

hpk19990820d

To:

cc: (bcc: NHB NASReg/NHB/SINGOV)

Subject: (Embargoed) Speech by Assoc. Prof. Ho Peng Kee, 20 Aug 99, 3pm.

Singapore Government

PRESS RELEASE

Media Division, Ministry of Information and the Arts, #36-00 PSA Building, 460
Alexandra Road, Singapore 119963. Tel: 3757794/5

=====

EMBARGO INSTRUCTIONS

The attached press release/speech is EMBARGOED UNTIL AFTER DELIVERY.

Please check against delivery.

For assistance call 3757795

=====

SPRINTER 4.0, Singapore's Press Releases on the Internet, is located at:

<http://www.gov.sg/sprinter/>

=====

SPEECH BY ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR HO PENG KEE, MINISTER OF STATE FOR LAW AND HOME
AFFAIRS AT THE SPF & SCDF NATIONAL SERVICE TRAINING VISIT AT CIVIL DEFENCE ACADEMY
ON FRIDAY, 20 AUG 99 AT 3.00PM

Commissioner Khoo Boon Hui
Commissioner James Tan

Employers and spouses of our NSmen

Ladies and Gentlemen

Contribution of NSmen

I warmly welcome you to the Civil Defence Academy and this third National Service (NS) Training Visit. Last year, we visited two training grounds. This is the first year that both Police and Civil Defence' demonstrations are held at one common training ground. This demonstrates the strong bond and camaraderie between the Home Team agencies which further strengthens the Home Team spirit and operations.

Today's visit is organised to give you a keener appreciation of the NS obligations of your employees and husbands. We hope that the visit will give you a better insight into the types of training they undergo and how they contribute to our national defence.

Important role of employers

As employers, you play a key role in National Service. NS is vital in making Singapore a safe and secure home. Without NS, the foundation for a thriving economy would be weak. We understand the adjustments employers have to make to release your NSmen employees when they are called up for their In-Camp-Training. Your NSmen employees will return to you fitter, more confident and disciplined. On our part, we have cut down in-camp training to the minimum, to reduce disruption to NSmen and employers as much as possible. As you spare your NSmen employees for in-camp training, they return to you fitter, more confident and disciplined.

We have also taken various steps to recognise the contributions by employers. For example, since 1997, we have been presenting awards to employers who go the extra mile to support NS and its activities. Employers who are award-winners are given corporate membership to our SPANS Town clubhouse, and CDANS Country and Town clubhouses.

Our clubhouse facilities are being upgraded. The CDANS Country clubhouse is embarking on Phase Two of its development. This will include new facilities like a bowling alley and an international standard air rifle range. Employers who are existing or future corporate members of the clubhouse can look forward to enjoying these facilities. Come July 2001, when the new SPANS/JOM clubhouse for police officers and Police NSmen at Jalan Rajah is ready, corporate membership will also be extended to future MHA Employers' Award winners. We look forward to sharing all these new facilities with award-winning employers of our NSmen.

NSmen who volunteer their services in Specialist Advisory Groups

Some Police NSmen have gone beyond NS responsibilities to volunteer their valuable services to the SPF. For example, I am pleased to see that 30 Police NSmen have volunteered to be members of the Information Technology, Human Resource and Public Affairs Specialist Advisory Groups formed by the Police recently.

In SCDF too, NSmen are involved in several special projects. Some help the Fire Safety Bureau to clear building plans on fire safety matters. Others assist in developing computer training packages for their fellow NSmen. More than 200 NSmen are also deployed in the community to help CDECs implement their safety and security programmes.

I commend the SPF and the SCDF for their initiatives. This move is in line with one of the five key ideas that form the Singapore 21 Vision – that of

hpk19990820d

Active Citizenry. Home Team NSmen are now active participants of the SPF's and SCDF's growth, other than just being involved in a national crisis or during periodic training. I therefore urge employers to give their full support to these NSmen who have volunteered their services over and above their NS liabilities. I am sure that you too are proud of their voluntary spirit and willingness to contribute.

An episode recounted to me by a senior NS officer brings home in a poignant manner how NS responsibility has become a part of our Nsmen's lives. One of his officers was overseas when the roof of Compassvale Primary School collapsed. He learnt about it from the media. He telephoned this senior NS officer, who was his superior, to find out if their unit had been mobilised, and whether he should return to Singapore. He was ready to cut short his overseas trip to respond to the call of duty if required. Indeed, he made the effort to find out if he was needed. This account warms my heart. I am sure that other officers also bear this attitude – ready to serve when required at any time.

Finally, I thank the employers and wives who have taken time off to join us for this afternoon's visit. I am sure you will gain a better insight into the training of our Nsmen, your employees after this visit. With this better insight and understanding, I am sure that you will continue to give your support to our NSmen so that they will remain committed to doing their share to keep Singapore a safe and secure best home.

Thank you.

National Archives of Singapore