

Dr M: If you don't want me, say so

STAR 15 MAR 1987

By Zainal Epi

KUALA KUBU BARU, Sat. — **Danuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad** said today Umno members should tell him if they do not need his services anymore in the party.

He said there was "no need to push me down if my services are not needed."

Opening the Hulu Selangor Umno delegates meeting here today, the party president said: "If party members want me, I will continue to serve. If party members do not want me, tell me, do not push me down."

Dr Mahathir said he was not campaigning but merely giving his advice so that the party would remain intact after the elections next month.

The Prime Minister added that there was no point in winning and becoming a leader if the party was split.

"There is no need for candidates to go overboard in their campaign for party posts as this would result in a split in the party."

"Whatever we do, we must first think of the party, unity, race, religion, the other races in the country and the country."

"If we think that the system of democracy only gives us the freedom without any feeling of responsibility, this will produce bad results."

"We must feel responsible. Do not go to the extent that our actions destroy us."

"Our intention is not to fill a vacancy but to struggle for the race, nation, Umno and other races in the country," he added.

Dr Mahathir said that the

changing of Prime Ministers in the country was a matter of course.

He said no Umno leader had planned to take over from the other. For example, Tun Hussein Onn did not plan to take over from Tun Abdul Razak nor Tun Razak from Tunku Abdul Rahman.

"All happened as a matter of course. God determines everything."

"There is no need to scramble. When the time comes, it will happen," he added.

Dr Mahathir said that neither he nor the party president were important.

"What we must ask ourselves is that will the unity which prevailed all this while be lost by our actions," he added.

He said candidates should not make allegations (*fitnah*) in their campaigns which would create ill-feelings and depict a bad picture of challengers.

He added that there were also allegations against him stating that he was the richest man in the world and that he owned a house at Genting Highlands.

"Show me the proof that I am rich. The helicopter and the big house in Seri Perdana? Those are owned by the Government."

"The house in Genting Highlands is Encik Daim Zainuddin's house and not mine. I have only one house in Kedah."

"I regret such allegations are made as this is not good. We are all Muslims."

"I regret such stories will create unhealthy feelings which will then turn into ha-

tred. When this happens, the people's view will be changed. Even a beautiful face can be ugly when the feelings have crept in," he added.

He said that he regretted such allegations because this would create a split among party members and when this happens "if any person wins the presidency, he will win by 55 per cent."

"This will be a great loss as others will not respect the person. Whatever he does, he only has 55 per cent backing behind him and the backing is given because of some other reasons."

"When this happens, who will lose? Umno will lose. All of us will lose. We cannot achieve our objectives."

"We should not just show the other person's bad things, we should also highlight his good side."

"Do not just think of winning only, think of the responsibility as well. Speak the truth," he added.

Speaking at a Press conference later, Dr Mahathir said that he did not know of the compromise which some party leaders and members were talking about.

"What compromise? Having two presidents, three deputy presidents, 115 supreme council members? Is that what compromise is all about?"

"Like what was written in *The (Sunday) Star*? Having three Deputy Prime Ministers? Then what about other parties in the Barisan Nasional? What about the MCA, PBS and others?"

"I do not know how to

avoid the contest and I do not know what is compromising," he added.

Dr Mahathir also said that there was nothing wrong with the recent party supreme council meeting held over last weekend which lasted only 30 minutes.

"There was nothing to discuss anyway and there was no point to discuss allegations raised during the campaigns."*