

Mahathir blames the irresponsible

NST 5 DEC 1987

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. — The Prime Minister today blamed irresponsible politicians for forcing the Government to enact tougher laws.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir **Mo-hamad** said these politicians **knew that** if they could force the Government to take tough measures against them, the act itself would become a political issue.

He said they would delibera-

tely abuse existing laws to force the Government to enact tougher ones. They then condemned the Government and questioned the need for these laws, he added.

"They would say the Government is undemocratic, but they were responsible for pushing the Government."

Dr Mahathir said this in his speech when tabling amendments to the Police Act 1967 for a second reading in the Dewan Rakyat.

He said this was the second time he had tabled an amendment Bill which the Government could not be proud of.

Yesterday, he **tabled** for second reading a Bill to amend the Printing Presses and Publications Act 1984.

"It is not just the Government; but Malaysians generally cannot be proud of these amendments.

"I say this because it shows that there are individuals and groups in our society who

have not reached 'political maturity'.

"**They do** not know the limits and do not appreciate the Government's liberal attitude. Those who are mature do not need tough laws to check them.

"They will not do things that are detrimental to society. They will be responsible and will not do anything that will affect the stability and development of the country."

Referring to this "politically

immature" group, he said they were always on the lookout for loopholes in the law to do harm as the Government cannot touch them.

As the fines imposed for offences related to illegal assemblies were light, they were willing to break the law and then pay the fines, without feeling any shame, he added.

"That their actions affect political stability and the econ-

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omy does not stop them. They are only concerned about their party and the politics of their party.

"They would love to give the impression that Malaysia is unstable and not conducive to investors.

"They would rather see people unemployed... to claim that Malaysia is undemocratic, unstable and cannot attract investors.

"They hope to tarnish the image of the Government in the interest of their political party."

The Prime Minister said this group had always been giving foreigners misleading information that the situation in the country was bad. They would lie in the hope of gaining sympathy from foreigners for their party's struggle.

"That this affects national development is not a problem to them. If they are branded as disloyal to the country, they get very angry. But what else can they be called?"

He spoke of a dilemma facing the Government. If the laws were not tightened, this group would do anything to spark off chaos and cause ten-

sion in the country. However, if the Government strengthened the law, it would be condemned as being undemocratic.

"But the Government will not run away from its responsibility," he stressed. "The Government need not be liberal to those who do not appreciate the Governments liberal stand.

"Being liberal to them is like offering a flower to a monkey. The monkey would rather tear the flower apart than appreciate its beauty."

He said the DAP would claim that the country is no more democratic with the introduction of these amendments to the Act.

"They will say the death knell has been sounded for democracy. They will say that investors will not come here anymore."

Dr Mahathir said foreign investors did not take into account whether democracy was alive in the countries where they invested.

What mattered most to them was political stability and a strong Government capable of enforcing law and order, he said.

"If we sincerely study (the situation), we will find countries in the East with the largest number of foreign invest-

ments are those that are not too democratic, but whose Governments are strong with political stability.

"No one wants to invest in a country that is so democratic to the extent that demonstrations occur every day and the Government falls every two months.

"Investors do not invest to see democracy in countries. They come because they want to make profits. A chaotic situation caused by the abuse of democratic rights will not attract them.

"The Government, which is responsible for development and the well-being of the people, must ensure stability so that frustrated politicians do not abuse the freedom we have for their own interests.

He said it was for this purpose that the amendments were proposed so that the police could act swiftly to ensure public order and national security.

With the amendments, he added, there would be more effective control of assemblies, gatherings and processions.

"With such control, we hope assemblies, gatherings and processions in future would be held in a responsible manner and according to reasonable limits for the preservation of security and public order."