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**This Day
In the
Last 18 Months**

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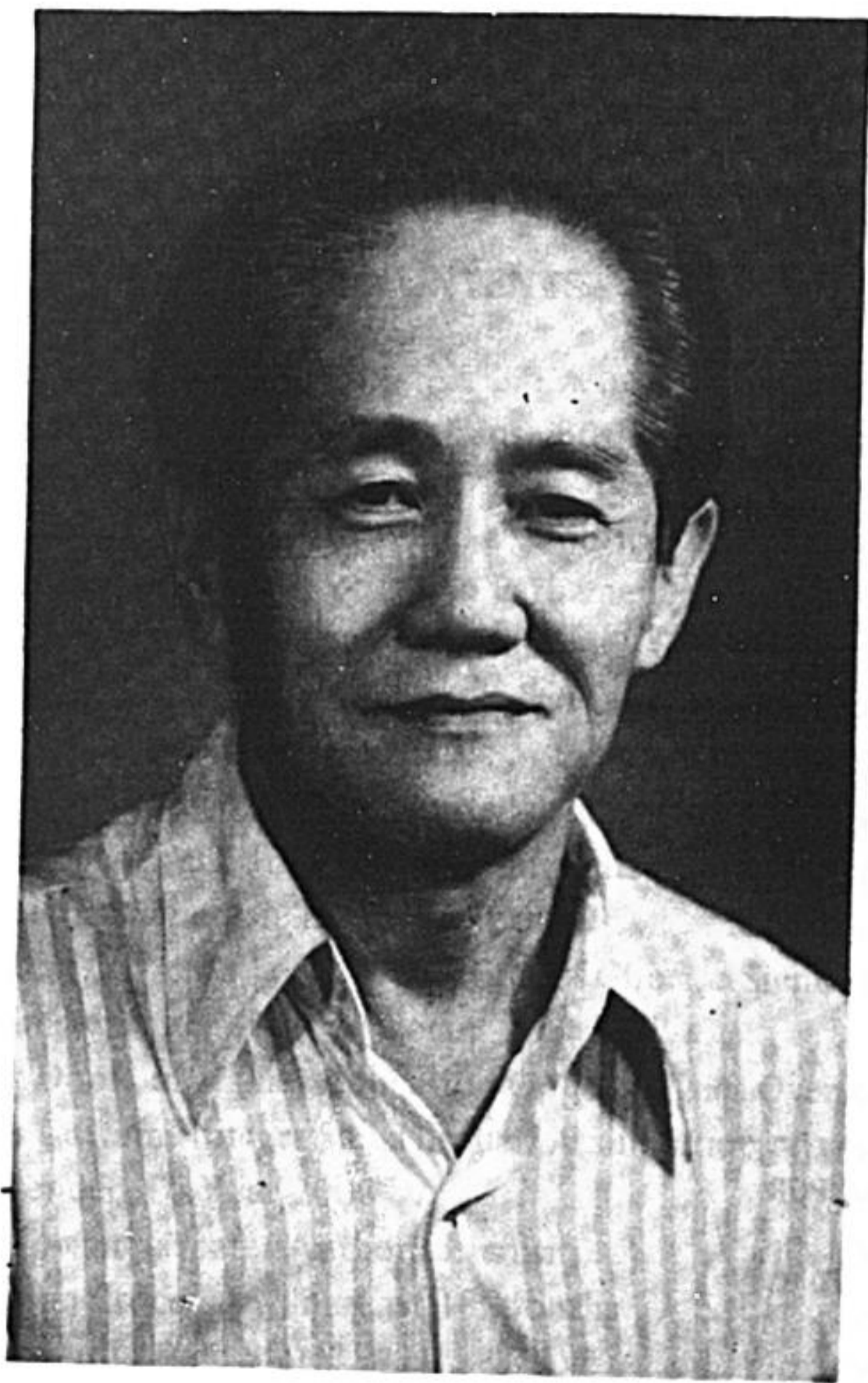
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PERPUSTAKAAN NEGARA
MALAYSIA



Sdr. Dr. Chen Man Hin
Our Candidate for the Seremban By-Election

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INTRODUCTION

ON 22ND OCTOBER 1983 the DAP formally announced the party's candidate for Seremban, Dr. Chen Man Hin, because exactly 18 months ago, on 22nd April 1982, the voters in Peninsular Malaysia gave the Barisan Nasional an unprecedented landslide victory, and the people of Seremban voted in Datuk Lee San Choon as their Member of Parliament, and started the process in the drastic erosion of the people's political, economic, educational and cultural rights.

As far as the DAP is concerned, the Seremban by-election will decide, not so much as to whether Dr. Chen or the DAP wins, but whether the people of Seremban would act on behalf of all Malaysians to launch the Seremban Campaign to roll back the extremist forces which reared their ugly heads 18 months ago.

In the last 18 months since the last general elections, the people have lost their basic rights faster and in even greater degree than the 25 years from 1957 to 1982.

For quite some time, Radio and Television Malaysia had introduced a daily series known as 'Hari ini dalam sejarah' to acquaint Malaysians about the historical developments of the country. Unfortunately, the 'Hari ini dalam sejarah' has completely denied the historical role and contribution of the Chinese, Indians and other races to the making of Malaysia, in the same way that the Examinations Syndicate of the Education Ministry, in the history paper of the Std. V Assessment Test recently, had denied the historical contribution of Yap Ah Loy in the opening up of Kuala Lumpur.

The DAP takes the Seremban by-election very seriously, not as an occasion to 'trivialise' the occasion as the Acting MCA President, Datuk Dr. Neo Yee Pan, is doing, but as an important political occasion for the people of Seremban as well as for all Malaysians to understand greater the political deve-

lopments and trends in the country, which would affect the lives and future of all Malaysians including the generations yet unborn.

With this in mind, the DAP will begin today introduce a series known as **'This Day in the Last 18 Months'** to remind Malaysians as to the degree their political, economic, educational and cultural rights had been eroded away in the last 18 months as compared to the 25 years from 1957 to 1982, and why they must make a decision to halt the erosion process of the last 18 months.

This series of **'This Day in the Last 18 Months'** would go on until 17th November 1983, although we can go on for months to remind the people of their lost rights as a result of the April 22, 1982 landslide victory of Barisan Nasional and the disastrous defeat of the DAP, but these 18 days should make Malaysians realise the urgent need to undo the political darkness of the last 18 months.

I challenge Datuk Dr. Neo Yee Pan to present their own series of **'This Day in the Last 18 months'** to highlight the new rights in political, economic, educational and cultural spheres which the people had won. It is impossible for Datuk Dr. Neo to do so, for he would not be able even to point out one single new right which the MCA's great political breakthrough had achieved for the people, in particular the five million Malaysian Chinese.

Lim Kit Siang
Seremban,
31st. October, 1983.

October 31, 1983

BN LANDSLIDE VICTORY

Root Cause of Erosion of People's Rights.

ON THIS DAY IN MARCH 1982 (31.3.82), the press carried an interview by the Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir Mohamed, why he is calling an early general elections although Parliament had another 16 months before completion of its full term.

Dr. Mahathir said he wanted to get a mandate from the people *'so that we can get on with the new ways of implementing our policies.'*

The DAP had warned during the April 1982 general elections that a great victory for the Barisan Nasional would be regarded as public approval for the whole range of the government's nation-building policies, as well as mandate for Dr. Mahathir to carry out his policies, especially those he expounded in his famous political work, 'The Malay Dilemma' in 1970.

The DAP's warning was not heeded, and the DAP suffered the greatest electoral defeat in our political history. But as we had forewarned, the Barisan Nasional's unprecedented general elections victory was regarded as a 'mandate' as well as a 'blank cheque' to carry out the Barisan Nasional policies especially those conceived in the 1970s, as well as putting into practice the ideas which UMNO leaders had espoused but until now had not dared to articulate let alone implement them.

These ideas which are being implemented one after another in the short period of the last 18 months include:

1. The proclamation of a 'one language, one culture' policy at the Official Opening of Parliament immediately after the 1982 General Elections;
2. The implementation of the 'one language, one culture' policy by the different levels of government throughout the country in all fields of national life;
3. The open declaration of a policy of 'cultural assimilation' as the objective of the National Cultural Policy;
4. The launching of the process of Islamisation in the country;
5. The discrimination against mother-tongue education;
6. The denial of equitable places for university education for all Malaysian students;
7. The concentration of political power in the hands of the Prime Minister and serious erosion of freedom of expression, press and assembly.
8. The reduction of Parliament as a rubber-stamp for the Cabinet because of the overwhelming majority of Barisan Nasional.
9. The repudiation of the election pledge of the Barisan Nasional to have a 'clean, efficient and trustworthy government';
10. The announcement that the New Economic Policy will be extended from 1990 to year 2,000.

In the next 18 days, we will examine in greater detail the erosion of the political, economic, educational and cultural rights as a result of the 'mandate' given to the Barisan Nasional in the April 22, 1982 general elections.

November 1, 1983:

“Political Breakthrough” Becomes a “Political Let-Down”

ON THIS DAY IN MAY 1982 (1-5-82) the people's main talking point is still the new Cabinet formed by Dr. Mahathir Mohamed two days earlier after the Barisan Nasional's unprecedented landslide victory in Peninsular Malaysia and the DAP's disastrous general elections defeat.

Datuk Lee San Choon had won in Seremban and proclaimed the MCA's general elections victory as a '*political breakthrough*' for the Malaysian Chinese. As Datuk Lee boasted to MCA MPs after the general elections, the MCA '*had attained the degree of representativeness it sought from the Chinese community*'.

With such a great political breakthrough for the MCA, the people had expected this to be reflected in the new Mahathir Cabinet formed after the general elections.

The people still remembered the MCA Youth Resolution only six months ago demanding for the appointment of a MCA Deputy Prime Minister. In the flush of its '*breakthrough*', MCA leaders also went round telling the people that the MCA would be demanding for more MCA Ministerial and Deputy Ministerial posts.

But what a let-down when Dr. Mahathir Mohamed unveiled his new Cabinet. There was not only no MCA Deputy Prime Minister, no additional Minis-

ters and Deputy Ministers for the MCA, the MCA was not even able to get back the previous important Cabinet posts which were once the traditional posts of top MCA leaders like the Finance Minister and Trade and Industry Minister.

As MCA President, Datuk Lee San Choon, continued to occupy the secondary Cabinet post as Transport Minister, previously the traditional seat of the MIC President!

In a matter of days after the MCA's unprecedented elections victory, the MCA *'political breakthrough'* has become a *'political breakdown'*!

