

SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AT  
THE OPENING OF "IDEAL HOME" EXHIBITION  
AT PETALING JAYA ON 14TH SEPTEMBER, 1961

Mr President, Promoters, Honorable Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen:

The completion of these three "Ideal Homes" within the \$18,000 price range brings to realization the dream of modern homes for persons with modest incomes. Credit should go to the sponsors of the competition to discover suitable designs, to architects whose ideas have materialised into these fine buildings, and to the contractors for the fine construction job they have executed.

These "Ideal Homes" are in keeping with the architectural progress of our country. In recent years the trend of creating housing estates for sale outright or by instalments has become a popular feature throughout the country. The factors that led to the popularising of housing estates, I believe, are the increase in the population, the shortage of houses, the return of more local architects trained abroad, the desire of the people to own and live in modern houses, the better incomes earned by middle class workers, and the search by land owners and investors for new avenues for investment.

This development is evidence of the march of progress and prosperity in Malaya after Merdeka. When the people own and live in fine modern homes they are a happy and prosperous people, who in turn are good citizens. These house owners set the standard for better home for the whole country.

Petaling Jaya was originally intended to be an area for resettling squatters living within Kuala Lumpur Municipality. That was about ten years ago. The squatters were unwilling to move to Petaling Jaya, which today has grown into a large and imposing suburb and an industrial area that the original planners did not envisage. As I stand here today before these new houses and survey the transformation of what once rubber estates and disused mining land into a fine new town, I sense the new spirit of Malaya.

In tune with this new spirit the promoters of the "Ideal Homes" competition will provide scholarships to poor but deserving students with a flair for architecture from the funds raised. The winners of the awards will receive their training at the Technical College. The Federation of Malaya Society of Architects has taken on the responsibility of selecting the right candidates, and I congratulate the Society for the great and practical interest they take in the selection of promising young Malaysians to be trained as architects.

The firms who are promoting the competition are also responsible for introducing new types of building materials into this country to make it possible to build \$18,000 "Ideal Homes". The contractors are responsible for providing the skilled labour for the construction of these houses. This competition, I note, is permeated with the spirit of co-operation from various bodies and individuals. I wish to emphasise that co-operation in all spheres of activities is essential to accelerate the progress of Malaya. Whether in rural development or in urban development, co-operation is the key to progress and prosperity. Furthermore, the rural people can draw inspiration from the people in urban areas in self-help, initiative and in concerted efforts.

I sincerely hope our young architects will find time and interest in designing "Ideal Homes" for people in the rural areas—homes that are strong, comfortable, and within the pockets of the rural people, homes that will conform to the rural environments.

A good home is just as important to the city workers as it is to the rural worker. It is good for the morale of the tenant and his family. It makes him feel proud as a citizen whether he lives in the Federal Capital or in the ulu. To the promoters of this competition, to the architects, and to the contractors I commend this idea. Perhaps in the near future designs for such a home will be forthcoming from the drawing board of an architect.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is a great pleasure for me to declare the second phase of the "Ideal Home Exhibition" open.