

Dr M: No reason for US to cry foul

STAR - 6 MAY 2001

■ By DEVID RAJAH

MALACCA: Washington's failure to be re-elected to the UN Human Rights Commission is an indication that other Western nations are more qualified than the United States.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday this "ouster" of the United States was a democratic process.

"If we follow the democratic process, sometimes we win

and other times we lose, and when we win or lose we have to accept it," he said, adding that those who voted were probably of the opinion that other countries were better qualified.

Dr Mahathir, who spoke to reporters after meeting serving and retired Special Forces Unit members at the Sungai Udang Camp here, said the United States could not claim its being voted out was unfair because those who voted this

time must have felt that they had to elect other countries in.

Asked if the reason for voting the United States out of the commission was an indication of the country's attitude towards international organisations and frustrations from its allies and foes alike, Dr Mahathir said it could be, but the real reason was difficult to understand.

The United States was voted out for the first time since 1947, with France getting 52

votes, Austria (41), Sweden (32) and the United States (29).

The three seats allocated for Western nations were up for grabs in a ballot held within the UN Economic and Social Council.

On another matter, Dr Mahathir said the lifting of the 10% profit levy on portfolio profits repatriated within a year was a pragmatic move.

"Furthermore, the levy from the profits was very lit-

tle and the process of collection and allocation of levy by companies was very complicated," he said.

He added that this was why the Government decided to abolish the levy.

He also said allegations concerning bribery, made by former World Bank chief economist Joseph Stiglitz, in the restructuring of economies by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank was a clear indication that the two

institutions were out to promote neo-colonialism.

The allegations were reported by *The Observer* on Tuesday.

Dr Mahathir said the revelations by Stiglitz were one of the reasons why Malaysia rejected IMF and World Bank rescue plans for ailing economies.



More balanced situation now — P25