This is what Datuk Lee San Choon said in his victory press conference on 24th April 1982 on the MCA's unprecedented general elections gains:

"You will recall that before nomination day, I called on the Chinese voters to state in no uncertain terms whom they wanted to represent them to lead them politically – the MCA or the DAP.

"The decision of the Chinese voters is now there for all to see. Everywhere the DAP has been rejected – totally and comprehensively.

"At no time in Malaysian history has the Chinese voters spoken with such conviction. On no other occasion have they made their intentions so clear and so simple."

It is also very clear, 18 months later, that the MCA has absolutely nothing to show in terms of restoring the people's political rights despite its self-proclaimed *'breakthrough'*.

The MCA's political breakthrough has not been able to redress the imbalance of political power as reflected in political appointments or in key public service appointments.

For instance, in the last 20 years since the establishment of University of Malaya, there has not been a single Malaysian Chinese or Malaysian Indian who had been appointed to become Vice-Chancellor of anyone of the five local universities. Is this because there is no Malaysian Chinese or Malaysian Indian who is academically or professionally qualified for the post of University Vice Chancellor in Malaysia? The MCA's April 1982 General Elections *'breakthrough'* therefore is empty and hollow.

On 2nd June 1983, following the resignation of Datuk Lee San Choon from the Cabinet, Dr. Mahathir Mohammed carried out a Cabinet reshuffle.

Again, there was no MCA Deputy Prime Minister, no restoration of the posts of Minister of Finance and Minister of Commerce and Industry to the MCA, nor were there extra Cabinet posts for the MCA. But what is worse, the Acting MCA President, Datuk Neo Yee Pan, was retained in the third-slot Cabinet position of Minister of Housing and Local Government, unable even to get the secondary Cabinet post of Transport Minister.

The post of Transport Minister vacated by Datuk Lee San Choon as MCA President was given to Tan Sri Chong Hong Nyan, MCA Secretary-General, who is clearly rated higher in UMNO eyes than Datuk Neo Yee Pan.

No wonder, in the Seremban by-election, Datuk Neo Yee Pan had to get the UMNO President's personal clearance for the MCA candidate.

Surveying the drastic erosion of political rights which started 18 months ago as a result of the MCA's *'political breakthrough'*, it would be apt to say that the people of Seremban, as well as the people of Malaysia, want to weep except they have no more tears!

November 2, 1983:

MCA Wants Less Chinese Voters in Parliamentary Constituencies.

ON THIS DAY IN AUGUST 1983 (2.8.83) Malaysians Chinese must have got a shock of their life when they read in the newspapers of the MCA proposal in Parliament to dilute the already grossly under-represented political power of the Malaysian Chinese in the country.

In the debate on the Constitution Amendment Bill (1983) which among other things seeks to increase another 22 new parliamentary seats to a total of 176 in Malaysia in the redelineation of parliamentary constituencies, the MCA Member of Parliament for Lumut, Ng Cheng Kuai, presented the formal MCA proposal to Parliament that the new electoral constituencies should be drawn in such a way that there would be no parliamentary constituency with more than 60 per cent Malaysian Chinese voters.

This MCA proposal is most shocking as the MCA claims to be the party which is the sole legitimate champion of the Malaysian Chinese, especially after the April 22, 1982 general elections, and wants to reach the position of 'Chinese is MCA and MCA is Chinese' in the way 'Malay is UMNO and UMNO is Malay'.

Yet the UMNO had never entertained any proposal that the electoral constituencies should be drawn in such a way that no constituency would have more than than 60 per cent Malay voters. This is because the UMNO knows that their MPs and Assemblymen are elected on Malay votes, while MCA knows that their MPs and Assemblymen cannot depend on Chinese votes!

This is why immediately after their landslide general elections victory in April 22, 1982, the MCA wanted Chinese political power to be slashed even further! The MCA knows that it is impossible to redelineate constituencies in Kelantan, Kedah, Perlis and Trengganu where there would be less than 60 per cent Malay voters. In fact, there would be constituencies in these states where the Malay electorate would be as high as over 80 or 90 per cent in some constituencies.

The MCA knows, however, that it is perfectly possible to redelineate urban constituencies like in Penang, Perak, Selangor, Negri Sembilan and Malacca, Johore where no single urban constituency would have more than 60 per cent Chinese voters. It is only in this way that the MCA can be assured of winning these seats in the rest of the 1980s and 1990s, based on UMNO's votes!

The successive MCA generation of leaders since Merdeka had agreed to the unfair and unequal political system where the Malaysian Chinese's political power is not fully reflected by their numbers.

Thus, in 1974, under Datuk Lee San Choon's leadership, the MCA agreed to a Constitutional amendment which discarded the 'one-man, one-vote' principle in the redelineation of electoral constituencies. This is why I marvel at times at the capacity of MCA leaders for deception and hypocrisy when they lament in their speeches about the lack of political power of the Malaysian Chinese, when they are the very ones responsible for such a political system. And now, after the April 22, 1982 general elections victory, the MCA want the political power of the Malaysian Chinese, which is already so under-represented, to be even further diluted.

The people of Seremban must make clear their rejection of the MCA proposal to reduce further the weak political power of the Malaysian Chinese. We should in fact be fighting for the restoration of their political position and power as equal Malaysian citizens whose one vote is equal to another citizen's one vote in electing MPs and Assemblymen and in determining the political destiny of the country.

November 3, 1983:

MCA's Silence on the Loyalty of Malaysian Chinese

ON THIS DAY IN OCTOBER 1982, (3-10-82) five months after its unprecedented general elections victory in the April 22, 1982 general elections, the MCA held its General Assembly with euphoria and joy for, as Datuk Lee San Choon, the MCA President, had said earlier, the MCA had achieved the *'degree representativeness it sought from the Chinese community'* at long last.

The MCA invited the Acting Prime Minister, Datuk Musa Hitam, to declare open the MCA General Assembly where the MCA was, for the first time, fully representative politically of the five million Malaysian Chinese in the country.

What happened? Datuk Musa launched an attack on the 'loyalty' of Malaysian Chinese to Malaysia, which is not confined to those who have emigrated abroad, but including those Malaysian Chinese in the country who dare to stand up and criticise Barisan Nasional policies and measures.

The MCA, in the full flush of their 1982 general elections victory, represented the five million Malaysian Chinese to meekly accept Datuk Musa Hitam's rebuke of the Chinese community in Malaysia.

This is what Datuk Musa said:

"And when we speak of love and loyalty to the country, we cannot run away from the suspicion or prejudice that certain quarters of a certain community in this country live hypocritically.

"This prejudice arises because it is said that though these people pledge loyalty to this nation, at the same time they smear the administrative system, the legislature and the policies of Malaysia.

"This prejudice gains currency because there are Malaysians who incessantly talk of their undivided loyalty but act as thorns in the flesh, as enemies from within. They stab us from the back."

It is clear that Datuk Musa was not merely referring to former Malaysians who had emigrated abroad, but was also directing his fire on those who 'smear the administrative system, the legislature and the policies of Malaysia' from within, for only they could 'stab us in the back'. Those who had renounced or lost their citizenship could never become 'enemies from within' or 'stab us from the back' for they are no more Malaysians.

This is a great libel against the Malaysian Chinese, but the MCA, fully representing the political interests of the Chinese as a result of the 1982 general elections result, also represented the Malaysian Chinese to accept this rebuke! If Datuk Musa had made such libel in a DAP function, we would have stopped him from speaking, and if he had already spoken, we would have immediately adopted a resolution to deplore his speech and uncalled for attack on the loyalty of Malaysian Chinese to this country.

By its silence, the MCA was in fact admitting that Datuk Musa Hitam was right and justified in his Opening Address.

Is this the '*political breakthrough*' the MCA is talking about when it asked the voters to elect Datuk Lee San Choon in Seremban and MCA candidates elsewhere?

It was left to the DAP, despite our disastrous general elections defeat, to lead the attack on Datuk Musa's speech, especially during the Parliamentary debate on the Royal Address.

Datuk Musa Hitam's speech was most uncalled for, especially as there was an imputation that Malaysian Chinese who criticise the administration and policies of the government are 'disloyal', while Malaysians of Malay origin are not similarly suspected if they criticise government administration and policies. Are there two types of Malaysian citizens as a result of the April 22, 1982 general

elections victory of the Barisan Nasional where one whole community are to become second class citizens in terms of their political rights?

The DAP has made its position clear that it could not agree with Malaysians who emigrate abroad because of disagreement and frustration with the Barisan Nasional policies, as such migrants are acting in a very selfish manner in putting their self and family interest above the interests of the community and country. They should stay behind to fight for changes to undo the injustices and inequities perpetrated by the Barisan Nasional.

But their selfishness do not make them disloyal or all the Barisan Nasional leaders who are corrupt and made use of their political position for personal gains should be stripped of their Malaysian citizenship for the crime of disloyalty to Malaysia! By the same logic, all the Bank Bumiputra and Bumiputra Malaysia Finance Directors and officials who, by Dr. Mahathir Mohamed's description are guilty of moral wrong-doing although have not broken any law, should also be declared publicly and openly as 'disloyal' to Malaysia and be stripped of their titles and civic rights!

While we in the DAP disagree, regret and even oppose such emigration of Malaysian 'brain power' abroad, we fully understand the underlying reasons for their action; which is not to make more money abroad, but primarily to secure for their children educational justice and future which is denied them in Malaysia as a result of the Barisan Nasional policies.

Barisan Nasional leaders whose policies are directly responsible for driving Malaysians overseas have no moral right to criticise Malaysians abroad, for they are chiefly responsible for such emigration. Those who emigrated are wrong, but even more wrong are those who formulated and implemented policies which forced Malaysians to emigrate. Why attack a smaller wrong while leaving unmentioned a bigger wrong?

I myself had been attacked for being 'disloyal' and 'anti-national' in Parliament by extremist UMNO MPs when I spoke up for the rights of the Malaysian people to educational equality, economic justice, political rights and fundamental liberties. I had been told more than once in Parliament that if I did not like the Barisan Nasional government policies, I could 'get out' of Malaysia. My response to such extremist utterances is that if the extremists do not like to hear the DAP's voice representing the people's hopes and aspirations, the UMNO

extremists could 'get out' of Malaysia, for all citizens are equally entitled to the Malaysian soil without any one community or class claiming superior rights.

The tragedy is that in such cases, the extremist UMNO MPs would have the full support and applause of MCA MPs to ask DAP MPs to 'get out' of Malaysia!

