

Dr. Mahathir replies to a challenge

S. T. - 2 APR 1969

MAY I reply to the challenge made by Prof. (Dr.) Syed Hussein Al-Attas?

I have in fact replied to the Professor of Malay in the Malay press but apparently he has not read it.

As Chairman of the Higher Education Council I do not lay down policies regarding education. My duty is to listen to views of the divers people in the council and convey their more concrete suggestions to the Minister.

There is at least one member of the Gerakan in the council although he is not there as re-

presentative of the Gerakan.

It is then up to the Minister to accept or reject advice given by the council. Whatever decision he makes after advice has been given, becomes his policy and is not mine. As Chairman of the Higher Education Council I do not consider it my duty to defend the Government's education policy.

A leader has to demonstrate that his views are endorsed by the ordinary people before he can demand that Ministers spend their time debating with him.

I would suggest that as the General Election is just around the corner, Prof. Syed Hussein should try and demonstrate that his views are acceptable by winning a parliamentary seat.

If he succeeds I will be most happy to meet him in any forum any number of times not by virtue of being the Chairman of the Higher Education Council but, if I have any luck, as another Member of Parliament belonging to the Alliance Party.

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