

SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER
ON THE ROLE OF THE MINISTRY
OF WELFARE SERVICES
IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GERAKAN MAJU
AT MINISTER OF SOCIAL WELFARE
ON 6TH DECEMBER, 1966.

Impact of Government's Development Plans

One of the most important psychological effects of the Government's Development Plans is the widespread consciousness and confidence among our people that *it is possible to develop our country and raise the standard of living of our people, including those of the rural areas*. To me, this is a psychological breakthrough considering the immense psychological damage done to our people through three hundred years of colonial rule through which our people have been subjected to various schemes which could only make them lose their sense of independence, and their confidence in their own ability to develop with very narrow economic and social expectations in life.

Need for a follow-up of this psychological breakthrough

Under the Second Five-Year Plan and the First Malaysia Plan the Government has opened and will continue to open up vast opportunities for our people to avail themselves of. It is my firm belief that if our Development Plans are to achieve their ultimate objectives there must be a follow-up of the development consciousness which has now spread among our people. This consciousness together with the liberated energies of our people must be properly channelled so that our people would not adopt the wrong attitude of leaving the responsibility of implementing development projects solely to the Government. In other words, this consciousness should not lead them back into their old attitude of dependence on the Government.

Gerakan Maju

To inaugurate the necessary psychological follow-up actions to

our Development Plans whereby we can mobilise and exploit the productive energies of our people so that they can get the right sense of involvement and participation in our gigantic endeavours to give them a better deal, greater opportunities and better amenities of life, I launched Gerakan Maju on 14th March this year. This Operation is basically designed to reactivate the latent spirit of self-help and self-reliance among our people so that they can play their normal role as citizen of this country.

In order to make Gerakan Maju a success, there is need to coordinate and use all available resources for the purpose of intensifying our efforts in giving proper guidance and training to our people in order to enable them to adapt and adjust themselves to the development age. That is why I have given direction that there should be maximum coordination among Ministries, Departments and other bodies which carry out community development in one form or another.

Ministry of Welfare Services.

I would like to mention here that some of you within the limits of your present function, have done remarkably well in the field of implementing, in one form or another, development projects. However, I feel that with the launching of Gerakan Maju, we must expand your role in the field of development by reviewing the allocation of duties of certain categories of officers in the Ministry and by training and converting your present field officers or social workers into socio-development extension officers working together with other field officers of other Departments.

Research Officers

I realise that the time has also now come for us to assess the reactions of our people towards our development projects and evaluate the effectiveness of our Development Plans.

I have therefore set up a research division within my Ministry to carry out such research.

Reservoir of expertise in the Ministry of Welfare Services.

I know that over the years we have trained a corps of research

officers with social bias in your Ministry. It is my intention to make use of these officers to assist officers of my Ministry in their research programmes. I know you can be of tremendous assistance in the type of research that we are going to undertake because some of you are not only pragmatic research officers but also you have the experience and know-how in the assessment of social attitudes and adjustments. This experience and know-how could be channelled towards making Gerakan Maju a success provided that you are sufficiently development-conscious and oriented.

Vast opportunities for service

In implementing our Development Plans we encounter numerous social problems, social attitudes inimical to our national wellbeing, non-acceptance of change and social adjustments as a result of change for the better. We need to solve these problems if we are to achieve our objective of making our people self-reliant through the implementation of development projects and Gerakan Maju.

Programme to fit in with that of the Ministry of National and Rural Development

I understand that you will be in conference for the next three days and I hope at the end of your conference you will be able to produce a proposed programme of action which could widen the active role of your Ministry into the field of development especially in the field of Gerakan Maju.

It is also possible for you to relegate your "welfare" role only to a secondary place and use your energies towards making a success of the present critical phase of the implementation of our development plans.