

Penyampai : TAN SRI DATO SERI AHMAD SARJI BIN ABDUL HAMID
Tajuk : PERSIDANGAN "RE-INVENTING GOVERNMENT - A NEW VISION FOR
GOVERNMENT TRANSFORMING THE PUBLIC SECTOR"
Lokasi : HOTEL ISTANA, KUALA LUMPUR
Tarikh : 03-08-1993

Di bawah kepemimpinan Y.Bhg. Tan Sri Dato' Seri Ahmad Sarji, Ketua Setiausaha Negara Pentadbiran Awam Malaysia telah mengalami proses re-inventing yang aktif sejak tahun 1991. Re-inventing adalah bertujuan menjadikan Perkhidmatan Awam lebih efisien, efektif, dinamik inovatif, berdisiplin dan action-oriented. Oleh itu beberapa program pembaharuan dan kemajuan telah dilaksanakan melalui Pekeliling-pekeliling Kemajuan Perkhidmatan Awam dan seterusnya dikuatkuasa dan dinilai oleh Panel Kemajuan Perkhidmatan Awam.

The civil service in Malaysia is currently undergoing a period of change. These changes are necessary in response to the changing national environment. The private sector continues to be the engine of growth. The role of the civil service will continue to be the pacesetter and facilitator in order to establish a competitive, dynamic and resilient economy. What are the objectives of administrative reforms in Malaysia? Firstly, we want to create a civil service which is efficient, effective, dynamic, and innovative; secondly, we need to have a civil service which is highly disciplined with the highest standards of integrity, and thirdly, we require a civil service which is action-oriented, people-oriented, and customer focussed.

In undertaking some of the administrative changes, we are mindful of the opinion or suggestion that the civil service should become more like business. There are similarities between business and public administration, namely that officials or managers in both sectors are involved in organizational design, allocation of scarce resources, and the management of people. But the context of public administration significantly alters the work itself, and so there are differences between the two. Three differences are most apparent. The first difference between public administration and business lies in the purposes to be served. In most business, even those with service objectives - the bottomline - profit - is the basic measure for evaluating how good a job the organization is doing. In turn, the performance of individual managers, can, in many cases, be directly measured in terms of their units' contribution to the overall profit of the company. The objectives of public organizations are often stated in terms of service; for example, the mission of the Department of Environment is to protect the quality of the environment; such service objectives are much harder to specify and to measure. What does "quality" mean with respect to the environment? A second difference between work in government and in business is the fact that in business, decisions can be quickly made from an individual or a small group, whereas in a public organization, inputs are required from many diverse groups and organizations. We call this the pluralistic nature of government decision-making. Thirdly, managers in public organizations seem to operate with much greater visibility than their counterparts in industry - we are subject to constant scrutiny by the press and the public. With this background, we have introduced changes in the civil service which incorporate some of the principles of management in the business sector. However some of the structural changes, and the value-changes introduced are peculiar to the civil service.

The Malaysian civil service has embarked on a journey towards developing a quality culture. The ultimate objective is the evolution of a mindset premised on quality values that would permeate the entire public sector. In this regard Total Quality Management (TQM) has been adopted, all public sector agencies are required to formulate their respective missions through the process of strategic quality planning. They are to be market-driven and to institutionalise a distinct customer-orientation in the delivery of services. In this connection we have recently introduced the Client's Charter. This Charter is the apex of all our efforts in inculcating and internalising the quality ethos. The Client's Charter is a written commitment made by all government agencies pertaining to the delivery of outputs or services to their respective customers. It is an assurance by agencies that their outputs or services will comply with the declared quality standards - that is, in conformance with the expectations and requirements of the customer. The benefits to be obtained from this Charter are numerous. The customer has specific information on the standards of quality to expect and consequently is in a position to assess whether he or she obtains value for money, either from charges paid directly or taxes paid indirectly. The customer is also in a position to evaluate the

performance of services rendered as well as make comparisons between agencies that provide similar type of services. On the other hand, the Client's Charter would provide public sector agencies with concrete performance indicators that can be used to continuously upgrade the services rendered. Service recovery based on customer feedback would also become an integral part of managing the performance of public sector agencies. We believe that the Client's Charter is a starting point in bringing about the empowerment of the citizenry vis-a-vis the public sector.

