

MCA history: DAP misleading public
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Lovely Jin

Shame on Ronnie Liu to even suggest MCA started off as a political tool of British power. Ronnie Lie is trying to twist MCA's history by writing off the real facts of the founding of MCA and Malaya's road to independence.

Tan Cheng Lock was always greatly concerned with the welfare of the Chinese in Malaya. He affirmed that all Chinese and Malays should be given equal rights and privileges enjoyed by the Europeans. Would a Chinese political tool to his British masters dare to speak up against the British in fighting for independence and equal rights? During his term as a member of the Straits Settlement Council by the British government, he voiced out his protest against the colonial government over the ill-treatment of the Chinese.

Would Malaya have achieved independence if not for the cooperation of MCA with Umno and MIC? After Cheng Lock passed away, Tunku Abdul Rahman eulogised in Parliament on Dec 20, 1960 that '... without his (Cheng Lock's) patriotic support in those early days, I might say here that my mission for independence could not have been achieved except probably at great loss in life and property'.

Who is Ronnie Liu trying to kid? When the so-called Independent candidate Ng Chee Pang submitted his nomination for the Batu Talam by-election recently in January, everyone could see through the puppet show whereby Chee Pang was the political tool of the DAP. Witnesses spotted Liu at the Batu Talam nomination centre too.

What is the ulterior motive of Liu in completely twisting the background of the Social Welfare Lottery programme and the resettlement to new villages? MCA was never out to make 'easy money' as Liu puts it.

Following the declaration of the Emergency Act in 1948, many Chinese Malaysians endured much suffering and hardship. The British expelled many Chinese from Malaya, a place where some had stayed for several generations. All their assets and properties were confiscated or burnt by the British. It was in these deplorable and chronic situation that Cheng Lock called for a meeting with the various Chinese organisations urging them to give their support to form the Malayan Chinese Association.

When MCA was formed in 1949, it was not a political party but a welfare organisation to look into the plight of Malayan Chinese who had become innocent victims of the communist insurgency. MCA intervened to prevent the British from repatriating some 500,000 Chinese settlers back to China. MCA helped resettle the Chinese into new villages by launching the Social Welfare Lottery in 1950.

Funds raised from the lottery were utilised to help poor Chinese build homes and to provide them with food, medication and other financial aid in the new villages. Additionally, other infrastructure facilities such as water supply, mobile clinics, Chinese primary schools, community halls and libraries were also gradually set up in those localities.

It was not a 'quid pro quo' between the MCA and the British as Liu alleges but a genuine undertaking and labourious effort to improve living conditions of new village settlers.

Liu accuses HS Lee and Leong Yew Koh of selling out on our rights and interests but does not detail how. All we hear are just endless complaints. The rights of every rakyat Malaysia are contained in the Federal Constitution. Articles in the Federal Constitution are very balanced, without favouring one race over another. Article 153(7) of the Federal Constitution clearly states that the special position of the Malays shall not operate to deprive the rights and privileges of any persons.

Liu also accuses MCA of not defending our right to mother-tongue education. The MCA has never sold out on the rights of Malaysians to attend Chinese schools. Till today, parents may send their children to Chinese primary schools. In an address at the general assembly of Chinese School Teachers and Chinese School Boards in Kuala Lumpur on Dec 4, 1971, Tan Siew Sin gave the assurance that the future of Chinese education in Malaysia was guaranteed under the Federal Constitution and '... there should be no doubt about the future of Chinese education in this country. This is guaranteed under the Federal Constitution'.

In conditions paving the way for Independence, Tunku Abdul Rahman in 1955 laid out to the British Secretary of State for the Colonies Alan Lennox Boyd that '... in respect of education ... the Chinese and Indians insisted on having their own schools and this should be allowed'. Tunku's recollection clearly indicated that Chinese schools would remain as part of Malaysia's education landscape.

Liu pathetically tries to spark acrimony between Tan Siok Choo (grand-daughter of Cheng Lock) and Ooi Kee Beng by stirring up their public exchanges. However, Kee Beng has acknowledged that the word 'founder when referring to the MCA is used by some in a highly-specified manner to mean that Cheng Lock was the only founder and that other figures were among Malayan Chinese who provided the organising energy that helped Cheng Lock to get the political party off the ground.'

Shame on Liu for sinking to the lowest level of politicking by distorting historical facts and undermining the entire efforts and contributions of MCA in the early days. Why is he slandering Cheng Lock and other notable figures in MCA history who had toiled so much to give our country independence and to improve the lives of new village settlers? His attacks have become very personal, completely devoid of accuracy.

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