

TR: 1.2.1966

ADDRESS BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
AT THE THIRD WEEK-END COURSE FOR
SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICERS HELD
AT THE SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICERS
TRAINING CENTRE, PETALING JAYA,
3RD FEBRUARY, 1966.

Gentlemen,

I am very happy to have this opportunity of talking to you this evening.

This is the third week-end course, and I think the idea of having this week-end "get together" of senior Civil Servants is having a beneficial effect on the service and is leading to better understanding and integration between your different tasks in different Ministries and Departments.

As you are all aware we inherited our Government administrative structure and Civil Service procedure from pre-Independence days and now the time has come to make changes; new procedures and new methods are required in keeping with the particular needs of our country and we must retain only those methods and traditions which still have some value and worth in Malaysia; and we must also discard some, of the old useless habits that we inherited from the previous colonial administration.

One such bad habit is the practice of the Civil Service to automatically apply the "bureaucratic brake" to their work.

If Malaysia is to progress, with an efficient and competent administration, and keep pace with modern progress, then you as Civil Servants have got to take your foot off the "bureaucratic brake" and instead start pressing the "administrative accelerator", and put the maximum speed into all Government action!

So therefore, it is my Government's intention that the whole

system of our administration be reviewed and overhauled so that it may be streamlined in keeping with our present-day, modern needs.

Not only must the system be radically changed, so also must the individual thinking and mental attitude of every single Civil Servant throughout the country must change, with a new approach, a "new look"!

The first step towards this improvement will be the creation of a Development Administration Unit in the Prime Minister's Department, staffed by professional management analysts and this Unit will plan and guide the major programmes of administrative improvement.

It will focus on such government-wide systems as those involving personnel and career development, budgeting and expenditure control, the contract system and many other systems and procedures.

This Unit will also help each Department to plan and implement their own management improvement activities and it will become a permanent section of the service so that the improvement of our administration will be a continuous process in keeping with changing needs of modern Government administration in the present day and in the future.

At present, within the service we have few people of our own who are trained in the modern skills of public administration management and it may be necessary at this stage to call in a reputable public management consultant firm in order to launch this new approach towards administration and this new unit to implement it.

It is further the intention of my Government to improve the education and training programmes for all levels of the Civil Service and this includes creating and supporting a graduate programme in development administration in the University of Malaya to be used primarily for the post-entry training of Civil Service Officers.

For this purpose the University will require adequate staffing, both Malaysian and foreign, sufficient advance programme-building time and ready access to Government agencies.

It may be that the relationship with a foreign university will be necessary to provide institutional and professional support during the initial years of this training programme and it will also be necessary to provide mid-career University level education' for professional officers together with expanded in-service training for the technical and clerical level of staff.

In short, Gentlemen, the future aim of my Government with regard to the Civil Service is to achieve three things.

Firstly, to speed up Government action in all aspects at all levels.

Secondly, to reduce the costs of administration, and I believe this can be done if we concentrate more on the quality of personnel rather than, as has been the mistake in the past, laying too much emphasis on quantity, the number of staff, many of whom were under-qualified and under-trained.

Thirdly, to improve the quality of service to the nation, and to the public, so that our administration can go ahead with the "accelerator" hard down, seldom, if every using "bureaucratic brake" which has been over-used in the past!

In addition to these three aims, steps will be taken to strengthen the professional competence of the Civil so that it can provide the necessary administrative leadership for our rapidly developing country and such action will require:- the initiation of a vigorous post-entry University course in development administration for all newly selected officers; also it will require:- the creation of opportunities for Civil Service officers to fulfil their careers in specialized areas of Government activity and this in turn will necessitate a new policy of longer continuity postings of officers in a single Ministry or Department so that they may stay in the same post and be masters of their particular professional subject and so that their expertise may continue to improve in a cumulative way rather than following the old system of continual transfer every few years to different Ministries and different Departments merely because of the needs of the present-day promotion system.

As you know, with regard to Development, during the implemen-

tation of the last Five Year Plan, we evolved our own Development implementation technique with an entirely new and original method, such as the setting up of Development Operations Rooms and progress reporting techniques.

However, I am still not satisfied and, as I told State Development Officers and State Engineers two days ago, the system of administration in the public service, whether it be for development or for general administration, must become automatic and institutional and each and every Government officer responsible for implementing the Elected Government's policy must acquire an attitude of action so that he will work on his own initiative and achieve results on his own without continually having to be prodded from above or chased by his superiors.

I am determined that the implementation of this present Plan, that the implementation technique we used in the previous plan, will become and automatic, institutional method of administration will run efficiently by itself whether or not there is a Minister available to go around chasing up people.

And so not only with Development alone but with the overall public administration of the country, I am determined that there will be a greater improvement and a quicker improvement so that our people will not only benefit with the improvements that come with Development and a better economy such as new roads, schools, bridges, factories and other items under the Development Plan, but I am determined that our people will also reap the benefits of an improved quality of public service in every aspect of Government administration.

And it is the intention of my Government to give a high national priority to the improvement of our public administration, a priority second only to that already assigned to social and economic development.

I hope therefore that each one of you here tonight will give not only, during this week-end "get together" but also on the return to your various desks and offices, the greatest effort possible in your contribution towards improving our public administration.