The public sector has also introduced several management support systems. In the area of financial management, the Modified Budgeting System (MBS) has been introduced to provide greater autonomy and flexibility to public sector agency managers. This autonomy however has its price. Public sector managers are now held accountable for achieving the intended outcomes of their respective programmes. The focus is on results, not just processes of budgetary expenditure. The reward systems and performance appraisal procedures have also been introduced as support mechanisms to ensure a high level of motivation, discipline and dedication among public sector employees. The New Remuneration System introduced in 1992 will lead to flatter, less hierarchical organisations; it would also facilitate the provision of adequate recognition to excellent employees.

We have identified a set of twelve values which become prerequisites for good quality public service. These values called "the twelve pillars" are: the value of time, the success of perseverance, the pleasure of working, the dignity of simplicity, the worth of character, the power of kindness, the influence of examples, the obligations of duty, the wisdom of economy, the virtue of patience, the improvement of talent and the joy of originating. The last item - the joy of originating - clearly shows the emphasis given to creativity and innovation as a means to improve the quality of service.

The Malaysia Incorporated concept has been the impetus for greater and intense public-private sector collaboration in national development. The imperative has been to build a meaningful working relation-ship in order to forge ahead in an increasingly competitive global market place. Rules, regulations, procedures have been constantly reviewed to expedite work processes, and importantly, decision-making.

Services to the private sector have been revamped to facilitate the growth and operations of business activities.

Consultative Panels comprising private and public sector representatives have been set up to streamline regulations and procedures, to jointly develop human resources and to facilitate the sharing of information. Our latest publication "Dealing with the Malaysian Civil Service" is a landmark effort to foster this nexus.

While making all possible changes to facilitate economic growth, it is still the duty of the civil service to act as the guardian of rules, regulations and procedures established by our superiors. In order to carry out this function, the civil service has to enforce the law, the rules, regulations and procedures. A predictable civil service is undoubtedly necessary for social justice and fairness. Rules, regulations and procedures are an important instrument to ensure accountability, and predictability in the acts, actions and behaviour of the civil servants. The private sector, however, can point out to the civil service if there are rules, regulations and procedures which are dilatory in nature, and therefore require modifications or amendments. The operations of Malaysia Incorporated have made such an exercise possible in the past.

I note that Ted Gaebler defines "reinventing" as follows : "Reinventing means to re-think, re-work and re-create, continuously". Following this definition, the civil service in Malaysia can be said to be actively engaged in "re-inventing" itself. In 1991, in order to enable civil servants to perform the tasks in a precise and predictable manner, we introduced guidelines to establish manual on work procedures and desk files; in the same year, we introduced the quality management programs, including quality control circles and quality services at the counters. In order to detect the movement of files, we introduced guidelines on Work Action Form. We promulgated the system of project reporting through computers. We produced guidelines for innovation in the civil service, as well as productivity indicators. In order to strengthen the

nexus of private-public sector cooperation, we introduced further guidelines on Malaysia Incorporated. Then in 1992, we introduced a guide on total quality management in the public service; in order to strengthen the development process, we introduced guidelines for development project planning and preparation. We are also concerned with financial accountability. So we introduced the guidelines for micro-accounting system. To remedy administrative inefficiency, we introduced more elaborate guidelines on managing public complaints.

The New Remuneration System (NRS) for the public sector which came into effect on 1st January 1992 introduced a new concept of varied salary movement based on annual performance appraisal. At the same time, with the reduction in the number of layers in the various schemes of service, it flattens the structure or lessens the levels of hierarchy which the public service has been identified with. This year we introduced three more guidelines on morning prayers, on public service excellence awards, and the clients' charter.

We would like to believe that through these administrative reforms, we have "re-invented" the public service. We would also like to believe that the civil service in Malaysia is undergoing a paradigm shift. The changing civil service is Malaysia's competitive edge. The success of any political leadership in implementing its policies and objectives depends heavily upon the expertise, quality, and commitment of the professional career employees of government. For this reason, improving the quality, morale, and performance of the public service is now being accorded high priority. Many public services around the world have failed - not because the employees lack talent and energy - but because byzantine rules and procedures imprison talents and sap morale. So, in my view, the seminar's main pre-occupation in "re-inventing" the public service should be to find ways to remove impediments to effective management and to encourage work force creativity.