

# RIFT AT REST

STAR 21 SEP 1986

**KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Datuk Musa Hitam said today that they wanted to put to rest the differences between them.**

The Umno president and his deputy did not refer to the issue, despite both saying yesterday they might, when delivering their respective winding-up speeches at the end of the 37th Umno general assembly here today. A number of delegates had commented on and asked about the differences which led to Datuk Musa resigning as Deputy Prime Minister last March.

Faced with questions at a Press conference afterwards where they were seated side by side, Dr Mahathir said: "You can assume that we want to put the matter to rest." Datuk Musa, who was

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seated beside him, smiled and nodded in agreement. In his winding-up speech earlier, he had said he would not dwell on his reasons for the sake of party unity.

Dr Mahathir said the assembly ended in a "happy mood, proving that Umno members are united." He put this largely down to the Barisan Nasional's big win in last month's general election.

Dr Mahathir stressed that Umno would continue its "moderate and realistic" policies despite the fiery rhetoric of some of the delegates, especially on

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the statements he made were "qualified ones" adding that some delegates at the assembly had wanted him to "do a few things which I can't."

"I only said that we cannot take the rights of the other races but we will not surrender our rights to anyone. That was all I promised," he said.

He said the question of whether "we should be firm or not did not arise."

Dr Mahathir said he was disappointed that an Umno delegate had blamed the falling prices of the country's commodities to the speeches he made at international forums.

He said he would be disappointed if members asked him to tone down his speeches to please the superpowers just because he feared that they might manipulate the prices of the nation's goods.

He added that the superpowers did not help countries who were friendly with them.

If the delegates felt that by being firm he had brought them trouble, then they had to choose someone who was less firm, he said.

As to criticism from delegates that when it came to the NEP leaders did not practise what they preached, Dr Mahathir said it was only too easy to talk when one was not doing the job.