

SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT PRESS STATEMENT

MC. SE. 16/67 (LAW)

SPEECH BY THE MINISTER FOR LAW, MR. E. W. BARKER,
IN MOVING THE 2ND READING OF THE PUBLIC AUTHORITIES
PROTECTION (CESSATION) BILL IN PARLIAMENT, ON
THURSDAY, 7TH SEPTEMBER, 1967.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move, "That the Bill be now read a second time".

As you are aware, Sir, the Public Authorities Protection Ordinance of 1912 provided, inter alia, that legal proceedings against public authorities shall not lie unless instituted within three months after the act, neglect or default complained of. This Ordinance remained in operation in Singapore until 1955 when it was repealed by the Public Authorities Protection (Repeal) Ordinance. The object of the repeal was to assimilate the law applicable to proceedings against public authorities with that applicable in other cases, with the result that public authorities ceased to enjoy any privileged position in litigation. The repeal was also designed to bring our law in line with that in the United Kingdom.

After the formation of Malaysia, the Public Authorities Protection Ordinance, 1948, of Malaysia was extended to Singapore by the Modification of Laws (Government Proceedings and Public Authorities Protection) (Extension and Modification) Order, 1965, made under the Malaysia Act on the 25th of February, 1965. This Ordinance, which still operates in Singapore, provides, inter alia, that actions against public authorities shall be commenced within twelve months next after the act, neglect or default complained of.

In consequence of the independence of Singapore upon separation from Malaysia, it is considered desirable that the Public Authorities Protection Ordinance, 1948, of Malaysia should cease to apply to Singapore and that we revert to the position where the law applicable to proceedings against public authorities is similar to that in other cases. The Bill now before the House seeks to do this.

Sir, I beg to move.