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West's refusal to accept our choice of leaders undemocratic

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SENIOR US officials and senators have recently made comments that amount to interference in Malaysia's internal political affairs.

Malaysia inherited the present political system from its colonial days. This Western system of government empowers the Prime Minister to appoint his cabinet and dismiss it too (with or without reasons).

The Western media has relentlessly attacked Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for an action that is part and parcel of this political system.

When Russian President Boris Yeltsin sacked his entire Cabinet, the Western media and politicians kept their comments (if any) to themselves.

Former US Senator Sam Nunn has called on the Malaysian Government to allow orderly demonstrations. He is either naive or chooses to ignore the potentially ugly consequences of such demonstrations.

Nunn is strangely unaware of what happened in Kuala Lumpur when the mob took matters into its own hands and things almost went out of control. The Western media thrives on the drama of such street politics and repeatedly print and televise strategically-taken photos and scenes of chase and arrest for sensation and impact.

This is irresponsible. Mob mentality cannot be given undue publicity and thus encouraged.

All peace-loving Malaysians are grateful to the authorities for the restraint shown and the firmness taken to maintain law and order. Public safety must not be compromised.

Democracy is all about majority. For the umpteenth time, can the West please take note that Dr Mahathir is very much a duly and popularly elected Prime Minister?

The repeated standing ovation by the hundreds of thousands of Malaysians given to him during the Commonwealth Games (and at the height of the unruly demonstrations) speaks for itself.

The vast majority of Malaysians support and respect Dr Mahathir as Prime Minister. The refusal of the West to accept this is undemocratic.