

SPEECH BY THE MINISTER OF STATE (DEFENCE), MR. WEE TOON BOON, WHEN MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE CORROSIVE AND EXPLOSIVE SUBSTANCES AND OFFENSIVE WEAPONS (AMENDMENT) BILL AT THE SITTING OF THE SINGAPORE PARLIAMENT ON 21.4.66.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

Sir, the Government considers that the penalties provided for offences under the Corrosive and Explosive Substances and Offensive Weapons Act of Malaysia which is the law currently applicable to Singapore are inadequate to serve as a positive deterrent to criminal acts by social delinquents and disloyal elements in the country. Sir, it is the duty of the Government to protect the people as a whole from acts of violence by a few criminals and disaffected persons. This Bill is a step towards achieving this. Some of the penalties provided for in the Bill have been taken from the Corrosive Substances Ordinance, 1955 which was applicable to Singapore before Malaysia and which has now been repealed. Where the provisions for penalties contained in the former Singapore Ordinance have been considered to be inadequate, enhanced penalties have been included.

Clause 3 seeks to enhance the penalty for carrying or being in possession of corrosive or explosive substances from three years imprisonment and whipping to 10 years imprisonment and caning. The present penalty for using any corrosive substance or offensive weapon for the purpose of causing hurt and for causing by corrosive substance an explosion which is likely to cause hurt is a maximum of seven years imprisonment and whipping. Clause 4 amends this to life imprisonment and caning. In clause 5 is included an amendment to the penalty provided for carrying or being in possession in a public road or place any offensive weapon otherwise than with lawful authority from two years imprisonment to three years imprisonment and caning. Clause 6 amends the punishment for manufacturing, being in possession, carrying or lending weapons such as a flick knife, gravity knife, a whip, motorcycle chain, a knuckle duster and metal pipe from two years imprisonment and a fine of \$2,000 to three years imprisonment and a fine of \$3,000. The maximum penalty for a second or subsequent offence of this nature is increased from three years to seven years imprisonment.

Sir, I beg to move.

APRIL 21, 1966.

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