There is a great distinction between 'loyalty to country' and 'loyalty to government'. **The DAP owes absolute loyalty to Malaysia, but we owe no loyalty to the Barisan Nasional government.** It is tragic that one of the fruits of the landslide Barisan Nasional general elections victory in April 22, 1982 is the questioning of the loyalty of Malaysian Chinese to Malaysia!

November 4, 1983:

Raub's Rejection of the "One Language One Culture" Policy

ON THIS DAY IN JUNE 1983 (4-6-83) the people of Raub made a historic decision by giving the DAP a great victory in the Raub by-election with a majority of 1,846 votes to declare unequivocally and categorically their opposition to the Barisan Nasional's 'One Language, One Culture' Policy proclaimed in Parliament after the April 22, 1982 General Elections.

This was a full endorsement of another equally historic decision of the people of Kepyang on October 16, 1982 when in the Kepyang by-election the DAP won with a majority of 9,764 votes, which was fought basically over the Barisan Nasional's '*One Language, One Culture Policy*' proclaimed five days before the Kepyang polling day.

These two by-election results should have provided the MCA a strong argument to ask the UMNO to retract the '*One Language, One Culture Policy*', but unfortunately, the MCA leaders succeeded in convincing the UMNO leaders into believing that the Kepyang and Raub by-election results have no special significance and political meaning. Thus, the MCA leaders convinced Dr. Mahathir into saying that the DAP won Kepyang by-election because of 'pity votes' and Datuk Dr. Neo Yee Pan himself said that the DAP won Raub because of

'sympathy' votes. Furthermore, the MCA leaders claim that both were mere State Assembly by-elections and not a Parliamentary contest.

As such, there was no need for the Barisan Nasional government to review the *'One Language, One Culture' Policy*, and its wholesale implementation at all levels of government could proceed unhampered.

The MCA leaders, after their *'great political breakthrough'* in the April 1982 general elections had done the Malaysians a great disservice in endorsing the proclamation of *'One Language, One Culture' Policy* at the Official Opening of Parliament, as well as in blocking DAP efforts through the Kepayang and Raub by-elections to get the *'One Language, One Culture' Policy* reviewed and retracted.

In the Seremban Parliamentary by-election on November 19, the voters of Seremban must make it unmistakably clear that the people of Seremban fully endorse the declarations of the People of Kepayang and the People of Raub to declare their uncompromising opposition to the *'One Language, One Culture' Policy* and their demand for its repeal and withdrawal.

The Seremban by-election must put the aspirations of Malaysians for a Malaysia of *'many languages, many cultures'* at the centre-stage of national attention, and serve notice to all those who wish to create a Malaysia of *'one language, one culture'* that their policy is unacceptable and unworkable in a multi-racial, multi-lingual, multi-cultural and multi-religious Malaysia.

Even more important, the Seremban by-election must remove the obstacle to get the UMNO leaders to realise that their *'One Language, One Culture' Policy* is objected to by the majority of Malaysians, and must be reviewed and repealed. This obstacle is the attitude of the MCA leadership, and the people of Seremban must perform for the people and country a historic function by removing such an obstacle through a thumping defeat for the MCA in the by-election.

A clear-cut Declaration by the People of Seremban to oppose the *'One Language, One Culture' Policy* would complete the first step in the process started by the Kepayang and followed by Raub by-elections to re-establish the multi-racial, multi-cultural and multi-religious basis of Malaysia which came under sustained attack after the last general elections 18 months ago.

November 5, 1983:

MCA Afflicted by Corruption

ON THIS DAY IN OCTOBER 1982, (5-10-82), Johore MCA Chairman Datuk Teo Ah Kiang, was arrested by the Anti-Corruption Agency for corruption when he was Johore State Executive Councillor which he subsequently pleaded guilty on 12th January 1983 and fined \$4,000 or one year's jail by the Johore Bahru Sessions Court.

Previously, the Malacca MCA Chairman, Datuk Tan Cheng Swee, who was also MCA National Treasurer, was also charged and convicted of corruption.

There has been a long and intimate relationship between corruption and the politics of MCA, which probably explains why the MCA leadership do not have the 'backbone' to stand up to UMNO leaders on the rights of the people and in particular the five million Malaysian Chinese which the MCA claims to represent.

This is best illustrated by the 109 acre-Seremban International Golf Club land scandal which came to light in August 1982 where a choice piece of land was approved for sale to top political and government officials at a fifth of its market value. The land was formerly occupied by squatters who were evicted so that the top political leaders who already own property either in Seremban or elsewhere could get the choice land for housing at the give-away premium rate of only \$1/- per sq. ft. when it could easily fetch five or six times that amount in the market - resulting in the government and the public losing some \$10 million!

MCA leaders, including the Negri Sembilan State Chairman, Dr. Gan Kong Seng, Exco Member, was also publicly named as one of the beneficiaries of the Seremban International Golf Club land scandal, but neither he nor any MCA leader had a word to say to denounce political leaders who made use of their political positions for their own personal benefit.

DAP leaders had often been hauled to court by the Government but not for corruption or any criminal breach of trust for self-gain at public expense. Sdr. P. Patto and I had been charged in court under the Official Secrets Act 1972 for trying to save \$9 million of the taxpayers' money in the purchase of four SPICA-M Fast Patrol Crafts. Sdr. Lau Dak Kee and Sdr. N. Madhavan Nair had been charged in court for asserting the fundamental right of freedom of speech and expression against arbitrary police curbs. Sdr. Chan Kok Kit, Sdr. Chian Heng Kai and I had been detained under the Internal Security Act (in both their cases for close to five years) for our constitutional political struggle to bring about greater political freedom, economic justice, cultural democracy and educational equality for all Malaysians.

For the past 17 years, Dr. Chen Man Hin had contributed every single cent of his Parliamentary and State Assembly allowances to advance the political cause for a democratic socialist, Malaysian Malaysia. Sdr. Karpal Singh had provided free services in case after case of public interest litigation to carve new frontiers of civic rights of Malaysians against mounting government encroachments against fundamental liberties.

Other DAP leaders, like Sdr. Fadzlan Yahya, Sdr. Lee Lam Thye, Sdr. Dr. Tan Seng Giaw, Sdr. Liew Ah Kim, Sdr. Chong Siew Chiang, Sdr. Lee Kaw, Sdr. Fung Ket Wing, Sdr. Hu Sepang, had all to make great personal sacrifices.

This is why DAP leaders dare to stand up and speak out against all forms of corruption, malpractices, abuses of power and betrayal of the trust of the people by the powers that be. And this is also why MCA leaders dare not, and have the most disgraceful record in Malaysian political history in the fight against corruption and abuses of power, because MCA leaders are vulnerable to all sorts of pressures by the UMNO leadership.

The MCA's abysmal record in the war against corruption and malpractices is highlighted most vividly in the \$2,500 million Bumiputra Malaysia Finance loans scandal in Hong Kong — the biggest banking and financial crisis in Malaysian history.

Even some UMNO Ministers and leaders were sufficiently concerned to speak up against the BMF scandal and to ask for a public inquiry to get to the root cause of the problem. But there was not a single MCA Minister, Deputy Minister, Parliamentary Secretary or Member of Parliament who had dared to utter a single word.

This is a MCA political 'breakthrough' by itself!

Are the MCA leaders completely insensitive to the \$2,500 million BMF scandal which has agitated every Malaysian, regardless of race, or is there a more deep-seated reason?

For quite some time, there have been rumours that the BMF loans scandal implicates a number of top political personalities, reaching even up to Cabinet or former Cabinet level. Is the MCA and its leadership implicated in any way with the \$2,500 million BMF loan scandal to make the MCA leaders so silent about this biggest banking and financial scandal in Malaysian history?

After he became Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir Mohamed, said he would 'put the fear of God in those people who are corrupt'. But from the spate of recent scandals, including the \$2,500 million BMF scandal which Dr. Mahathir admitted was a 'heinous crime' but without criminals, it is evident that the 'fear of God' is not very effective in stamping out graft and corruption in high political places.

Only *'fear of the people'* through rejection in the polls could act as a restraint on rampant corruption in Malaysia, and this is where the people of Seremban must demonstrate in no uncertain terms their abhorrence of corruption and a system which allows corruption to become the order of the day.

A few days even before Nomination Day, MCA professional character 'assassins' in Seremban had launched a vicious personal attack on Dr. Chen and myself. I was accused of having acquired wealth from my involvement in politics. I want officially to go on record to say that I am prepared to donate my entire property and assets to the MCA provided Datuk Lee San Choon would give me 10 per cent of his wealth to me in exchange.

So long as MCA leaders cannot take a strong stand against corruption in Malaysia, they would never be able to take a strong political stand on any curcial or critical issue affecting the future of the people and generations yet unborn.

November 6, 1983:

MCA Opposes Merdeka U, Supports Islamic U

ON THIS DAY IN JULY 1982 (6.6.82) the Federal Court by four to one, upheld the High Court judgment of 7th November 1981 rejecting the application of Merdeka University Bhd. seeking declarations that:

1. the government's rejection of the petition for the establishment of Merdeka University was null and void contravening the Federal Constitution; and
2. the rejection constituted an unreasonable and improper exercise of the discretion conferred on the Yang di-Pertuan Agong by section 6 of the Universities and University Colleges Act, 1971.

Three days later, on July 9, 1982, the Federal Court granted an application by the Attorney-General, Tan Sri Abu Talib Othman, to issue a certificate certifying that its decision dismissing the appeal of the Merdeka University Bhd. involved constitutional matters and that there was no further appeal to the Privy Council.

With the High Court and Federal Court judgements, it would appear that the 15-year-old struggle to establish Merdeka University has been brought to an end, and the aspirations of the Malaysian Chinese to provide a complete educational system for Chinese education by providing university level education and to expand local higher education opportunities for Malaysian students had suffered a grave and irreparable blow.

The Courts held that the Merdeka University or any university established under the University and University Colleges Act 1971 would have to use Bahasa Malaysia as a medium of instruction, and therefore the proposed use of Chinese, English apart from Bahasa Malaysia for the proposed Merdeka University was not permissible, and justified the government's rejection of the application for the Merdeka University.

Yet five months later, in December 1982, the Barisan Nasional went to parliament to ask for special authority to establish the Islamic University which would use English and Arabic as medium of instruction. To do so, the Barisan Nasional government had to amend the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 to allow the Islamic University to be established outside the jurisdiction of the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971.

All the MCA leaders, including Datuk Lee San Choon and Datuk Dr. Neo Yee Pan, who led the opposition to the Merdeka University proposal because it would be using Chinese and English as medium of instruction now gave full support to the Islamic University which would use Arabic and English as medium of instruction!

