I REFER to the comment from Dr A. Soorian of Seremban ("Action must be immediate" - NST, Oct 16) on the provision of a grace period for the withdrawal of products containing Red 2G food colouring.

It is the social responsibility of the industry not to use Red 2G.

The Health Ministry's move was designed to safeguard public health and not the result of "patronage of big companies", as Dr Soorian suggests. The grace period was granted because the outright banning of Red 2G is still not conclusively called for.

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), on July 5, noted the limitations of the present databases on Red 2G, although "genotoxic and carcinogenic effects have been observed in rodents".