

No gov't should hijack its investigations

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By Steve Oh

COMMENT The dream of change has turned into a nightmare of retribution. It is maddening, desperate times.

The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) [appeal to God](#). They pray to “face the challenges”. What challenges? Who are “those who practise graft” they pray against? When law enforcers are in fear, and their heads go on leave at this critical juncture, indeed, God help us.

And when a leader says one thing and goes against the very thing he said, God help us too. Is PM Najib Razak caught out again when he said political donations ought to be [properly accounted](#) for but sees nothing wrong in the dubious RM2.6 billion banked in his personal bank accounts?

Hopes were high that *The Wall Street Journal* report on mysterious deposits in the bank accounts would nail the culprit. Instead in a clever 'tai chi' move he nailed his pursuers instead and packed them off in their political coffins. He is crafty. So was the serpent. Does the devil win? It ain't over yet until the next elections and the next.

In a dark land of twists and turns, the twist is the investigators are suddenly the investigated. So what are they investigating now?

How will finding out who leaked the information tell us where the money is? Which country acts to stymie its own investigations? It is weird, absurd and almost criminal.

The police are barking up the wrong tree. Why is the police cracking down on the MACC and doing the '[mad work](#)' and why are 'hidden hands' controlling the blitz on investigators?

Who is harassing and intimidating the MACC officers and obstructing their work? No wonder social media is full of public outrage. No wonder MACC staff have been brought to their knees in prayer. This is bizarre.

So much for the investigations that now appear cooked.

We know of kangaroo courts but a kangaroo investigation? A cooked kangaroo 'task force' where the investigators are investigated so they can't find the real crooks? And of the over-cooked audit report that's overdue and not likely to appear soon or ever?

And we are supposed to have '[more confidence](#)' in the cabinet reshuffle? Is someone playing a joke on the rakyat?

More unanswered questions

“They have returned to Najib,” laments former PM Dr Mahathir Mohamad, “those who came to me with the complaints.” What can the master expect but a dose of his own medicine for making his protege so much a chip of the old block?

It may take a thief to catch a thief but the master has yet to reveal his master stroke. With a record of 'knockouts', I doubt the master is about to allow his record to be broken. It is the lull before the storm.

If the RM2.6 billion is a donation, why did the MACC disclose it now and not wait for the special task force to reveal its findings?

Why didn't the recipient own up to it when WSJ first exposed it? Who and why would anyone give so much money to one person when the proper protocol is to send the money to the party treasurer?

Is the real allegation of conspiracy the conspiracy of concealment? And the desperate culprit does not want the public to know the truth? Will the MACC, when it stops praying, now investigate why so much money was donated and what happened to the money?

Should there not be a law to review political donations and limit how much money anyone can donate to a political party, who should receive donations and should not all political donations be published information?

If the 1MDB 'wealth fund' was such a great idea, why is there a sudden surge of sales of assets and frantic race to reduce debts? If it is such a great deal, why not come clean and show us the books?

Instead, even Mahathir tells us he is 'afraid' now to touch on the taboo subject. That's classic Mahathir's sarcasm. Even the 'devil' would be afraid of him. But is everyone afraid of the 'big bad wolf'?

'Auntie Bersih' and Adam Adli are not. They are now guests of the government. And it is a sound idea for people to pass the hat around to help pay for the bail money for those who can't afford it.

Global spotlight

I received an email on the global campaign to achieve four things for the country viz clean elections, clean government, save our economy, right to dissent. They are what successive governments promised. They are what people want. They are what those who will put the global spotlight on Malaysia will demand, and rightly so.

It will be quite a sight, countless Malaysians walking peacefully together in their streets all over the world. The 'diaspora dragon' is awake and who knows what an angry dragon may do.

Thomas Jefferson wrote, "The two enemies of the people are criminals and government, so let us tie the second down with the chains of the constitution so the second will not become the legalised version of the first."

Apt words. And that's what everyone is doing including countless citizens of the global Malaysian family in major cities on August 29-30.

They want their government to submit to the laws of the land. They don't want the arbitrary unconstitutional ways of a powerful politician to be the law. They want the constitution to be honoured.

What happens when a government is Jefferson's two enemies in one?

Whatever our beliefs and loyalties, it is wrong to allow anyone in power to steal from their own people and to force feed them with lies. It is not the legacy to leave our descendants.

They - the 'Aunties Bersih' and Adam Adlis - have all been defending the country's parliamentary democracy and insisting on fair elections and just governance and paying a heavy price for us all.

When the corrupt are not taken to task and the police do 'mad work', it looks like curtains for a country's integrity. Will it be like Italy when politicians were bedfellows with the mafia and magistrates exposing them were murdered?

Will a government look like 'organised crime' with all the trappings of a leader as godfather and the police as his henchmen?

The Italians took to the streets after too many murders and retook their government and saved them from the mafia. But it does not have to be that traumatic.

The Aussie example

For want of a good example of peaceful accountable governance, the Aussies have demonstrated how they deal with financial impropriety by their leaders.

Over the weekend, Lower House speaker Bronwyn Bishop from the ruling Liberal Party, was forced to resign over A\$260,000 worth of travel entitlements after three weeks of media and opposition pressure. She broke no law, only the propriety of mixing private trips with government business.

She owned up and apologised for her “sad mistake”. She didn't steal, she erred in making costlier choices to travel that upset the public. Australia may be 'down under' but its politicians are accountable. Former PM John Howard personally paid for the private segment of a foreign jaunt in the government's jet.

And when the police were used as henchmen for politicians in a cosy relationship with the then state Queensland government, the findings of the Fitzgerald Inquiry saw the corrupt cops and their boss sent to jail.

As did the Western Australian premier Brian Burke and his deputy David Parker over several thousand dollars of misused government funds after a royal commission into WA Inc. Yes, several thousands, not even hundreds of thousands.

Australia has a tainted colonial history but a corrupt politician will not be tolerated today. If the scandals that occur in Malaysia were to happen in that country, you can be sure the culpable politicians would be in jail and roasted on the Australian public barbecue until completely charred.

There is genuine parliamentary democracy in action and no wonder Australia is ranked among the least corrupt nations in the world not because there are no corrupt politicians but they are quickly brought to justice not shielded.

The political parties there don't act like members of organised crime and are toughest on their own corrupt party members.

Defending parliamentary democracy?

Those in a corrupt place with a dysfunctional system should spare us their dishonesty in saying they want to defend parliamentary democracy when they are doing the opposite.

How democratic is it to charge, among other things, the editor of *Sarawak Report*, suspend *The Edge* publications, impose travel bans on opposition politicians, and jeopardise the government's task force investigating 1MDB?

A government is suspiciously culpable if it allows criminal conduct by its leader or a minister or high-ranking official to get away with corruption even with murder by botching or blocking the course of justice.

The office of a country leader is far more important to the people than the selfish ambitions of any man.

The police should stop their 'witch-hunt'. Investigate by all means but after the task force has done its assignment and published its findings. Leave the MACC alone. Leave Bank Negara governor Zeti Akhtar Aziz alone. Leave the whistleblowers and task force alone.

Uphold justice, don't undermine it.

If a leader does good, he will be defended. If he does wrong, he will have to face the music. No one is guilty unless proven. That is why credible investigations are important.

Indeed, no government should hijack its own investigations.