

Penyampai : DATIN SERI DR. SITI HASMAH BINTI HAJI MOHD. ALI
Tajuk : THE ACCEPTANCE CEREMONY OF THE PROFESSOR KAZUE K. MCLAREN
LEADERSHIP ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
Lokasi : LECTURE HALL 2, FACULTY OF MEDICINE, UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA
Tarikh : 21-01-1988

Ladies and Gentlemen, It is indeed a great honour and privilege for me to receive the 1988 Professor Kazue K. McLaren Leadership Achievement Award. I would like to thank the Asia-Pacific Academic Consortium for Public Health for honouring me with this prestigious award which I deem it also a great honour for my country, Malaysia.

2. This award is even more special and meaningful to me because it is conferred in memory of an admirable lady who gave so much of her life through example, for the advancement of public health not only in her own country but extended it beyond to the Asia-Pacific region. Together with a group of concerned public health academicians she was instrumental in organising the Asia-Pacific Academic Consortium for Public Health of which Malaysia is a member.

Professor McLaren contributed significantly in the field of public health management, health leadership, primary health care and community involvement in the world health movement.

Her exemplary life as a teacher and innovator in the public health movement made a significant impact on the professional development of her students from the Asia-Pacific region.

Ladies and Gentlemen

3. The people of Malaysia are fortunate to have experienced improving health status. It has been the Government's policy of equity on health and rural development right from the First National Development Plan in 1957. Rural health services were virtually non-existent before Independence. Through the various development plans, basic health services are now available to almost the entire population in Peninsular Malaysia and about 65% in Sabah and Sarawak.

4. We are also fortunate in this country that health development is placed as a component and integral part of the socio-economic development of the country. It is increasingly recognised that while economic development is important, it cannot be at the expense of social development. In fact it is possible that economic development can be accelerated with adequate and appropriate methods of social development. Incorporated in this is social change, new values, and an improved quality of life for all people. To bring about new values to society we need leaders. The goal of "Health For All by the Year 2000" through primary health care is a vision that is concerned with new values. It is a vision which is founded on social equity, on the urgent need to reduce the inequality in the health status of the people. It is a vision based on the principle that health and development are closely interlinked. This vision thus involves going beyond the traditional arenas of providing medical and health care that many of us are more familiar with. This calls for a new kind of leadership in primary health care for the future.

5. In Malaysia, our vision for primary health care actively started long before 1978 when the Alma Ata Declaration was made. We are committed to the global concern of "Health For All" strategies and will continue to provide leadership in this aspect in order to upgrade the quality of health care and to improve the quality of life of our people.

6. Another area of deep concern in this country, as well as yours I am sure, is that of child survival. Today we are faced, as stated in the "Hawaii Declaration on Health Leadership Development and Child Survival," with an urgent and pressing need and the unique opportunity to reduce the tragic and unnecessary loss of life and capacity of children. The children of today will be the resource of the future. Their survival is therefore of utmost importance to us. The unique opportunity is further strengthened by the unrepresented accumulation of knowledge which could dramatically improve the health of children in the years ahead if only effectively applied. We have less than twelve years to go to enter a new century. Let it not be said by the people of the next century that we have neglected to ensure the survival of our

children.

7. In Malaysia, promotive and preventive activities and services have been a Government priority and all the strategies laid under UNICEF'S plan for child survival are an integral component of the MCH services. These activities have been implemented.

8. The improvement in the health status of the population is well illustrated by the decline of various mortality indices and in the increase of life expectancy. For example, the Infant Mortality Rate has declined from 76 per thousand live births in 1957 to 15.5 per thousand live births in 1986 while life expectancy of males has increased from 65.4 years in 1975 to 67.6 years in 1985 and of females from 70.7 years in 1975 to 72.3 in 1985.

9. Undoubtedly the challenges before us are numerous and we still have a long way to go in achieving "Health For All" and "Child Survival." We urgently need new and practical ideas from all sectors.

10. With the decline of mortality and communicable diseases, it is important for us to direct our attention to a wide spectrum of diseases brought about by a change in social values, behaviour and life styles. The global drug problem is one of these. In Malaysia we have embarked on an aggressive effort to eradicate drug taking with the cooperation and participation of all sectors - governmental, voluntary agencies and the community. Our efforts have shown some success due to the leadership commitment and will of our Government and our people.

11. I am pleased that the University of Malaya through the Department of Social and Preventive Medicine has taken a step forward to take up this challenge by holding this workshop and bringing together leaders not just in medicine and health, but also those in other fields of expertise, giving them an opportunity to exchange ideas and share experiences in order to identify new ways to develop leaders for the future.

12. May the vision of Professor Kazue McLaren, in whose memory this award is given, be an inspiration to us all, to spur each one of us to greater heights of dedication and service for the common good of all people.

Thank you.