to muddy the waters of the relationship between PAS and Umno. This includes members of PAS who see a route to power in coupling with Umno.

Social contract, Umno style

Who knows how things will play out? The only thing we can count on is Mahathir's continuing contempt for the community he chooses to represent. By saying that only "sophisticated" or "educated" Malays vote for the DAP, he is essentially saying that only "hicks" or "ignorant" Malays vote for Umno.

This is probably why there has been a sustained effort to keep Umno vote banks cut off from mainstream development. Of course, I do not for one moment think that only "sophisticated" Malaysians vote for the opposition (the online discourse proves this) but I do think it points to how Umno views the people who vote for them or BN.

NONEDr Chandra Muzaffar (left) said, "The MCA lacks Chinese intellectual leaders who are able to convince the community that this was not the case and the interests of all are being taken care of."

In other words, following Mahathir and Chandra's logic, Umno wants "ignorant" Malays to vote for them, while Chandra wants "intelligent" Chinese to vote for BN. This is the social contract BN seeks to protect at all cost.

What is there to reconcile? Perhaps if Umno spelt out exactly why they feel this process needs to take place and define what they believe is the grievances of those who voted against them, perhaps I would understand, why this process needs to take place.

All I know is this: Umno wanted it bad but got it worse.

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