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## Book an appreciation of Dr M, says writer

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**PUTRAJAYA:** American journalist Tom Plate said his book on Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad is "neither a whitewash nor a grand jury indictment but an appreciation" of the former prime minister.

In the book *Conversations with Mahathir Mohamad - Dr M: Operation Malaysia*, the country's fourth prime minister gives his views on the Internal Security Act (ISA) and the Jews, among others.

Dr Mahathir had also claimed that the 1987 crackdown, when 106 people were arrested under the ISA, was a police decision and that he had met opposition leaders before *Ops Lang* to assure them they would not be arrested.

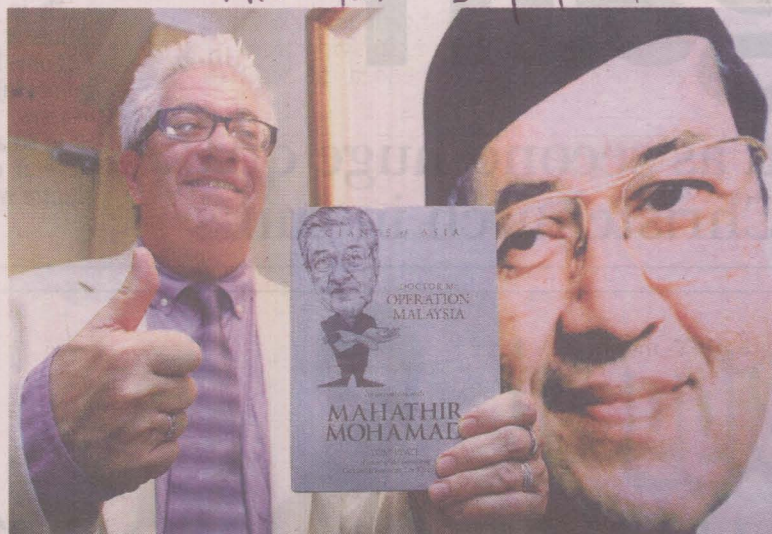
The statement drew flak from DAP stalwart Lim Kit Siang, who denied that Dr Mahathir had met him and other opposition leaders.

"I don't know what really motivated him (Dr Mahathir) to say the things he said.

"But I do think that at a certain point of one's life, you want the world to know your thoughts on some of the controversies and what you were trying to do, even if it did not work out exactly like you wanted," Plate, 67, said after launching the book at the Perdana Leadership Foundation here yesterday.

The book is part of his *Giants of Asia* series, which also included a book on Singapore's founding father Lee Kuan Yew.

"His (Dr Mahathir's) point was, if Malaysia doesn't try and just sits where it is, nothing is



**Malaysian giant:** Plate giving the thumbs up to his book on Dr Mahathir after the launch at the Perdana Leadership Foundation in Putrajaya yesterday. The book is priced at RM39.90.  
— Bernama

going to be achieved.

"Dr Mahathir was not afraid of failure and did not want to be timid," said Plate, who is also an internationally syndicated columnist and university professor.

"Sometimes, when I went back to him to confirm things he had said, Dr Mahathir would say, 'That's what I said and that's what I want to say'.

"I met him five times and spent a total of 10 hours with him," said Plate, adding that the discussions were intense.

In his speech at the book launch, Plate said he decided to include Dr Mahathir in his series on Asian leaders after interviewing the former prime minister to comment and "get some dirt" on Lee for his book on the republic's Minister Mentor.

"Upon hearing my request, Dr Mahathir said, 'Come on down!'

"When I told him that I should do a *Giants of Asia* book on him, he gave me a big smile," added Plate, drawing laughter from the audience.