



*By Malaysian Born*

ONE after another, we have read and seen, either first hand or otherwise, accounts of July 9th. Of BERSIH 2.0.

The mayhem, as the government-controlled mainstream media would have us believe, but caused by the same government, provoked more anger, and resulted in the death of one gentle soul.

The righteous anger, if you will, brought about by the indignation at the blatant and shameless unfairness of a corrupt government that is supposed to serve and protect the rakyat has united us to stand up for change. What next? Are we going to continue to be angry and rant only, the operative word here being "only"? Or are we each, in our own way, however small, going to take some concrete action to make our Malaysia the home it is supposed to be? Indignant anger alone is just going to sap our energy.

July 9th was physically taxing. Even now, I'm still aching from being on my feet continuously for over seven hours. Sakit tapi cukup berbaloi. My spirits are lifted. My faith in human goodness further strengthened.

The people on the streets that day were one. One. From my purdah and veiled Muslim sister to the sexy long-legged inner-wear revealing babe. From the conservative, karipap hairstyle (ala LGE) uncle to the guy who painted his face and bared his torso.

Everyone smiled at everyone. And you know it was warm and genuine. From the heart. If every smile I received that day was a hug, I'd have had at least a month's worth of full body massage.

In the midst of the rushing brought about by the tear gas and water cannons, people who knocked and stepped on another, still paused to say, "Oh, so sorry," through teary eyes. People offered water from their one and only bottle of water, not holding back for their own need later on. People spraying water from a hose onto the road so that others may wash the sting from their eyes and face.

One guy offering to share his sikat of pisang with orang yang dia tak kenal. Newly-made friends who looked out for each other in the midst of the rush. They didn't need to. But they did.

No suspicions. No fears. No egos even. Just wanting what is right. And fair. And good.

At one point, behind Hotel Angkasa, a 30-something-year-old man was trying determinedly to pull down the chain-link fence in an attempt to get away from what he must have thought was a chase by the FRU. I asked the group of men beside me, "Apa dia nak buat?" They replied, "Dia nak tarik bukak tuk ke belakang".

Immediately, I shouted, "Jangan! Jangan memberi mereka alasan untuk menyalahkan kita

merosakkan harta-benda!" He turned and stopped but still perched on the ledge. Again, I shouted the same thing, this time adding, "Ini perhimpunan aman." He jumped down.

This guy looked rough and tough. But he listened. Ego gave way to the greater good. He didn't look like the kind who'd listen to a woman. In fact, he looked like he was going to hurl abuse at me the first time I shouted at him, and for a split second, I was takut.

I think, nay I know, many saw the other side of their fellow rakyat in a different and positive light last Saturday. A new exchange has begun. They will go back to share their observations in their own circles.

The ripples have started to spread. Good, cantik ripples.

