

APEC to Gore: quiet, please
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Who's afraid of a little blowback? Not Al Gore. "That is the American message and I am proud to deliver it here and anywhere I go," he told reporters after New Zealand, Singapore and China joined Malaysia in needling the veep for bringing politics to a summit that's supposed to be all business. "APEC is an economic forum," said New Zealand's Prime Minister Jenny Shipley, whose country will host next year's summit. "Clearly there are some pressing bilateral issues that countries want to raise here in Malaysia, but it should not be at the expense of APEC."

TIME Washington correspondent Jef McAllister says Gore's critics shouldn't forget that his salute to "reformasi" Monday was plenty grounded in economic policy. It was Anwar's chumminess with the IMF that got him in trouble, he says, and it's Mahathir's nose-thumbing capital controls, not his long-time thuggery, that have the U.S. so riled. And notice that Mahathir's Asian counterparts were careful to stick up for APEC -- not Mahathir. "He's isolated himself so much from the rest of the region," says McAllister, "that the U.S. really doesn't have much to worry about."

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