

## Is MCA a lost cause?

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What's going to happen to MCA after the dust has settled is anyone's guess. What is clear is that its top leaders are more concerned about jockeying for position than reviving the party's fortunes. How do they expect to unify the party much less win votes this way?

By Oon Yeoh, The Edge

Time was when MCA battles involved Team A and Team B (in this latest iteration, it's Datuk Seri Ong Tee Keat's and Datuk Seri Dr Chua Soi Lek's teams respectively).

Now, there are more factions: There's a Team C (Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai's gang) as well. For all we know there could appear a Team D (other former leaders) and a Team E (disgruntled mid-level leaders) and probably more yet to emerge.

In short, MCA is in a big mess, and it's hard to fathom a way out of it. That is how fractured the party has become.

The worsening crisis that's unfolding is proof positive that the old adage about politics is true: "There are no permanent friends or permanent enemies, only permanent interests."

How else do you explain the constantly shifting alliances? At first Liow was aligned to Ong, which earned him an elevation to the No. 2 spot. Then, when Ong realised that Liow could be gunning for the top spot, Ong quickly made up with his arch-rival Chua to jointly rebuff Liow, who suddenly found himself out in the cold (Chua is the new No. 2 after appealing to the Registrar of Societies).

How also do you explain the on and off calls for EGMs? Immediately after the first EGM rejected both Ong and Chua, the former wanted another EGM to call for fresh polls. Then after making peace with Chua &ndash; after they both figured they had a common enemy in Liow &ndash; he decided fresh polls are not needed. Liow, of course, wants a fresh election.

Hardcore political watchers may be excited by the turbulence, even though it's hard to keep up with what's actually going on. But for the masses, it's all a big ho-hum. What difference will it make whether it's Ong or Chua or Liow who prevails?

The party has been mired in irrelevance since the historic general election on March 8, 2008 and has not been able to regain lost ground amongst Chinese voters who had abandoned it en masse.

Ong claims that he has a unity plan in place, which Chua supports. Liow rightly questions how you bring unity to a party when you are sacking people left, right and centre and replacing them with your own nominees.

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