

**SPEECH BY DR YAACOB IBRAHIM, MINISTER FOR INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND THE ARTS AT THE LAUNCH OF “THE PAPERS OF LEE KUAN YEW: SPEECHES, INTERVIEWS AND DIALOGUES” ON 30 SEPTEMBER 2011, FULLERTON HOTEL BALLROOM AT 4.30PM**

Mr Lee Kuan Yew,

Mr Ronald Dunn, President and CEO of Cengage Learning Asia

Excellencies and distinguished guests,

Ladies & gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to be here this afternoon for the launch of *The Papers of Lee Kuan Yew: Speeches, Interviews and Dialogues*.

**Putting the publication together**

2. In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in the heritage of Singapore, leading to calls from various sectors of the public to step up efforts to collect, preserve and make available materials such as speeches and interviews by our early politicians. These documents contribute in a significant way to our understanding of Singapore’s historical memory. I am therefore very pleased that the National Archives of Singapore (NAS) have come together to work with Mr Lee Kuan Yew’s Office and Cengage Learning Asia, to produce this publication.

3. *The Papers of Lee Kuan Yew* is drawn from the collections of NAS, as well as materials from various agencies such as the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), the former Singapore Broadcasting Corporation, and the Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts and its predecessors. Today, we are launching the first phase of the publication covering the period from 1950 to 1990, starting with Mr Lee's earliest speech delivered on January 1950 at the Malayan Forum in London, and ending with three media interviews he gave on 26 November 1990 before stepping down as Prime Minister of Singapore. The second phase of the publication, which will cover the years after Mr Lee stepped down as Prime Minister in 1990 to the current years, is targeted for release in the later half of 2012.

### **An insight into the past**

4. With many of the interviews in the publication being released for the first time, we believe that this publication will be a rich and valuable resource for scholars and individuals. The documents provide some clarity on the rationale behind many of the policies and initiatives introduced during different points of Singapore's history. With the benefit of hindsight, we are now able to form a clearer picture of the key

concerns of the government during each period, and how the policies helped to form Singapore that we know today.

5. The theme of the search for solutions to challenges and problems is also well-articulated in Mr Lee's speeches and dialogues. We find that the fundamental issues surrounding Singapore then and now are the same – to safeguard our internal and external security, to be innovative in ensuring our economic survival, and to create and maintain a harmonious nation. This convinces us of the constant need to adapt to the rapidly changing realities in the world in order to strive for Singapore's continued development and success.

6. In all, this set of speeches, interviews and dialogues sheds light on Mr Lee's views on regional and international affairs, and the way in which he communicated his ideas and beliefs successfully across different groups of audience. It also paints a very clear picture of the conviction and determination our early leaders had to possess in order to deal with the realities that Singapore faced during different periods of our country's history.

## **Conclusion**

7. I am confident that *The Papers of Lee Kuan Yew* will rekindle an interest in the role our key political figures played in Singapore's history, and I believe that this publication will be a useful resource and engaging read for all.

8. In closing, I would like to thank everyone for gracing the launch of this publication, and I wish you a pleasant evening ahead.

National Archives of Singapore