

Dr M: US

MSI 23 OCT 1990

move

bid to

force us

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. — The Prime Minister today described the move by the United States Congress to stop a US\$1 million (M\$2.7 million) military training grant to Malaysia as "economic arm-twisting."

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad was commenting on a Press report that the US Congress had on Thursday passed an amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act to this effect.

It had been introduced by Oregon Senator Mark Hatfield who had accused Malaysia of violating human rights by forcing Vietnamese boat people back to sea.

Speaking to reporters at the Putra World Trade Centre after closing the 44th World Amateur Bodybuilding Championships, Dr Mahathir said Malaysia was saddened by the move.

"It appears that the United States leadership does not hesitate to arm-twist smaller countries.

"Other countries do worse things, such as killing 21 Palestinians," he said, alluding to the recent incident at the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

"We have to look after our own interests just as they (Americans) prevent people such as Mexicans and Haitians from entering their country."

"But they have done this because we are a small and weak country and they think that might is right."

He said that Malaysia did not really need the money for military training, but rather, the knowledge that came with it.