Can the MCA explain to the people of Malaysia, and in particular the five million Malaysian Chinese, the reason for its shocking contradictory stand on Merdeka University and Islamic University?

Why should the MCA under Datuk Lee San Choon spearhead the opposition to the Merdeka University proposal? Surely if a party which openly proclaims to represent the five million Malaysian Chinese takes an uncompromising stand against the Merdeka University proposal, it not only justifies the opposition of a party proclaiming Malay unity and interest, but makes it impossible for rational and moderate Malay leaders to consider the Merdeka University proposal on its merits in the light of Malaysia's plural society.

Why didn't the MCA leaders, in view of their great 'political breakthrough' in the April 1982 general elections, demand in exchange for supporting the UMNO move to establish the Islamic University that the University and Universities Act 1971 should be further amended to permit the establishment of Merdeka University? Or is the 'give and take' process in the Barisan Nasional a strictly compartmentalised affair, with some parties always giving while others always taking?

The High Court and the Federal Court majority judgements in the Merdeka University case had given a very narrow and restrictive interpretation to the Constitutional guarantee in Article 152(1) on the 'using (otherwise than for official purposes) or. . .teaching or learning' Chinese or other languages. Thus they upheld the Government's contention that the Article "merely maintains the use of the ethnic languages not as a medium of expression or communication for the nation as such but only to the extent of preventing the erosion of their use as a medium of expression within their respective communities."

The logical conclusion of such a narrow and restrictive interpretation of the Constitutional guarantee in Article 152(1)(a) to the use of Chinese 'within the Chinese community' could lead to the eventual abandonment of Chinese language programmes on Radio and Television Malaysia.

In fact, the Federal Court majority judgement seems to have gone further in equating the Chinese language with other foreign languages, when it said that in the construction of Article 152 means, among others, the following:

"The Federal or a State Government has the right to preserve and sustain the use and study of the language of any non-Malay community – as indeed is being done in schools and at the Institute of Technology, MARA, and in the Department of Chinese and Indian Studies and in some other departments at the University of Malaya where even Arabic, Japanese, Thai and other languages are taught."

This is the reality of MCA's political breakthrough in the last 18 months, a 'breakthrough' that is leading to a serious breakdown of the entire structure of fundamental rights of Malaysians!

November 7, 1983:

MCA Hypocrites and Indonesian Immigrants

ON THIS DAY IN OCTOBER 1982, (7-10-82), the MCA Youth staged a high drama for cheap publicity when it made recently-widowed Madam Lim Ah Ying to kneel down outside the MCA Headquarters and cut her fingers to write with her blood her accusation against the illegal Indonesian immigrants for murdering her husband, labourer Yap Chai Huat, on a Felda scheme in Pahang.

It was only then that the MCA Youth Leader, Datuk Lee Kim Sai, came out from the Headquarters and received the 'blood petition' from Madam Lim Ah Ying, accusing the illegal Indonesian immigrants of murdering her husband and appealing for justice.

It would appear that if not for Madam Lim Ah Ying writing the 'blood accusation' outside the MCA Headquarters, Datuk Lee Kim Sai would not want to be involved in the case for Yap Chai Huat was murdered on September 24, 1982, some two weeks earlier. If the MCA Youth was really concerned about the lawlessness of illegal Indonesian immigrants, it should be prepared to take up the matter with the highest government authorities without having to force Madam Lim Ah Ying to cut her fingers to write in 'blood'!

Apart from giving Datuk Lee Kim Sai front-page publicity in most of the Chinese press the next day, what had the whole 'drama' achieved?

Some would get the impression that Datuk Lee Kim Sai was completely unaware of the terror of the illegal Indonesian immigrants until Madam Lim Ah Ying knelt outside the MCA headquarters to cut her fingers to write her 'blood accusation'.

This would be most shocking, for the problem of the illegal Indonesian immigrants had haunted Malaysians for several years.

If the MCA had really made the '*political breakthrough*' it claimed in the April 1982 general elections, then it is not Madam Lim Ah Ying who must cut her finger to write her petition in blood, it should be Datuk Lee San Choon who should in Cabinet cut his fingers to protest in 'blood characters' any Cabinet refusal to solve the problem of illegal Indonesian immigrants threatening the lives, safety and even livelihood of Malaysians.

After making Madam Lim Ah Ying to cut her finger to write the 'blood petition' and getting maximum publicity from the event, Datuk Lee Kim Sai forthwith forgot about the whole matter and the problem created by the Illegal Indonesian Immigrants, for the problem has become worse with every passing month.

The utter insincerity of the MCA leaders on this issue could be seen from their behaviour in Parliament on Oct. 11, 1982, when during the debate on the Royal Address, I proposed an amendment to the Motion of Thanks to direct the government to deal sternly with illegal Indonesian immigrants, as the government had hitherto closed its eyes to the graves problems posed by some 200,000 illegal Indonesian immigrants.

My amendment to the Motion in Parliament would include the following statement:

"And noting the grave law and order problem created by the influx of illegal Indonesian immigrants causing armed robberies and murders, URGES the government to crack down on the Illegal Indonesian Immigrants by establishing a Special Task Force III (Indonesian Illegal Immigrants) to stop the influx of Illegal Indonesian Immigrants."

Those who voted against this amendment included the MCA Ministers and MPs like Datuk Lee Kim Sai!

Up to now, the Barisan Nasional Government has not even conceded that the illegal Indonesian immigrants pose a grave problem in Malaysia. It has taken a very different attitude to Vietnamese refugees who tried to land in the East Coast in 1978 and 1979, leading to Dr. Mahathir Mohamed's world-renowned threat to 'shoot on sight' any Vietnamese refugee landing in Malaysia.

The MCA's own newspaper had carried press interviews of how easy it is for illegal Indonesian immigrants to secure a red identity card after a month of illegal entry, and to get a blue identity card after six to three months in the country. Yet the MCA Ministers and MPs, despite their breakthrough in the April 1982 General Elections, have done nothing about it.

In Malaysia there are some 300,000 stateless holders of red identity cards who for all practical purposes are Malaysian citizens, as they fulfil all the requisite qualifications for citizenship as well as not having another country as their homeland.

Some had applied for citizenship for 12 years without getting a single reply.

What has the MCA done to resolve these 2 problems since April 1982? I know that in the Muar Parliamentary constituency of Datuk Neo Yee Pan, members of the public who see him on these problems are turned away on the ground that 'nothing could be done'.

When we have reached the stage where illegal Indonesian immigrants are being treated in a better way than local people whose only tragedy is inability to get citizenship, something is terribly wrong with Malaysia.

November 8, 1983:

MCA's Stark Silence on the BMF Scandal

ON THIS DAY LAST MONTH (8-10-83), the DAP announced that it has decided to move a motion of urgent, definite public importance on the first day of the 1984 Parliamentary Budget meeting on October 10, 1983, to call for the establishment of a Royal Commission of Inquiry into the \$2,500 million Bumiputra Malaysia Finance loans scandal in Hong Kong.

The DAP had for some eight months, inside and outside Parliament, demanded a public accounting of the \$2,500 million Bumiputra Malaysia Finance scandal, for these are public monies and constitute about 15% of the total government operating expenditure for 1984 which is \$19,016 million or could have been used to repay and reduce Malaysia's foreign debt from \$17,779 million to \$15,279 million!

Or alternatively, the \$2,500 million could be used to modernise and update all the amenities and facilities, whether roads, drains, parks, and other infrastructures, of Seremban as well as of all the towns and new villages in Malaysia, and there would be still plenty of money left over for other development purposes! This magnitude of the BMF scandal could be further highlighted by the fact that for the entire Fourth Malaysia Plan, 1981-1985, only \$100 million had been allocated to grants for projects in town and local council areas, including Seremban - and this \$100 million has been further slashed down in the government 'austerity' exercise because of the economic recession and the BMF scandal by almost 50 per cent!

Or it could be used to build 10 new universities to solve the problem of denial of higher education opportunities of Malaysian students in their home-land, or used to build 125,000 low-cost houses for the poor and low-income groups at \$20,000 per units!

All the Cabinet Ministers must be collectively responsible to the people for the scandalous loss of \$2,500 million to Malaysia. What did the MCA Ministers do to keep a check on such gross abuse of power and misuse of public funds?

From my information, none of the MCA Ministers had dared to raise the \$2,500 million BMF scandal in Cabinet to question either the Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir Mohamed, or the Finance Minister, Tengku Razaleigh, about it.

Can Datuk Neo Yee Pan, Datuk Mak Hon Kam, Tan Sri Chong Hong Nyan and Datuk Chin Hong Ngian, the MCA Ministers, explain to the people of Seremban why none of them had ever dared to raise the BMF scandal in Cabinet, let alone allowing MCA leaders to raise the matter in public?

During the 1984 Budget debate, when almost every DAP Member of Parliament spoke on the BMF scandal, not a single MCA MP dared to talk about the BMF. If there are UMNO MPs who dare to call for a thorough inquiry into the BMF scandal during the Parliamentary debate, why there was not a single MCA MP who dare to do it?

The people want to know the story of the entire BMF scandal. But there is another story the people want to know: the reason for the stunning silence of MCA leaders on the BMF scandal!

Although the Speaker of Dewan Rakyat, Datuk Mohamed Zahir Ismail, rejected the DAP's motion on the establishment of a Royal Commission of Inquiry into the BMF scandal, he said that the government would be issuing a statement on the matter at long last. This was done by the Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir Mohamed, where he condemned the BMF scandal as a 'heinous crime' and 'a betrayal of trust'.

Unfortunately, Dr. Mahathir's statement did not answer the multitude of questions that have surfaced about the BMF scandal, as to how anyone is to believe that two or three BMF or Bank Bumiputra Directors could commit the

country to some \$2,500 million, which exceeds the total capital and reserves of Bank Bumiputra itself; how the various government agencies, like Bank Negara, Ministry of Finance, the Prime Minister's Department, and even the Cabinet, could be so negligent and irresponsible as to allow the \$2,500 million BMF loans scandal to reach such a magnitude.

In the late 1970s, the people of Malaysia were shocked by the Bank Rakyat scandal which lost some \$150 million and it had to be bailed out by a special vote in Parliament. This \$150 million had not been repaid by Bank Rakyat yet.

The then Prime Minister, Datuk Hussein Onn, had expressed the hope that the Bank Rakyat scandal 'would be a 'bitter lesson to other government

institutions and agencies including companies and subsidiaries set up by the Government'.

Hussein Onn's hope not only proved futile, we have now a scandal which is 20 times more serious than the Bank Rakyat scandal as BMF's loans amounts to \$2,500 million!

