

Newspaper	The Star
Date	16 September 2015

Let's see who the red shirts are

It is far better to face the problem than to have them hidden away.

The Star - 16/9/2015

BY the time this is published, the red-shirt rally should be well underway.

Good luck to them, I say.

I support everybody's right to assemble, even if I find their purpose for assembling repulsive.

You see, this is the difference between those of us who truly believe in democracy and those who support the manifestations of democracy only when it suits them.

One of their reasons to gather is to demand that Bersih can no longer gather – ironic, it is true. Although the concept of irony is probably beyond their little red brains.

There are those who say that the red shirts are advocating violence, therefore they don't have a right to assemble.

This is true; the Constitution is very clear on this. One of the limita-

tions on the right to gather is that it has to be peaceful.

But the organisers are now insisting they are peaceful, so let's just see what happens.

Some of you may say I am being blasé about the whole thing. After all, there have been many clearly violent sounds coming from this red lot. Posters inciting racial hatred and killing have been making their rounds, apparently.

I haven't seen any of them, so I won't comment. But what I do know is that it is far better to see the problem than to have them hidden away. And this lot are definitely a problem.

No matter how they try to paint themselves, the fact remains that this bunch got united together by one fact, that they are racial supremacists.

They now say that the rally is for national unity. How disingenuous; how utterly moronic.

For weeks it has been blood-curdling screams about so-called "Malay Dignity" and now suddenly they claim to be all cuddly and about national unity? Give me a break.

This rally is about nothing less than maintaining that notion of "Ketuanan Melayu".

They have a list of demands that reflect this, including the abolishing of vernacular schools, and get this, the return of the Internal Security Act. And now they are inviting non-Malays to their little gathering, almost as an afterthought, to show their "national unity" credentials, I suppose.

By all means go and join them if you want to support the idea that

somehow one race is superior to others.

As it is, Malays control the Government, the Government-Linked Companies, the police, the military, and the education system; everything except the private sector.

After 58 years of affirmative action, whose fault is that?

If these people had any "dignity", they would be ashamed at having to act tough all in order to say they should perpetually be on crutches.

If they had any dignity, they would demand fair treatment for all in the public and the private sector so they can show their mettle on a level playing field.

But they won't because what they want is a status quo where they can lord it over everyone else, not because they deserve it but because

the law and policies allow it.

Let there be no mistake, Malaysia is not some happy clappy fairyland of racial unity, and there are those who will insist that this country is split between the first class and the second class citizens.

So, I hope they all come out. All of these folks who believe whatever these red shirt-types believe.

Let them show their faces so that we know who they are and let us also look out for who their supporters are. Let it be clear that for those of us who want a progressive, inclusive, plural and just Malaysia, these are the people who stand in our way.

Azmi Sharom (azmi.sharom@gmail.com) is a law teacher. The views expressed here are entirely the writer's own.