

<http://www.malaysiakini.com/letters/114866>

## Obama's Nobel prize: 'Let's not be rude'

Anushka Anastasia Solomon  
Oct 12, 09  
5:39pm

I refer to the **Malaysiakini** report [Criticisms as Obama wins shock Nobel Peace Prize](#).

While it took everyone by surprise, like a natural disaster, after my initial bewilderment, I decided to take stock of the **Nobel Prize** for Peace awarded to US President Barack Obama.

I am a legal immigrant to America, 10 years, silent lips, turning always the other cheek, giving always the second coat, and observing always the laws of both my country of adoption and origin.

In my time here, I wrote passionately against one nominee for the **Nobel** Peace **Prize**, Dr Mahathir Mohammad. One article was headlined 'Former Malaysian leader poor choice for **Nobel** Peace **Prize**' and appeared in The Denver Post in December 2007.

My American friends called to congratulate me locally, for the **prize** went to another American, Al Gore and the people rejoiced. For me, I was writing the truth.

The late William Safire called Dr Mahathir Mohammad a 'tin-pot tyrant.' Ah, American freedom, the right to call a spade a spade.

Now the question arises, does President Barack Obama deserve the **Nobel** Peace **Prize**? This question is rather more difficult to answer. Speaking as one honoured by Amnesty International for my fistful of poems, for speaking out against 'human rights abuses in the face of repression' at the Edinburgh International Book Festival (2007 through 2009), there are always the more deserving. For example, the many unknown Malaysians who risk voicing their dissent and support there, the people too numerous to mention.

So why at this time rancour, in free America, over President Barack **Obama's** nomination and award? **Obama's** award, like his presidency, is a message to the nations that the tide has turned.

That Americans have overcome their racist past, publicly and for all to know; that this American president has learned sufficiently from the mistakes of his

predecessor and his own African American past, not to demonise any people of any nation; that he is committed to accord to them the dignity that belongs to all people.

The **Nobel** committee has chosen to honour one of us. This **prize** for peace is one that belongs to the American people from whom has sprung a leader who will be only as great as we make him and allow him to be.

We, the people make America.

Why not say, thank you kindly to the good people who nominated our president and return for once to that era when manners maketh a man? Why respond, in that so uncivil manner 'When did the Swedes learn to kiss America's ass?'

Have we, the American people, who speak always of grace, not yet learned to be gracious?