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US embassy rejects protest letter from MCA Youth

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KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - The United States embassy has rejected the MCA Youth's protest letter denouncing George Soros' speculative attacks on Asean currencies, saying that the US Government had nothing to do with the billionaire financier's activities.

"Despite Soros being an American citizen, the embassy refused to accept the protest letter," MCA Youth international affairs bureau chairman Lee Hwa Beng said.

Lee, accompanied by Youth vice-chairman Hoo Seong Chang, were escorted into the embassy's office to see the consul of political affairs Jeffrey J. Lunstead after waiting outside the gates since 10am.

Twenty minutes later, Lee and Hoo told reporters that Lunstead rejected the letter bearing the heading "Registering deep regret and protest against George Soros for economic sabotage of South East Asian countries, particularly Malaysia".

"It was undiplomatic of him," Lee complained. "Lunstead should have at least accepted the letter. We will send the letter to the ambassador by mail."

The MCA Youth's action was a follow-up to the condemnation of Soros' activities yesterday by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who had disclosed that certain Malaysians had exploited the situation for profits.

Dr Mahathir had said the Government had evidence that the pressure on the Asean currencies, including the plunge in the value of the ringgit, was caused by Soros though the Government would not disclose the evidence now.

Lee said Lunstead had read the letter, disagreed with the contents and refused to accept it on behalf of the ambassador.

"Lunstead said the US Government had nothing to do with George Soros," he said.

"I then asked him if Soros was an American citizen and Lunstead said 'yes' but still did not want to accept the letter."

Excerpts of the letter read: "We strongly urge your Government to take necessary punitive actions and measures to stop such detrimental activities by a citizen of your country.

"If such economic criminal acts are left unchecked, it will have far-reaching adverse effects and implications not only within the South East Asian economies, but it can affect the relationship between Asean and the United States.

"In the interest of Malaysia and US relationship, and for the principles of democracy so often expounded by your Government on matters affecting developing nations, your Government should take necessary legislative measures against Mr George Soros for his irresponsible actions."

The letter was signed by Lee and Hoo.

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