

MCA Youth regrets criticism of Barisan leaders

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KUALA LUMPUR: MCA Youth has expressed regret at the strong criticism against certain MCA, Gerakan and MHC leaders at the Umno Youth general assembly, saying delegates should refrain from making fiery and emotional statements.

Its chief Datuk Liow Tiong Lai said the criticisms were made although Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak had asked delegates to refrain from making irresponsible statements that would hurt the feelings of other races.

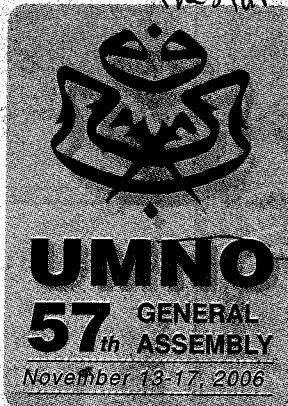
Describing it as more "poiso-

nous and unreasonable than the opposition," the MP for Bentong said Barisan component leaders must take into account the importance of all races when implementing any policy.

"We are not against the New Economic Policy spirit but we are now in the National Vision Policy, which carries out the spirit of the NEP," he told a press conference at the Parliament lobby yesterday.

He said he hoped the Government would keep its promise to implement the NVP in a comprehensive manner and that it must implement what had been discussed by the National Economic Consultative Council to benefit all races.

The Youth and Sports Deputy



Minister also said that there was no need to raise the issue of Deputy Higher Education Minister Datuk Ong Tee Keat as the matter had been resolved at Cabinet level.

Tee Keat did not criticise Hishammuddin (Education Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein), as he explained in Cabinet. He was merely exposing the misappropriation that occurred in Chinese schools which was raised by the school's board of directors," he added.

Also present was MCA Youth secretary-general Dr Wee Ka Siong, who said that the NEP spirit was not mainly about equity percentage but about eradicating poverty for all races and restructuring society.

Later at a separate press conference, Ong, who is an MCA vice-president, said he would let the people judge the "scathing" remarks made against him at the

Umno Youth assembly.

He said any delegate at any assembly would have the liberty to raise any issue.

Ong said that in Malaysia, most of the politicians, including him and other heavyweight leaders, were elected with the support from all races and not solely on the support of one particular community.

On Tuesday, Hishammuddin, who is Umno Youth chief, said that opportunistic leaders who stoked the "fires of disunity" had no place in Barisan Nasional.

He said Malaysia could not be moulded by the narrow-mindedness, chauvinism and extremism of those who play the racial card in order to emerge as champions of their race.