

Anwar did some explaining in Washington
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Opposition Leader Anwar Ibrahim has told his friends in the United States that he regretted using terms such as "Zionist aggression", the Washington Post reported on Monday.

In an article by its deputy editorial page editor Jackson Diehl, the paper said Anwar was in Washington for a couple of days last week.

"(He) spent a lot of time offering explanations to old friends, not to mention House Foreign Affairs Committee chairman Howard Berman and a Jewish leader or two," Diehl wrote in the article with the headline 'Flirting with zealotry in Malaysia'.

Anwar said he regretted using terms such as "Zionist aggression", which are "common coin demagogues like Mahmoud Ahmadinejad", Diehl added.

"Why do I need to use it if it causes so much misunderstanding? I need to be more careful," the writer quoted Anwar, who is also the advisor of PKR.

"If you say we are growing impatient with Israel, that is true. If you say I am not too guarded or careful in what I say sometimes, that is also true."

The daily noted Anwar recently joined a demonstration outside the US embassy in Kuala Lumpur where an Israeli flag was burned and had also made dark insinuations about the "Jewish-controlled" Washington public relations firm, Apco Worldwide, which is working for the Malaysian government.

"Najib describes Israel as 'world gangsters'. But he quickly turned Anwar's words against him; Apco has been peddling the anti-Israel statements around Washington," wrote Diehl.

Obama silence on Anwar

Diehl said many of Anwar's friends, among them former diplomat and ex-World Bank chief Paul Wolfowitz, were inclined to give him a break.

Diehl said Wolfowitz told him: "What Anwar did was wrong, but considering that he's literally fighting for his life - physically as well as politically - against a government that attacks him as being 'a puppet of the Jews', one should cut him some slack."

Diehl said Anwar was not getting the kind of support from the US for his current second sodomy trial unlike the first prosecution when the then vice-president, another of his friends, had spoken up for him.

President Barack Obama said nothing in public about Anwar during a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Najib Razak in Washington in April, he added.

Anwar, he said, found his own way to fight back by trying to turn the tables on allegations that he was an Israeli agent and a "Wolfowitz-loving American lackey".

"..he tried to turn the tables, alleging that Apco was manipulating the government to support Israeli and US interests. He also said that Israeli agents had infiltrated Malaysia's

security forces and were directly involved in the running of the government," Diehl wrote.

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