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SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER  
WELCOMING THE PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS  
TO MALAYA AT THE NATIONAL OPERATION  
ROOM, KUALA LUMPUR ON 12TH JANUARY,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to our country and to say in our own traditional way "Selamat Datang" most sincerely.

I am particularly happy to receive you here in our National Operation Room. This Room is the nerve centre of all our development activities throughout the country. And here around these walls are chartered all our development projects; here are also kept records of meetings of Development Committees at State, District and Federal levels. As Minister in charge of rural development, it is here that I obtain a briefing from all heads of departments on the progress in their respective fields. In other words, in this room you can find anything that you want to know about our National Development Plan.

On behalf of the Government and the people of this country, I should like to thank you all very much for having volunteered to come and help us. One of the important things that we do in our National Rural Development is to revive the old spirit of self-help or "Gotong Royong". We believe that it is this spirit that will make our people strong and self-reliant. You all have come to our country through the Peace Corps with the same spirit of service and self-help and it is this spirit of service and self-help that we want to revive and revitalise among our people.

During your stay in this country and in your tour to various places and your contacts with our people, you will find that we here have many things in common with you from the United States. We are a multi-racial society; we are endeavouring to build a strong united nation out of the various racial groups that inhabit this fair land of ours. We hope to build unity in diversity as you have done in the United States. We here believe in freedom and democracy. We are dedicated to making democracy really work so that our people will continue to be free and have a democratic way of life. For twelve years we fought the communists in this country and at the end of July, 1960, we officially declared

the war against the communists, or the Emergency as we called it, at an end. But there are still remnants of communist terrorists lurking in the jungle around the borders to our territory and Thailand. The communists having failed to overthrow the Government by force are now doing all that they can to subvert our people, our country and our way of life. They are endeavouring to infiltrate into our political parties, our Trade Unions and even in our schools. But we are determined to fight the communists in whatever form they appear because we believe that the communists way of life is not our way of life. It is a way of life that is alien to our people. It is a form of Government that will not give that peace and happiness which we are now enjoying and which we hope to continue to enjoy for ever.

It is for these reasons, economic as well as political, that we have launched the Development Programme on a gigantic scale and we have given Rural Development top priority in our Development Plan. More than seventy per cent of our people live in the rural areas. During the war against the communists, they stood firm and steadfastly to help us to rid these evils out of our society. Therefore it is only right and proper that they should be helped and guided to raise their standards of living so that they will be able to live and enjoy the amenities of modern life. We have launched this Rural Development Programme for nearly two years. We have provided amenities such as roads, bridges, water-supplies, schools and health clinics etc., to rural people and will continue to do so until all the people in the rural areas have all the necessary amenities required for a decent life. In September last year, we launched the Second Phase of this National Rural Development Plan and in this Phase we are gearing the people themselves to action to work harder to cultivate their land and increase their income. While the Government are providing these amenities to rural people, the rural people themselves must play their full part by putting up greater efforts towards improving their standard of living. We have impressed on the people that the way to happiness and prosperity is through sweat and toil. We have told them that having fought the communists their new frontier is the jungle and the forest where the wealth of our country lies. It is on their frontier that the battles against poverty is being fought. To win this battle, they must have the pioneering spirit, the will to work and toil for the benefit of themselves and of their children.

That is why we are grateful to the Government and the people of the United States for assisting us in this great and important task of carrying out our National Development by making available to us your services. I am glad to note that before you came here you are already armed with the background knowledge of our country, of its history, its culture and its people. I do hope that you will find your stay here both interesting and rewarding and at the end of your stay you will be able to go back to your country satisfied that you have helped the people to gain a better and higher standard of living and to cherish and uphold the heritage with you, the people of the United States, have cherished and enjoyed. I wish you a pleasant and memorable stay in our country.