The BMF scandal shows the ugly face of the New Economic Policy where the really poor are completely disregarded, while the privileged few play around with the thousands of millions of dollars of public funds for their self-glory and the country's loss. The BMF scandal also shows the ugly face of the MCA, as a party which has no social conscience or political principles.

I am giving the Acting MCA President, Datuk Neo Yee Pan, 48 hours to state whether the MCA agrees to the establishment of a Royal Commission of Inquiry to investigate into all aspects of the BMF loans scandal, not only the BMF Directors and officials, but also Bank Bumiputra Directors, Bank Negara, Ministry of Finance, Prime Minister's Department, and Cabinet Ministers or former Cabinet Ministers who had been involved in the BMF loans. If we do not read anything from Datuk Neo in the Friday newspapers, then everybody should have no doubts as to where the MCA stands on the BMF scandal!

November 9, 1983:

Caging of the 'Lion' and Demolition of Chinese Signboards

ON THIS DAY IN OCTOBER 1982 (9-10-82), the Selangor and Federal Territory Federation of Lion Dance Association was informed that the Police had rejected an application to perform the lion dance at a dinner as a new government ruling had come into force on October 1 that lion dances would not be permitted except during the Chinese New Year or to welcome 'VIPs' defined as Ministers and Deputy Ministers.

Although in the ensuing national uproar, the MCA subsequently claimed to have resolved the 'lion dance' problem, in actual fact, as a result of the implementation of the 'One language, One culture policy', the lion dance continues to receive restriction after restriction denying the freedom of cultural expression of all communities in Malaysia.

Thus in November 1982, the Police banned the performance of the 'South-North' lion dance at the martial arts performance by the Taiping Cultural Association.

During the National Day, the lion dance is not accorded its rightful place as one of the cultural heritage of Malaysian.

Throughout the country, over the years, the freedom of lion dance performance is steadily undermined. Previously, lion dances were allowed to take part

in processions to mark the birthday of deities. This was further restricted by requiring these lion dances to be confined onto lorries, and not pranced about on the roads. Now the authorities are not satisfied with just caging the 'lion', and in some areas have prohibited altogether the participation of lion dances in such processions, even though they are confined onto lorries!

This is another fruit of the MCA's great political breakthrough in the April 22, 1982 general elections. The rationale for such government attitude to the lion dance was best explained by the Acting Minister of Culture, Adib Adam, in the November 1982 Parliament that the Barisan Nasional government rejects the lion dance as part of Malaysian culture as unlike the songkok, the lion dance is not accepted by all the racial groups. The rejection of the lion dance as part of Malaysian culture represents not only UMNO policy, but also MCA policy, as the MCA Youth Leader, Datuk Lee Kim Sai had proudly proclaimed in Parliament on October 11, 1983 that the UMNO Ministers in Parliament are authorised to speak on behalf of all Barisan parties, including the MCA.

It would appear that the MCA used its *'political breakthrough'* to give full endorsement to the UMNO cultural policy which rejects the lion dance instead of getting the UMNO to moderate its cultural position to accept the lion dance as an integral part of Malaysian culture.

But this was not all. The MCA also used its *'political breakthrough'* in the last 18 months to give full support to the various 'signboard' regulations of the Municipal, town and district councils which deny to Chinese, and Tamil languages the constitutional usage as guaranteed in the Malaysian Constitution.

In January 1983, Chinese language signboards in Setapak, Kuala Lumpur were demolished and trodden upon, in utter disregard of the sensitivities of the Chinese businessmen, in pursuance of the 'one language, one culture' advertisement and signboards policy.

Although the MCA leaders had oft claimed that the highest UMNO political leaders have agreed that the Chinese language could be equally prominent as Bahasa Malaysia, no top UMNO leader was prepared to corroborate the MCA's claim. What is even more serious, the various Municipal, town and district Councils proceeded to implement and enforce the 'one language, one culture' signboards and advertisements policy.

Only yesterday, the Alor Star District Council 'made it very clear that its signboard regulations requiring Bahasa Malaysia to be more prominent than other languages would not be altered, although the matter of advertisement rates could be reconsidered. As a result, several Chinese businessmen had taken down their signboards and advertisements in protest.

In Malacca, the **Melaka Tengah Municipal Council**, with the full agreement of the MCA Assemblymen and Councillors, agreed to an advertisement by-law which requires pre-war signboards and advertisements which had never been required to pay any fees to pay 18 times the advertisement fees of a comparative signboard approved under the by-law.

In Johore, the **District Councils** require the compulsory use of Jawi on signboards.

The implementation of a 'one language, one culture' signboard policy could be carried out in two ways:

Firstly, by the outright prohibition or restriction of the use of Chinese and other languages; or

Secondly, by imposing punitive advertisement fees for the use of Chinese and other languages to discourage their use.

No wonder a Malay columnist in a respectable Bahasa Malaysia daily recommended the Thai practice which required the use of Chinese on signboards to pay ten times the normal advertisement rates!

What is most shocking is that during the entire 18 months when the signboards controversy raged up and down the country, the Federal Minister in charge of the Municipal and District Councils and the signboard regulations had not a single word to say. This Federal Minister is none other than the Acting MCA President, Datuk Neo Yee Pan, Minister for Housing and Local Government.

If Datuk Neo could allow the basic rights of Malaysian Chinese with regard to the constitutional use of Chinese language on signboards to be trampled upon without lifting a single finger to check such encroachments, what can Malaysian Chinese expect from Datuk Neo Yee Pan and the MCA in political, economic, educational and cultural areas which are directly in the charge of UMNO Ministers.

The 'one language, one culture' policy is being implemented in all fields and at all levels of government. In Malacca recently, the Malacca State Executive Council with unanimous MCA support, has just decided that quit rent for land used for breeding pigs would be 330 per cent higher than land used for keeping other livestock.

What a MCA political breakthrough indeed in the last 18 months!

November 10, 1983:

MCA Ministers & MPs Not Worth Their Salt

ON THIS DAY IN OCTOBER 1983 (10-10-83), I moved a motion in Parliament to condemn the heinous and dastardly crime against humanity committed by the Soviet Union in its cold-blooded and barbaric action in shooting down an unarmed South Korean commercial jumbo jet on September 1, 1983 and massacring the 269 people on board, including a Malaysian, Siow Woon Kwong, 23, of Muar, who was returning from the United States after graduating in electrical engineering and computer science.

My motion also demanded that the Soviet Union make an unconditional admission of its crime against humanity and make a full apology as well as full reparations to the families of the 269 victims, and to allow an international commission to conduct unhampered investigations into the crime and to surrender the Soviet military personnel responsible for the crime to an international crimes tribunal specifically set up for the purpose.

The MCA Ministers and MPs were in the forefront in voting against this motion, although none of them spoke in the debate on the motion. When I challenged the MCA Ministers or MPs to have the courage to speak up on the motion, the MCA Youth Leader, Datuk Lee Kim Sai stood up and blamed me for not understanding the Barisan Nasional system of operations, for he said that the UMNO Ministers and MPs represented the MCA Ministers and MPs as well when they spoke!

This is one of the instances of the utter uselessness of the MCA Ministers and MPs in Parliament in the last 18 months.

I will give another nine instances to make up a total of ten although I could easily double or treble the examples.

2. *The parliamentary performance of MCA Ministers are most disgraceful, and cannot compare with their UMNO counterparts. For instance, none of the MCA Ministers whether Datuk Dr. Neo Yee Pan, Mak Hon Kam, Chin Hong Ngian, or Tan Sri Chong Hong Nyan, dare to answer oral questions directed to their Ministry unlike UMNO Ministers. In all overwhelming number of cases, these MCA Ministers conspicuously absented themselves during question time, leaving the answering to Deputy Ministers. This is not the case with UMNO Ministers, who in most cases, answer their own questions. Let every MCA Minister tabulate the total number of questions that have been directed to them in last 18 months, and how many questions they have answered personally in Parliament. I will be surprised if they have a score of answering one per cent of the questions directed at them. How can the MCA Ministers expect to command the respect of their Deputy Ministers and civil servants when they are afraid to field oral questions directed to their Ministries?*
3. *MCA Ministers and MPs are even more UMNO than the UMNO Ministers and MPs in opposing the DAP motions. For instance in October 1982, the DAP proposed an amendment to the Motion of Thanks to the Royal Address to incorporate an amendment which would direct the Government to take stern action against the illegal Indonesian immigrants who have been murdering Malaysians and threatening the law and order situation in the country. The most vehement opposition to this amendment came from MCA Ministers and Members of Parliament.*
4. *On 14th March 1983, the DAP Member of Parliament for Sibu, Ling Sie Ming, moved a motion to repeal Clause 21(2) of the 1961 Education Act to perpetuate the existence of Chinese primary schools without the fear of conversion, and to give financial parity of treatment to Chinese primary schools as compared to national primary schools in terms of government financial allocation. The motion also sought to make mother-tongue teaching or Pupil's Own Language a*

compulsory subject in all national-type primary and secondary schools where there are fifteen pupils of each race in the class, unless the parents in writing state that they do not want their children to learn their mother-tongue.

Again, the foremost opponents of this motion was the MCA Ministers and MPs who conspired to kill the motion by denying time for its debate by dragging out debate on inconsequential issues.

5. *MCA Ministers and MPs look to the UMNO Ministers and MPs for leadership and inspiration in Parliament, instead of having a view and mind of their own. Thus when UMNO extremist MPs denounce the DAP for speaking up for the legitimate rights of all Malaysians, and told DAP MPs to 'get out of the country' if they do not like Barisan policies, the MCA Ministers and MPs provided the biggest applause to such extremist UMNO calls. In fact, such mentality has reached such prevalent stage in MCA quarters that a few days ago, a former MCA Negeri Sembilan leader even suggested that I should 'get out of Malaysia' since I seem to show so much dissatisfaction in my series on 'This Day in the Last 18 months'. These MCA leaders do not realise that we are expressing criticism and opposition to the various policies not because we love Malaysia less but because we love Malaysia more than the MCA leaders!*
6. *MCA Ministers and MPs lack a seriousness of purpose and a high sense of responsibility. They are hardly in Parliament House. In fact, they must bear a large responsibility for the lack of quorum in Parliament on 3rd November 1983 (when not a single MCA Minister or MP was in the House), whereby the House had to adjourn 160 minutes before time. Again, the MCA Ministers and MPs played their full guilty part to create a 'no quorum' situation whenever DAP MPs wanted to make adjournment speeches to express the people's problems and grievances.*
7. *MCA MPs are also the most irresponsible lot. On 26th October 1983, the MCA MP for Bukit Mertajam, Siow Hun Khim, even dozed off during question time, so that when the Speaker, Datuk Mohamad Zahir Ismail, called him to ask his question, the MCA MP remained slumped in his seat. The Speaker had no choice but to move on to*

the next questioner. The Hansard of the day reported that Seow Hung Khim was absent in the House when his question was called although everybody saw him slumped in his seat!

