

# Malaysia won't be pawn of super powers

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**KUALA LUMPUR, Mon.** — Malaysia will not be made a proxy or a target for big powers to test their strength, Deputy Prime Minister **Seri Dr. Mahathir said here** today.

"We must not allow the big powers to interfere in our own affairs and be used to test their war policies and weapons," he said when opening the three-day Conference of Chairmen of Working Committee on Local Security.

He said the Eighties is a decade of tough competition among the bigger nations for control of rich raw-material producing countries.

"They are working to gain control of strategic areas through direct means or by proxy and we, a small nation, must be careful lest we fall victim," he added.

Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir, who is also the Minister of Trade and Industry, stressed the importance of being cautious of subtle manipulation by foreign nations to gain control of our economy.

In such competition, he added, neutral nations like Malaysia were in danger of falling prey to them.

"However, it is usually countries that are cast out or do not have a firm stand will become the pawns of these big powers."

Referring to Indochina, he said other Asian countries "sincerely hope for her cooperation to create peace, freedom and neutrality."

The Deputy Prime Minister criticised religious extremists who were disrespectful of others in the course of spreading their religion.

"Freedom of worship is enshrined in the Constitution and the Rukunegara and must be respected," he said.

He said the extremists were even willing to break the law to achieve their aims.

Through the use of violence and brutality, they were a threat to national security, he added.

He said it must be remembered that the free-

dom of worship, which reflects the country's racial diversity, was born of a strong faith that each individual truly understood his religion to become "one who is tolerant and responsible".

Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir also called for the total involvement of each citizen, in national defence.

He expressed regret that there were some irresponsible groups who were only too ready to smear the country's image.

He described them as having "no patriotic spirit, it empty inside, which makes them easy prey to enemy influence."

Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir said no one was excluded from the task of maintaining peace and

stability.

He attributed the success in containing security threats to full cooperation from Thailand, adding, that in time guerilla warfare would be completely wiped out.