

S.T. 17 DEC 1970

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. — Former Umno "strongman" Dr. Mahathir Mohamed today dismissed speculation that he is seeking to rejoin the party.

"At the present moment I have no intention of continuing with my political struggle in the Umno camp," he said in a telephone interview from his Alor Star clinic.

Dr. Mahathir, who was a member of the Umno central committee until he was expelled last year for a "breach of party discipline," said he was not "sulking away after being dismissed."

Suitable

But he felt that the implementation of Umno policy was not being done in a manner suitable for him to be in the party.

"However, once the nature of its implementation is acceptable to me I will take a decision," he said.

Dr. Mahathir asserted that it was up to him to decide whether or not to rejoin the party.

The question would not depend on his nomination to the party membership

by the various Umno divisions.

"As I am no longer an Umno member, it will be rather odd for the party divisions to decide that I should be reinstated as a member," he said.

He appealed to Umno divisions which have been agitating for his reinstatement in the party to withdraw from the cause.