8. *The unquestioned support of MCA Ministers and MPs to the policy of 'one language, one culture' in Malaysia as proclaimed during the Official Opening of Parliament on October 11, 1982.*
9. *The complete silence of MCA Ministers and MPs on the \$2,500 million Bumiputra Malaysia Finance loans scandal in Hong Kong during the 1984 Budget debate lasting from October 24 to November 8, 1983.*
10. *The blind support for all Barisan Nasional Bills and proposals, whether it is the establishment of the Islamic University or the Penal Code Amendment Bill 1982 which gravely undermines the fundamental right of freedom of religion enshrined in Article 11 of the Malaysian Constitution as it allows for state interference in the practice, profession and propagation of non-Muslim religious faiths.*

On 21.6.1983 PAS was reported as demanding the revision of the Malaysian Constitution so as to be 'in line with Islam'.

On 25.6.1983 the press reported that the International Islamic University had issued an **Islamic Services Ethics (Etika Perkhidmatan Islam)** with fifteen regulations binding on all university academicians, staff and students (including non-Muslims) to 'safeguard the Islamic identity'.

On 27.6.1983, it was reported that a **Special Committee for Islamic Development**, headed by the Deputy Prime Minister, and a **Consultancy on Islamic Matters** headed by the Chief Secretary to the Government, had been set up as part of the long-term objective of the Government to adopt Islamic values in the administration of the country.

On 18.7.1983, a noted writer called for the **assimilation of Islamic values in the campuses of the five local universities.**

On 12.8.1983, the Menteri Besar of Trengganu, **Datuk Haji Wan Mokhtar Ahmaed**, confirmed in the Trengganu State Assembly that the **State Government was drafting laws to punish non-Muslim for offences under the Muslim law.**

On 19.10.1983, the Deputy Housing and Local Government Minister, S.Subramaniam, told Dewan Rakyat that the Government was studying the proposal of pawnshops based on Islamic principles.

On 23.10.1982 The Johore State Assembly Speaker, Datuk Syed Zain Alsahab, urged the Government to introduce whipping for men who committed adultery with other men's wives.

November 11, 1983:

Shutting Doors of Higher Education Opportunities Overseas.

ON THIS DAY IN AUGUST 1983 (11.8.83) the visiting Australian Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, Stewart West, reaffirmed the Australian Government's decision to slash by almost 50 per cent Malaysian students going to Australia for secondary and tertiary education next year.

In 1983, 3,200 Malaysian students went to Australia for higher studies as compared to 2,300 in 1982. But for next year, only 1,640 Malaysian students would be allowed to enter Australia for studies – made up of 1,050 for secondary and 590 for tertiary education.

It would appear that only the 'super-super' students could go to Australia for education abroad apart from others like leisure travel abroad, payments beginning of this year, students were told that for those who do not have a SPM certificate (i.e. sitting for the SPM examination which has just started), they would require to have a SRP aggregate of 15 for the best five subjects.

As a result of the new Australian quota restricting places for Malaysian students beginning next year, only students with a SRP aggregate of six for the best five subjects could be considered for a Student Visa to Australia for pre-university education. This means a student must secure at least four A1s and one A2 in order to qualify for consideration, and if he gets 3A1s and 5A2s, he would not qualify. I understand next year, only students with a SRP aggregate of 5 for the best five subjects, in other words a full five A1s, would be considered for Australian Student Visa.

This instance highlights the growing diminution of higher study opportunities for Malaysians overseas, stemming from a double process of restriction of university places by foreign countries and the escalation of living and study costs, like in the United Kingdom, where only the wealthy can send their children for studies.

Malaysia has now some 60,000 students overseas for higher studies, costing the parents and country some \$1,000 million a year. The Minister of Finance, Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah, lamented during the 1984 Budget speech that Malaysia's traditional invisibles deficit had worsened in recent years from \$4,300 million in 1979 to \$5,600 million in 1982, and which is expected to increase further to \$6,800 million for 1983. One of the main causes is the expenditures for education abroad apart from others like leisure travel abroad, payments abroad for freight and insurance, etc.

But the Barisan Nasional Government remained obstinate in refusing to heed the DAP call, right through the 1970s, for a liberal policy on higher education to ensure that Malaysian students can pursue higher studies in their own country instead of having to go overseas and put a heavy burden on the foreign exchange.

The recent announcement of a Sixth University in the Prime Minister's constituency in Kedah by itself would not do much to solve this problem for the Sixth University project is 'too little, too late'.

The Malaysian Government talks about 'Looking East' to emulate the Japanese example of success. Japan has some 400 universities and two million university students. If we are to emulate the Japanese example, then we should have one-tenth her university population, i.e. 40 universities and 200,000 university students, as we have one-tenth' Japan's population.

But who opposed my proposal only two weeks ago in Parliament that we should aim to establish up to 10 universities in Malaysia, which could be partly supported by the enormous amounts of money which Malaysian students have to spend overseas? The MCA Deputy Minister of Education, Dr. Tan Tiong Hong, of course!

In Japan, 75 per cent of the 5,400 universities are private universities, but in Malaysia, when there was a proposal to establish a private university in the form of Merdeka University, it was again the MCA which spearheaded the Opposition.

The doors of higher education for Malaysian students overseas are shutting up one after another in the last 18 months. They must be replaced by more universities and colleges established in Malaysia, whether government funded or privately established.

November 12, 1983:

Barisan's Cultural Integration through Assimilation

ON THIS DAY IN AUGUST 1983 (12.8.1983) a Cabinet Minister stated in Parliament for the first time in Malaysian history that the cultural policy objectives of the Barisan Nasional government is one of 'assimilation', reaffirming his statement in the Dewan Rakyat two weeks earlier the government's rejection of the Cultural Memorandum adopted by the Fifteen Chinese National Organisations at the Malaysian Chinese Cultural Congress held in Penang on March 27, which advocated a multi-cultural policy approach based on integration and not on assimilation.

The Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports, Anwar Ibrahim, told DAP Members of Parliament during question time that the cultural policy and objectives of the government which he had enunciated which would not compromise with the multi-cultural policy proposals had the full support of all the component parties in the Barisan Nasional. In fact, the MCA Youth Leader, Datuk Lee Kim Sai, inadvertently admitted this when he declared in Parliament on October 11 on the DAP motion to condemn Soviet Union for its barbaric action in downing an unarmed South Korean commercial jet and murdering 269 people on board, that it was not necessary for MCA Ministers and MPs to speak in the House as UMNO Ministers and MPs are authorised to speak on behalf of MCA.

As a result of the ensuing uproar at the two statements by the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports in Parliament, Datuk Lee Kim Sai arranged for a

dialogue between Anwar Ibrahim and the Chinese national organisations on 26th Sept. 1983 where the Minister assured the different communities that there would be no 'forced assimilation'. Datuk Lee Kim Sai later explained that what Anwar envisaged was assimilation over a span of time, say decades, and not immediately.

● The open declaration of a cultural objective of 'assimilation' is one of the most disturbing developments in the last 18 months following the Barisan Nasional landslide general elections victory in April 1983.

The Barisan Nasional claims that its cultural policy is based on the 1971 National Cultural Congress principles, which had been fully supported by all MCA Ministers today, like Datuk Neo Yee Pan, Mak Hon Kam, Chin Hong Ngiam, and the present Wanita MCA Leader, Rosemary Chong, had given full support to the 1971 National Cultural Congress principles in their capacity as Deputy Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports.

The 1971 National Cultural Congress, which was attended by participants predominantly of one racial group, adopted three principles of creating a national culture, namely:

The National Culture should be based on the indigenous culture;

Elements of other cultures which are suitable or appropriate could be accepted into the national culture;

Islam should be made an important element.

I would describe the 1971 National Cultural Congress principles of creating a Malaysian national culture as that of 'integration through assimilation' where assimilation is the method and end-product. What Malaysians want is not assimilation, whether forced or unforced, whether now or in the next few decades, but a process of integration to develop a new Malaysian cultural identity out of the diverse cultural traditions in Malaysia.

In the 1970s, the second principle of the 1971 National Cultural Congress principles of incorporating other cultures into the national culture was virtually forgotten, and national culture was equated with Malay culture. In fact this formulation of cultural policy is not very different from the formulation of the

Indonesian national culture in 1966, namely 'the development of an Indonesian national culture based on its rich and varied regional cultures in the nation, although allowance would be made for the acceptance of external cultural influences which would enrich and heighten the national culture.'

The landslide Barisan victory in the April 1982 general elections was regarded as a full endorsement by the people for the National Cultural Policy, which explains why the Cultural Memorandum of the Malaysian Chinese Cultural Congress which advocated cultural pluralism and cultural parallelism was rejected without a second thought by the Minister of Culture, and even without having to refer back to the Cabinet or the MCA Ministers!

In fact, the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports, Anwar Ibrahim, has even gone to the extent of asserting that the National Cultural Policy, should not be allowed to be questioned or challenged anymore. I have no doubt that should the Barisan Nasional pass a law in Parliament to ban questioning of the 'one language, one culture' policy or 'cultural assimilation' objective, the MCA Ministers and MPs would again be the first to support!

The equation of Malay culture with the Malaysian national culture reached its zenith in December 1982 when, as a sequel to the 1971 National Cultural Congress to examine the progress of creating a Malaysian national culture in accordance with its three principles a Conference known as "*Meeting of the Malay Cultural World*" was held in Malacca and opened by the Prime Minister himself.

At this 'Meeting of the Malay Cultural Word', non-Malay cultures and their role in the national culture were dismissed as 'parochial' or 'marginal' problems of the non-Malay communities and not national problems.

For the rest of the 1980s and 1990s, it would appear that those in authority would be shifting their preoccupation not as to whether there is practical content in Principle No. 2, but whether Principle No. 3 that Islam should be made an important element should supersede Principle No. 1 so that the Malaysian national culture is based on Islam and not on Malay culture, as Islamic fundamentalists are contending that Malay culture contain un-Islamic or features which must be purified.

This then is again another major breakthrough of the MCA in the last 18 months! For purposes of the Seremban by-election, the MCA in Seremban is allowed to bring out their lion dances wherever they go without even having to apply for police permit. This is a 16-day reprieve for the lion dance for the purpose of misleading the Seremban voters before the 'lions' are put under stronger chains!

