

SPEECH BY: DATO' SERI DR. MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD
(PRIME MINISTER)

EVENT: A DINNER HOSTED BY VICE-PRESIDENT BUSH

VENUE: WASHINGTON, USA

DATE: 18 JAN 1984

TIME:

Let me first of all express on behalf of my wife and members of my delegation, as well as on my own, our sincere thanks for the delightful dinner that you, Mr. Vice-President and Mrs. Bush, have so graciously laid-out for us. I would also like to express my appreciation for your kind words and generosity.

2. As you are no doubt aware, Mr. Vice-President, from your personal contacts and dealings with us that one of the happy features of the friendly relationship which exists between our two countries is that they are not based on any formal alliance or commitments. Rather, they are based on the even surer foundation of shared values and interests. In terms of physical geography, Kuala Lumpur is a long way from Washington but I believe that our shared commitments to democratic government and its values, to the free enterprise system and its opportunities, and to the spiritually secure, humane and just society, transcend the gap of physical distance and bring us much closer than perhaps we often realise.

3. Though we both have illusions about the world, we also have a shared interest in peaceful and cooperative relations among nations, irrespective of their social philosophy or political persuasion. Also, if I may say so, we have no expectation of each other, and we make no demands on each other, beyond these shared interests and values and, as a result, our relations over the years have been generally positive and sound.

4. This is not to deny that there have been occasional differences in the way we have looked at certain issues, or that there have been occasional issues and even irritants in our bilateral relations. But I have no doubt that the positive aspects of our relationship and our shared interests and values far outweigh these occasional differences.

5. These positive aspects include the frequent and close consultations on many issues of interests to us both. In the fields of investment and trade, the United States continues to be a significant economic partner for us, and most recently in the field of education, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of our students in this

country which, I am convinced, will have long-term benefits, for Malaysia and for the cooperative relations between our two countries.

6. Once again, I thank you, Mr. Vice-President and Mrs. Bush, for the courtesy and hospitality you have shown me, my wife and members of my delegation.

7. May I now have the pleasure of inviting you all to join me in a toast to Vice-President and Mrs. Bush and to the well-being of the people of the United States.