

PKR's deplorable attitude towards dissent and criticism
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I was one of those PKR members who went on the morning of Nov 27th to the Petaling Jaya Civic Hall to express openly our disagreement and dissatisfaction with the way the party elections had been conducted and its failure to be clean and fair.

Our intention was to demonstrate peacefully and in an orderly manner without disturbing the public or anyone in particular.

However, I was very disappointed and saddened to observe how nowadays PKR responds to any display by party members of any stand or opinion which differs or is not in line with what the party wants.

I had participated before in the Reformasi street demonstrations of 1998-2002 protesting against the injustices committed by the Mahathir regime on Anwar Ibrahim and couldn't help comparing what happened on Nov 27 to what I witnessed during the Reformasi demonstrations of 1998-2002.

PKR which was born from the spirit of defiance and in protest against injustice is expected to be understanding and tolerant of peaceful demonstrations which are just open expressions of dissatisfaction and unhappiness.

What more when we the demonstrators are its own party members, not from Umno or MIC or MCA or any BN party.

However, it did not turn out that way. The response from the party was not far different from the way the police or FRU acted during the 1998-2002 street demonstrations.

Our banners and posters were seized from us by members of the PKR security squad, just like what the police did back in the 1998-2002 street protests.

Our demonstration though peaceful and orderly, was met with hostility by the party. We were subjected to verbal abuse, harassed and prevented from gathering at the public space we wanted.

Members of the media who were just doing their professional duty in covering and recording our demonstration were yelled at and were issued threats to stop their coverage.

Some of us were roughed up as soon as our intention to demonstrate at the congress venue was known.

In short, if PKR that morning of Nov 27th had water cannons or tear gas or the FRU at their disposal, I am convinced it would not have hesitated to use them all to disperse or suppress our peaceful demonstration.

This is what PKR has come to nowadays. A party which was supposed to uphold and practice the ideals of free speech and free press, clearly has forgotten those ideals. What is the cause of this loss in direction?

If a fish rots from its head, I dare say PKR is now rotting because of its leadership which is drunk and obsessed with gaining the reins of government, so much so that it has forgotten the original aims of the party which was to reform and bring genuine change to the country for the sake of our children and grandchildren.

To me, PKR now is not much different from BN/Umno. The date Nov 27 010 is one which really saddens me.

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