

Partai Rakyat using the students: S. I. Mahathir

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. — Partai Rakyat, which "failed" in the last elections, is trying to get students involved in a confrontation with the Government, Education Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohamed said today.

He said: "They were hoping for the police to use violence on the students so that they could go round the country condemning the police of brutality. Fortunately, no such incident occurred."

Dr. Mahathir was commenting on the taking over of the University

of Malaya by a group of students led by the so-called Temporary Executive Council formed by the university's students' union, yesterday.

The students demonstrated in the campus, demanding the release of five people arrested in Johore Baru last week.

Last night, another student organisation — Nationalist Executive Council — in turn took over control of the university from the Temporary Executive Council and restored the administration to the authorities.

Praise

On the NEO action, Dr. Mahathir said: "I am very glad to know that students who have a high sense of responsibility have acted wisely. It is a happy augury for the future of the country."

On the protest against the arrests of students involved in demonstrations in Johore Baru, Dr. Mahathir said: "They cannot expect special privileges."

"The students want their colleagues to be released merely because they are students."

"They seem to have a peculiar sense of values, and this is most disturbing among people who pose as future leaders of

the country," he added.

Home Affairs Minister Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie said he was convinced that the majority of students firmly believed in the rule of law and the need to uphold it at all times.

He said in a statement that the "action of the socialist group in taking over the university is distinctly a breach of the law."

On the nationalist group's success in ousting the socialist group, he said that this confirmed his confidence "in the ability of the majority of the students to sort out their own problems within the framework of law and the spirit of Rukunegara."