November 13, 1983:

NEP Extended to Year 2000

ON THIS DAY IN SEPTEMBER 1982 (13.9.82), Kuala Lumpur and the whole country was abuzz with the Draft Structural Plan for Kuala Lumpur which had just been released, because it proposes the extension of the New Economic Policy's (NEP) requirements beyond 1990 and is a Plan of bias and imbalances which would make several existing areas populated by the Chinese and Indians as the most backward and depressed areas in the Kuala Lumpur of tomorrow.

The Kuala Lumpur Master Plan has become the model plan for the future of all other towns in the country. The Seremban Draft Structure Plan is based on the same principles as the Kuala Lumpur Draft Structural Plan.

This is why the Negeri Sembilan Chinese Assembly Hall and various Associations of Seremban had submitted a joint memorandum on the Seremban Draft Structural Plan to the Negeri Sembilan State Government earlier this year, but from my sources of information, the memorandum had been completely disregarded.

The joint memorandum objected to the Seremban Draft Structure Plan on the ground that its attempt to extend the time frame of the NEP from the

year ending 1,990 to the year 2,000 would be to make into law what is only an economic policy; the promotion of unbalanced growth contrary to the stated objective of balanced growth; the neglect of the cultural and religious aspirations of the non-Malays, etc.

On 18th August 1983, the Wanita UMNO Assembly adopted a resolution urging the Government to extend the period for the implementation of the New Economic Policy from 1,990 to the year 2,000.

Ten days later, this call was taken up by the Perak Malay Chamber of Commerce. On 24th October 1983, the Acting Deputy Director of UDA Planning Division, Dr. Ahmad Idris Mohd. Noor, also called for the extension of the NEP to the year 2,000.

This campaign for the extension of the NEP from 1,990 to 2,000 must have taken comfort by the interview by the Deputy Prime Minister, Datuk Musa Hitam, in June 1983 that there was no hard and fast rule that the implementation of the NEP must stop by 1990, and that there would be an extension of the NEP or something akin to it after 1990.

There is also no doubt that if the decision is taken to extend the NEP to the year 2,000, or have something akin to it, despite the pledge in 1970 that this policy of racial quotas and percentages would end in 1990, the MCA would give it full support under the leadership of Datuk Dr. Neo Yee Pan.

The 'NEP as proclaimed' seeks to eliminate poverty regardless of race and to restructure the Malaysian society to eliminate any identification of race with vocation or location.

The 'NEP as implemented' has not only failed to eliminate poverty in accordance with the NEP's own time-targets, but the disparity of distribution of income and wealth among Malaysians have widened, indicating that the rich and well-to-do have benefitted more from the NEP than the poor of all races.

A vivid example of the abject poverty that still exists in Malaysia is the plight of the contract labourers at the Selancar Empat Felda 'Hell Estate' where their destitution subject them to gross exploitation including wrongful confinement, illegal detention, forced labour, criminal assault, denial of wages, child labour, sexual exploitation and debt slavery.

Nor has the 'NEP as implemented' carried out a restructuring programme to eliminate the identification of race with vocation or location, except in selective sectors and areas.

For instance, from before 1970 to 1980, the Malay percentage of Felda settlers rose from 94.6% to 96.2% or 17,729 settlers to 61,663 settlers; Chinese fell from 3% to 1.8% or from 558 settlers to 1,127, and Indians and others also fell from 2.4% or 446 settlers to 1.22% or 1,273 settlers. The total number of Felda settlers before 1970 increased from 8,733 to 64,063 in 1980.

This selective restructuring is to be found in many other areas like the armed and police forces. What has the MCA done with its breakthrough to rectify such NEP imbalances? In the last 18 months, such imbalances multiplied, and on top of it, there is now the growing momentum for the demand for the extension of the NEP from 1,990 to 2,000. Another MCA breakthrough!

November 14, 1983:

Trends Toward Greater Authoritarianism

ON THIS DAY IN OCTOBER 1982 (14.10.1982), the Dewan Rakyat erupted into a 10-minute row when DAP Member of Parliament for Jelutong, Karpal Singh, told the Sabah Chief Minister, Datuk Harris Salleh: "You cannot harrass us here. You can be a dictator in Sabah but not here."

This happened when Datuk Harris Salleh was trying to defend himself against my charge against him and the Sabah Berjaya Government of being undemocratic when I spoke on the Motion of Thanks for the Royal Address three days earlier.

I had said that the Sabah Chief Minister best typified the mentality in some Barisan quarters that democracy means merely the 'freedom' to choose the Barisan candidates, while any other choice is akin to 'subversion'. As example, I cited Datuk Harris's oath to 'punish' the people of Sandakan for re-electing Sdr. Fung Ket Wing as MP for Sandakan in the 1982 general elections where he fumed that there would be no development in Sandakan and attacked the people of Sandakan for 'biting the hand that fed them'.

As I commented in Parliament: "*Datuk Harris Salleh has turned the democratic theory upside down, for in a democracy, it is the people who feed the likes of Datuk Harris Salleh and not the other way round.*"

Although the Berjaya State Government subsequently strenuously denied that Sandakan would be starved of development, there is no doubt that in Sabah we have an example of a highly dictatorial government under the guise of democracy. Sdr. Lee Lam Thye, and I have the dubious distinction of being Members of Parliament who are denied entry into their own country i.e. Sabah.

However, what is most disturbing in the last 18 months is the ever-concentration of authority and power in the hands of the Executive, and in particular in the Prime Minister, reducing Parliament and even Cabinet Ministers to a mere formality. There has been a continuous shift of power from Parliament, and even the Judiciary, to the Executive, and in particular the Prime Minister.

Parliament is treated with contempt with MPs denied adequate time for meaningful parliamentary debate on the national issues of the day, as well as being kept in the dark about the real reasons for the amendments to laws and to the Constitution.

MPs are also denied information about matters of grave public interest, as in the Parliamentary cover-up of the Bumiputra Malaysia Finance scandal and the malpractices of MBF, Bank Bumiputra officials and the negligence of government institutions entrusted with the task of supervising them.

Article 150 of the Constitution has been amended whereby the Prime Minister can have an Emergency declared without having to consult the Cabinet if he is satisfied that a 'grave emergency exists' or 'there is an imminent danger' requiring an Emergency. This Prime Minister's power is not questionable or challengeable in a Court of Law.

In October this year, the Dewan Rakyat amended the Official Secrets Act 1972 (where I have again the dubious distinction together with Sdr. P. Patto of being the first two persons to be charged) which would have the capacity of turning Malaysia into the most secretive government in the whole Commonwealth.

What saddens one greatly is to discover that in the entire Parliamentary debate on the Official Secrets Act (Amendment) Bill 1973, not one single Barisan MP who spoke understood the meaning of 'Official Secrets'. They thought that 'Official Secrets' are about protecting the nation's security against foreign spies when they mean all official information, the bulk of which have nothing to do with security and are extremely trivial.

In view of the past Barisan record of using the mass media for its own political purposes, the recent proposal for a National Communications Policy must be viewed with suspicion as to whether it is another attempt to harness the mass media to entrench its political power.

The recent announcement that with effect from next year, the government news agency, BERNAMA, would monopolise the in-flow of all foreign agency news, the Bill tabled in Parliament to restrict and regulate the imported publications, the suspension of the Nadi Insan, the monthly organ of the Institute for Social Analysis, the tearing out of articles from foreign magazines like Far Eastern Economic Review before they are allowed in, the proposal to ban Malaysians in future from having TV aerials to receive Direct Broadcasting Satellite (DBS) programmes when they become available, are all distributing signs of a concerted attack on press freedom which is already in a very attenuated form in Malaysia.

In the last 18 months, despite the landslide Barisan Nasional elections victory, the Government seems to have abandoned its pledge to have a 'open, liberal and tolerant' society.

November 15, 1983:

Islamisation Process in the Last 18 months.

ON THIS DAY IN SEPTEMBER, 1982 (15.9.82) Malaysians are still trying to analyse and decipher the import of the UMNO Presidential Address delivered by Dr. Mahathir Mohamed at the recent UMNO General Assembly.

In his speech, Dr. Mahathir said that *"For the well-being of Muslims in this country and the world, the Government has planned three major projects."* The first two projects were the establishment of the International Islamic University and the Islamic Bank. The third is the introduction of a compulsory subject of Islamic Civilisation for all university students in Malaysia.

The introduction of compulsory subject of Islamic Civilisation is against the entire spirit of Article 3 of the Constitution which reads:

"3.(1) Islam is the religion of the Federation, but other religions may be practised in peace and harmony in any part of the Federation."

If it is argued that because Islam is the official religion in Malaysia, it should be made familiar to all Malaysians; then the similar argument holds that as the other religions are guaranteed Constitutional recognition and status, the Buddhist, Hindu and Christian civilisations should also be made familiar to Muslim students.

If the argument is that it would conduce towards greater inter-religious understanding and harmony for non-muslim students to understand Islam and Islamic Civilisation, the same argument holds equally true that Muslims students should also understand the other religious and their civilisations.

There would have been no objection if compulsory courses of Islamic Civilisation for non-Muslim students and Buddhist, Hindu and Christian civilisation courses for Muslim students are introduced at the same time.

This was not the case. This incident reflect a most disturbing development after the Barisan Nasional landslide general elections victory – the process of Islamisation in the various aspects of national life affecting non-Muslims.

I still remember that before the April 1982 general elections, I questioned why the teacher-training courses were being amended to include a course of Islamic Civilisation for non-Muslim teacher-trainees. At that time, the course was quietly withdrawn. But after the landslide general elections victory, the Barisan Nasional government regarded it as a mandate to proceed without any hesitation the Islamisation process, especially as the MCA could always be depended upon to give unthinking support.

A quick survey of the Islamisation process in the last 18 months could be seen from the following newspaper accounts:

On 22.10.1982, the Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, Anwar Ibrahim, was reported as saying that Badan Perunding Islam (BPI) had finalised draft regulations for the Syariah Courts to punish non-Muslims under Muslim law for offences such as khalwat and zina.

On 2.11.1982, it was reported that the Mufti Wilayah Persekutuan Datuk Sheikh Mohsein Haji Salleh, had called for the establishment of a Special Body to convert non-Muslims to Islam.

On 2.12.1982, Anwar Ibrahim was reported to announce at a Universiti Pertanian Malaysia youth leadership course that an Islamic Insurance Company would be set up, and quoting Anwar as saying that he was confident that the Islamic Bank would grow into one of the largest institutions in the country and would ultimately Islamise the banking system as well as the country's economic system.

