

D682

B Ea40 AAE

PARLIAMENT-MAHATHIR R' R' R'

E?M

KUALA LUMPUR, DEC 3 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD, SAID TODAY THE GOVERNMENT IS AMENDING THE PRINTING PRESSES AND PUBLICATIONS ACT 1984 SOLELY TO FULFIL ITS RESPONSIBILITY OF ENSURING NOTHING THAT CAN JEOPARDISE NATIONAL STABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT IS ALLOWED TO SPREAD IN MULTIRACIAL MALAYSIA.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID FOR THIS PURPOSE, THE GOVERNMENT INTENDED TO MAKE THE PROVISIONS IN THE ACT CLEAR-CUT BY HAVING LEGISLATION THAT COULD NOT BE SUBJECTED TO INTERPRETATION BY ANYONE SO THAT THE OBJECTIVES OF THE ACT WERE ACHIEVED.

HE SAID IT WAS ESSENTIAL FOR THE POWERS OF THE EXECUTIVE IN THE ACT TO BE MADE CLEAR IN WRITTEN LAW.

+THE AMENDMENT BECOMES EVEN MORE NECESSARY IN VIEW OF THE TENDENCY AMONG CERTAIN CIRCLES TO RESORT TO THE UNWRITTEN LAW TO OBSTRUCT THE FUNCTIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT, + HE SAID WHEN TABLING THE BILL TO AMEND THE ACT IN THE DEWAN RAKYAT.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE ACT WAS BEING AMENDED BECAUSE THE GOVERNMENT, WHICH REPRESENTS THE PEOPLE, FELT IT WOULD BE VERY DANGEROUS IF THE INTENTIONS OF THE ADMINISTRATION WERE MISINTERPRETED THROUGH EXERCISE OF THE DISCRETIONARY FUNCTIONS OF ONLY TWO OR THREE PEOPLE.

+NO MATTER HOW WISE THEY MAY BE, AS HUMAN BEINGS THEY HAVE EMOTIONS THAT CAN INFLUENCE THEIR THINKING AND STAND, + HE SAID. -- MORE

1830MST 03 12 87

D686

B Ef341 AAE

PARLIAMENT-MAHATHIR 2 KUALA LUMPUR R' R' R'

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO ACCEPT UNWRITTEN LAWS BECAUSE IT MIGHT NOT KNOW WHAT IT COULD DO AND WHAT IT COULD NOT.

+THE GOVERNMENT IS PLACED IN A CONFUSING POSITION IN SUCH A SITUATION OF AMBIGUITY. ANYONE CAN CHALLENGE THE GOVERNMENT AND BLOCK ACTIONS WHICH THE GOVERNMENT CONSIDERS LEGITIMATE, + HE SAID.

HE STRESSED THAT THE GOVERNMENT ADMINISTERED AND ACTED THROUGH WRITTEN LEGAL PROVISIONS. THIS ENSURES IT WOULD NOT ACT ARBITRARILY OR OVERSTEP ITS AUTHORITY.

WRITTEN LAWS CLEARLY SPELLED OUT WHAT WAS POSSIBLE AND WHAT WAS NOT. IN OTHER WORDS THE GOVERNMENT, LIKE THE PEOPLE, WOULD BE SUBJECT TO THE LAW.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID WITH THE AMENDMENTS TO THE ACT, PUBLISHERS AND IMPORTERS OF PRINTED MATERIALS WOULD BE MORE CLEAR AS TO WHAT WAS GOOD FOR THE NATION AND BE ABLE TO REGULATE THEMSELVES. -- MORE

1838MST 03 12 a7

D692

B E842 AAE  
PARLIAMENT-MAHATHIR 3 KUALA LUMPUR R'R'R'

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID LEGISLATION SUCH AS THE ACT ALSO EXISTED IN OTHER COUNTRIES, INCLUDING COUNTRIES WHERE SEVERAL INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINES WERE PUBLISHED.

HE SAID FREEDOM OF THE PRESS WAS NOT ABSOLUTE. NEWSPAPERS EVERYWHERE WERE SUBJECT TO CONTROL, IF NOT BY THE GOVERNMENT THEN BY THEIR OWN EDITORS AND STAFF, ADVERTISERS AS WELL AS THE NEWSPAPER OWNERS.

EACH HAD THEIR OWN STAND AND INTERESTS. FREEDOM OF THE PRESS WAS ACTUALLY SUCH FREEDOM AS ALLOWED BY THE CONTROLLING GROUP, HE ADDED.

IF ANY AMONG THE GROUP WAS NOT RESPONSIBLE OR WISHED TO PROPAGATE AN UNHEALTHY VIEW, SOCIETY WOULD BECOME THE VICTIM, HE SAID.

+THE GOVERNMENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING THAT UNHEALTHY ELEMENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO 'SPREAD IN OUR MULTIRACIAL SOCIETY,+ HE ADDED. -- MORE

1 847MST 03 12 87

D722

U E851 REPEAT AAE  
PARLIAMENT-MAHATHIR 4 KUALA LUMPUR R'R'R'

AS SUCH, WHEN LOOKING AT THE AMENDMENTS TO THE ACT, THE FACTOR THAT SHOULD BE GIVEN SERIOUS ATTENTION WAS THE NEED TO SAFEGUARD NATIONAL STABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN A MULTIRACIAL CONTEXT.

+IF IN PROTECTING THIS INTEREST WE HAVE TO REGULATE A LITTLE THE FREEDOM OF A GROUP THAT THREATENS OUR STABILITY, THEN WE SHOULD GO AHEAD AND IMPOSE THE REGULATION,+ HE SAID.

ON THE AMENDMENT GIVING THE MINISTER CONCERNED ABSOLUTE POWERS IN THE RENEWAL? REVOCATION OR SUSPENSION OF PUBLICATION LICENCES, HE SAID THE MINISTER'S DECISIONS WERE GRANTED IMMUNITY FROM COURT QUESTIONING BECAUSE ON MANY OCCASIONS THE INFORMATION HE HAD RECEIVED IF MADE PUBLIC COULD HAVE ADVERSE EFFECTS ON NATIONAL SECURITY AND INTERESTS.

IF THE CASES WERE HEARD IN OPEN COURT, THE COURTS WOULD BECOME A POLITICAL ARENA, HE SAID.

+IF THE MINISTER ABUSES THE POWERS GIVEN, THE PEOPLE CAN DECIDE ON THE ACTION TO BE TAKEN AGAINST HIM THROUGH THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES PRACTISED IN THIS COUNTRY,+ HE ADDED. -- MORE

1945MST 03 12 87

D721

B E852 AAE  
PARLIAMENT-MAHATHIR 5 KUALA LUMPUR e's?' R'

ON THE PROVISION MAKING IT AN OFFENCE TO PUBLISH FALSE NEWS WITH MALICIOUS INTENT, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THERE HAD BEEN NUMEROUS INSTANCES LATELY OF UNTRUE REPORTS APPEARING IN NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES PUBLISHED BOTH LOCALLY AND OVERSEAS.

+IT SEEMS THE NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES CONCERNED ARE NOT BOTHERED BY THE IMPLICATIONS THEIR FALSE REPORTS MAY HAVE FOR THE QUARTER OR GROUP THAT HAD BECOME THEIR VICTIM OR THE ADVERSE EFFECTS ON THE SECURITY AND ECONOMY OF THE COUNTRY,+ HE SAID..

HE SAID THIS PROVISION WAS INCORPORATED IN THE BILL TO ENCOURAGE THE PRESS TO BE MORE RESPONSIBLE. -- BERNAMA

1943MST 03 12 87