

GHAFAR TO STAND BY P.M. EVEN OUT OF GOVT

A PLEDGE OF SUPPORT FOR MAHATHIR

21 SEP 1986

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — Umno vice-president Ghafar Baba today pledged his undivided support for Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

He would continue to support the party president irrespective of whether he (Encik Ghafar) remained in the Government.

The Deputy Prime Minister, in replying to points raised during the assembly, said Dr Mahathir had led the Barisan Nasional to a resounding victory in the general election.

He said he agreed with a con-

gratulatory message received by the Prime Minister from a leader of a neighbouring nation, which said he (Dr Mahathir) was bold in calling for an election when the country was facing an economic slowdown.

Encik Ghafar also expressed his support for Dr Mahathir's address at the opening of the assembly.

He said Dr Mahathir had told him the gist of the speech he would deliver at the assembly.

"I told him I would give him my support. When I asked him

whether the points to be raised were just to please the delegates, Dr Mahathir replied he would stand by the contents of his speech."

Encik Ghafar then pledged his undivided support for Dr Mahathir, which drew applause from the assembly.

The Umno vice-president said the Umno Supreme Council would issue guidelines to ensure that the campaigning for party posts next year was conducted in a healthy manner.

He urged the delegates to accept the guidelines on ethics in

good faith.

"Any contest should be conducted in a friendly manner. There will be losers and winners. We cannot be winners all the time."

He also expressed his concern that Umno delegates would relax because of Umno's performance in the general election.

"The Malays have a tendency to close ranks when they face a crisis ... but split up when they achieve success."

He urged the delegates to take care of their respective divisions and constituencies.