

**ADDRESS BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
TO THE SECOND FEDERATION CHIEF
SURVEYORS' CONFERENCE AT DEWAN
TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN ON 17TH MARCH,
1960**

Gentlemen,

I am very glad of the opportunity of meeting you here today and of opening your Conference, particularly since I have been given to understand that the principal purpose of this Conference is to discuss the impact on your Department of the changes which have brought about your transition from the comparative seclusion of the Ministry of Natural Resources to the floodlit arena of the Ministry of Rural Development.

In the circumstances it is appropriate that I should make some reference to these changes which reflect no change of policy on the part of the Alliance Government but merely emphasise a hardening of determination.

It is the declared and determined aim of the Alliance Government to give the highest priority to what it considers to be a task of national importance—that is the raising of the economic, cultural and educational standards of the people living in the rural areas. To achieve this aim the Government has pledged that for the next five years, the absolute maximum governmental effort will be concentrated on this task. Land is recognised as a most important factor and asset in the economic upliftment of the people and it is, therefore, the Government's intention to tackle the problem of bringing land within the reach of the landless as well as those who do not have enough of it for economic sufficiency. I am determined to carry out this policy of providing land to the landless and in carrying it out I shall need your help. You are going to play a very important part in this and I know that I can rely on your Department for that loyalty, co-operation and hard work for which it has always enjoyed a most enviable reputation over the years.

As you are aware the Government not only gives this work of Rural Economic Development the highest priority but the Government regards it also as an Emergency campaign. That is why the Government has set up an organization similar to that used for fighting the Communist Terrorists for the purpose of this campaign for rural development. Now as an Emergency this work means two things.

- (a) Every one must concentrate his efforts and energy in this work and other work not directly connected with this campaign, must be kept aside for the time being.
- (b) We must produce results—quick results. The Government is determined in this national task quick results should be produced—not in a matter of years but in a matter of months.

Therefore, this task—this national task does present a challenge to us all, in particular to you, members of the Survey Department who are directly concerned in this work. It is necessary, therefore, to gear our administrative machinery to this new task. That is why I am so pleased to learn that the main purpose of this Conference is to discuss the impact of this new policy of the Government on the Survey Department.

In the face of such an important national task as this we must be prepared to take a bold step if necessary, to change our old ways if desirable. Because in this campaign only one thing that matters that is result—quick result. But one thing I want every one of you to realize is that the responsibility of implementing this policy is yours. We will succeed, we will achieve result, if every one of you puts his shoulder to the wheel. That is why it is so important to put the machinery of your Department in a proper order. Because once a decision is made to carry out a project it must be completed to the end. For example, if we decided to start a Group Settlement Scheme it must be carried out, it must be surveyed. I would not like to be told that we have not the men to do the survey or that it must wait a year or two years. If you have not the men or the equipment to cope with the work it is for you to tell me now and I will try and get the men and equipment. But once our new intensified land development and alienation start going there should be nothing to stop it or reduce its velocity.

You know as well as I do the tremendous problems we have to face in land alienation. We have 207,000 arrears of land applications and I am told by the Statistical Department that during the course of the next 4 or 5 years there will be another 250,000 families wanting land or employment. In addition to that you have arrears of about 3/4 million lots to cover up. So you can see the task before you is tremendous. But this should not discourage you or that you should be dismayed—rather it should spur you to greater efforts and sacrifice. Such is the magnitude of the task before you but if every one of you realizes this and is prepared to meet the challenge, you will be able to surmount it.

That is why in this land alienation we have decided to take a bold step—to decide on any priority. We intend to give land to those who have no land and those who have not enough land to live on first. All other applications must be kept aside for the time being. By this means we will be redressing your arrears since the frustrated applicants turn hopefully to the new settlements the outstanding, unsatisfied applications will die away. Therefore, I ask you not to be dismayed.

Fortunately it has been recognised in recent years that expansion of your Department was essential and substantial staff increases have been made. The recruitment of a further 250 technicians this year has been approved.

If more men or more equipment will enable you to accomplish more, I will do my best to obtain such men or equipment. But from you I shall expect the maximum loyalty and co-operation, not only for myself but also for all those others who will be straining towards our common goal. I look forward to you all to give your co-operation to members of other Ministries and Government Departments in carrying out this policy. It is only by all Government servants working as a team at all levels can we produce the maximum result in this important national task.

I do not wish to prolong my speech because I know that you have a long conference before you and doubtless wish to get on with the business as soon as possible; but before I conclude I wish to pay a tribute to 3 Senior Officers of your Departments who after having given the best parts of their lives in the service of this country, will be retiring from service soon. They are:

Mr L.S. Himely, Surveyor-General

Mr F.E.G. Caswell, Chief Surveyor, Perak

Mr N.B. Chandrapala, Chief Surveyor, Kelantan

On behalf of the Government of the Federation I thank them all very much and wish them many happy years of retirement.

Well, gentlemen, I wish you all success in your deliberations and I can assure you that any recommendations you may make as the result of your deliberations will receive my earnest consideration. I now have great pleasure in declaring this Conference open.