On 10.12.1982, the Penal Code was amended in Parliament purportedly to deal with the kafir-mengafir and 'dua imam' problems, but with such wide-ranging scope as to gravely undermine the freedom of worship and religious observances in the country.

On 31.12.1982, it was reported that the Pensions Division of the Government was undertaking a study to introduce an Islamic pension system to replace the present pension system based on the West.

On 23.2.1983, it was reported that a university lecturer at an education seminar called for an Islamic education system from kindergarten to University level to counter 'Western influence'.

In early 1983, following the Malay World Cultural Meeting held in Malacca in December the previous year, a debate ensued in the Bahasa Malaysia press on the need for an Islamic approach to the creation of a national culture - an Islamic national culture. This was accompanied by a strong demand that Islam should be used as the formula for nation-building in multi-racial Malaysia - an Islamic nation-building policy.

On 9.4.1983, Anwar Ibrahim was reported as saying that the Malaysian Constitution does not prevent the assimilation of Islamic values in government administration.

On 29.5.1983, it was reported that a S2 million Klinik Islam preparatory to the establishment of an Islamic Hospital would be set up in Kuala Lumpur.

On 18.6.1983, the Minister of Home Affairs announced in the press that Islamic Civilisation would be an additional subject for police recruits undergoing police training.

November 16, 1983:

MALAYSIA: An Islamic State?

ON THIS DAY IN MARCH 1983 (16-3-1983) the University of Malaya Islamic Students Society (PMIUM) attacked the former Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, for his statement on the occasion of his 80th birthday that Malaysia should not be turned into an Islamic State because the country had a multi-racial population with various beliefs.

The PMIUM said that the Tunku's views were contrary to Islamic teachings and also in conflict with the government's objective to assimilate Islamic values in all aspects of national life.

Although the third Prime Minister, Tun Hussein Onn, when celebrating his 16th birthday shortly after, supported Tunku's views and declared that Malaysia was set up as a secular State with Islam as the official religion, the cumulative and accelerated process of Islamisation as reflected in the emphasis on Islamic Bank, Islamic University, Islamic Insurance, Islamic Administration and Government, Islamic formula to Nation Building, Islamic approach to National Culture, Islamic Education, Islamic Pension, Islamic Literature, etc. had left non-Muslims far from assured.

Their anxieties are not relieved by the statement made by the Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir Mohamed, in Sabah on 28th October that he wanted Malaysia to be a model Islamic nation.

The deep concern, unease and foreboding of non-Muslim Malaysians about the Islamisation process in government, administration, economy, education and even morals is not because of any antipathy or enmity towards Islam as a religion, but stem from their fear that the basic foundation of Malaysia as a secular nation where there is freedom of religious beliefs, with Islam as the official religion, is being insidiously but effectively undermined.

Government Ministers had sought to allay the fears of non-Muslim on the ground that the values from Islam which are being incorporated into the government and administration are good values, which other religions would also recognise and support, like justice, tolerance and harmony.

Such Ministerial assurances, however, are becoming less and less effective when the process of Islamisation is accelerated meanwhile, for non-Muslims fear that the process of Islamisation would prepare the foundation for the creation of an Islamic State in the future - which in fact had been publicly admitted by advocates of Islamisation at Islamic forums.

Their fears and anxieties are further increased when they read in the press about what is happening in other countries where an Islamic State is being attempted, as in Pakistan, where large numbers of women had protested and demonstrated against President Mohammed Zia ul-Huq's campaign to impose strict Islamic values, with proposals that would require the evidence of two women to equal that of one man; that compensation to a family for the death of a woman be fixed at half that for a man's; increased flogging of women convicted of adultery; a government proposal to establish separate universities for women; the proposal that the family of a crime victim can ask for the death penalty only if the victim is male; and a ban on women athletes at the Asian Games in New Delhi last year.

Nor are their fears and anxieties lessened when from their readings about Islam, they learn that in an Islamic state, non-Muslims 'may have a place in the administrative machinery of the State but they cannot be entrusted with the responsibility of framing the general policy of the State or dealing with matters vital to its safety and integrity.'

In actual fact, proponents of the Islamic State in Malaysia have advocated that non-Muslims in Malaysia can make their political contributions in an Advisory Council but they would have no role in the real decision-making Majlis to run the government and country.

What disturbs non-Muslims is that although we do not have an Islamic State, non-Muslims seem excluded from the framing of fundamental policies of State. For instance, in a matter like the incorporation of Islamic values into the government and administration which would affect both Muslims and non-Muslims in Malaysia, non-Muslim Malaysians play no role whatsoever. In fact, the same argument could be extended to other fundamental policy formulations and occupation of key Ministerial portfolios.

As the Islamic values which the Government wants to inject into the Government and administration are universal values which are also taught by the other great religions and beliefs, then in a multi-racial, multi-religious and multi-cultural nation like Malaysia, these values must be disseminated in the name of all the religions and faiths concerned and not in the name of any one religion, for three reasons:

- (1) to uphold the Constitutional guarantee of freedom of religious beliefs;
- (2) to further national unity by using the common universal values to be found in the various religions in Malaysia as a basis for nation-building, instead of creating a new barrier between Islamic values and non-Islamic values;
- (3) to prevent a third polarisation in Malaysia to add to the double polarisation of class and race, namely that of religion, which would come about if radical changes in the administration, government, economy, education, politics and law are made in the name of Islamisation solely by Muslims, to the exclusion of Malaysians of other religious faiths.

For the sake of national unity in Malaysia, and to prevent before it is late the crystallisation of the third polarisation of religion to add to the complications of the double polarisation of race and class in Malaysia, the Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir Mohamed, should call a halt to the Islamisation process which affect non-Muslims in any aspect of Malaysian life, and to allow non-Muslim Malaysians the right to determine whether they want to be affected by the Islamisation process.

November 17, 1983:

Vision of a Malaysia Year 2001

ON THIS DAY (17.11.83) we conclude the 18-part series on 'This Day in the Last 18 months' to remind Malaysians as to the degree their political, economic, educational and cultural rights had been eroded away, in the last 18 months, following the landslide Barisan Nasional general elections victory in the 1982 general elections.

April 22, 1982 may go down in history as one of the most important dates, if not the most important date, in Malaysia with far-reaching national repercussions, like August 31, 1957 when we achieved Independence.

April 22, 1982 may also go down in our history as the greatest opportunity lost by Malaysians to ensure that Malaysian nation-building proceeds on a balanced course which gives every Malaysian, regardless of race, religion or status, an equal stake in a multi-racial, multi-lingual, multi-cultural and multi-religious Malaysia enjoying socio-economic justice and political freedoms.

This is because when Dr. Mahathir Mohamed called a snap general elections in April 1982, he had just taken over the Premiership in less than a year, and he was uncertain as to the extent the Barisan Nasional's nation-building policies, especially the economic, educational, political and cultural directions initiated in

the 1970s, had the support or opposition of the people, and whether he should put into practice the political philosophy he had enunciated in his 1970 political work, 'The Malay Dilemma'.

Barisan Nasional reverses in the April 1982 general elections, without dislodging the Barisan Nasional as a ruling party or even deprivation of its two-third majority in Parliament, would have forced the Mahathir Administration to conduct a painful reappraisal of its nation-building policies to secure greater legitimacy for the government.

The Barisan Nasional's abnormal landslide victory in the April 1982 general elections made such reappraisal and pauses unnecessary, for it was interpreted as a full popular mandate for the Barisan Nasional's nation-building policies not only of the 1950s and 1960s, but also those of the 1970s, resulting not only in these policies being taken to greater lengths, but also unleashing forces and policies which were making tentative beginnings before the general elections and would have been nipped in the bud if the people had spoken up against them through the ballot box.

A completely new political situation has emerged after the April 1982 general elections as a result of the landslide Barisan Nasional victory, and from the national trends that we can see now, they do not augur well for unity, stability and prosperity for Malaysia and her people in the rest of the 1980s and 1990s.

This is why the Seremban Parliamentary by-election on November 19, 1983 is of such critical importance, for it could complete the first phase of the process started by the people of Kepayang on Oct. 16, 1982 and endorsed by the people of Raub on 4th June 1983 in two by-elections to arrest and divert the disastrous course of nation-building embarked upon 18 months ago.

We do not pretend that to arrest and reverse this disastrous course of nation building after the landslide general elections victory of April 1982 is going to be easy or smooth-sailing. But a firm first step must be taken for the people to stand up and speak loud and clear to call for a halt to the drastic political, economic, educational and cultural backslidings in the last 18 months. And this first step will only be taken after the Seremban by-election could complete the Kepayang and Raub by-election decisions.

Even if we succeed in completing the Kepayang and Raub-election decisions with an endorsement of the people in the Seremban by-election, the struggle ahead is going to be a long and gruelling one.

We must have a long-term perspective of Malaysian history, for if we are short-sighted, interested only in the daily grind of life, then we will lose out and become pawns in the hands of those who have a longer perspective of Malaysian history.

The DAP calls on the people of Seremban and Malaysia to have a "*Vision of a Malaysia in the Year 2,001*" and to work towards that vision.

It is a **Vision of a Malaysia** in the year 2,001 where all Malaysians regardless of race, religion, language or culture, are completely equal citizens.

It is a **Vision of a Malaysia** where all sons and daughters of the Malaysian soil, regardless of race, are Bumiputeras of Malaysia.

It is a **Vision of a Malaysia** where all the deprived and dispossessed classes of today, the workers, hawkers, peasants, fishermen, enjoy the full fruits of their labour instead of being wage-slaves or exploited consumers of the rich and powerful.

It is a **Vision of a Malaysia** where there is the fullest honouring and flowering of the different cultural traditions and mother-tongue education in Malaysia, with national unity reinforced by a common national language and a common sense of national destiny.

It is a **Vision of a Malaysia** where the brightest talents regardless of race can find fulfilment and creative outlet for the greater good of Malaysia instead of being stunted if they remain at home or drained away if they have to seek fullest realisation of their capabilities abroad.

It is a **Vision of a Malaysia** where the clean and righteous rule the land while the corrupt and immoral, whether legally or morally, are punished and disgraced in society.

It is a **Vision of a Malaysia** where political democracy would grow to its fullest stature instead of our present democratic system which has only a Parliament House to boast about.

It is a **Vision of a Malaysia** where the fundamental rights of men as enshrined in the Malaysian Constitution are given the fullest measure of expression instead of being qualified umpteenth times until they lose all meaning and significance.

It is a **Vision of a Malaysia** where with the talents of Malaysians of all race and the bountiful resources God has given to Malaysia, Malaysia can become one of the great nations of the World. .