

Gore growls at APEC
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Frank Pellegrini

Perhaps aware of the excitement vacuum created by his arrival at the Asian Pacific Economic Conference summit in Bill Clinton's stead, Al Gore wasted no time in insulting his hosts, throwing U.S. support behind the "brave" protesters calling for Malaysian prime minister Mahathir's ouster. Malaysian trade minister Rafidah Aziz called it "the most disgusting speech I've heard in my life." But TIME Washington correspondent Jef McAllister says Mahathir's is one carpet the U.S. won't stop urinating on.

"There isn't much Mahathir can do to the U.S.," says McAllister. "The U.S. is upset at him over currency controls, and Anwar" -- the former deputy prime minister still jailed on controversial sex charges -- "has a lot of friends in Washington." That was in evidence Saturday, as Madeleine Albright visited with Anwar's wife; Gore, meanwhile, will give Mahathir wide berth throughout his visit. The host-bashing is good face time for the veep on a prominent human rights issue; too bad all the cameras are back in Washington with the current president.

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