

SPEECH BY INCHEE SHAARI TADIN, PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY
(CULTURE) AT THE CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE NEW IDEAL
EXPOSITION AT GAY WORLD ON MONDAY, 3RD MARCH 1969
AT 7.00 P.M.

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During the past few weeks, the New Ideal Exposition has drawn tremendous crowds of interested people and sightseers. I am glad to be present to-night to officiate at the closing ceremony of the month-long exposition.

The exhibition is a timely one to coincide with our celebrations of the 150th year of the founding of Singapore. The wide range of goods on display sums up illuminatingly our 150 years of progress - from a humble beginning of a handful of fishermen to an industrial nation of world account. It is a pride for all who have a stake in the making of a nation that this piece of wasteland has in a short span of time become an expensive real estate sustaining two million and more people of the major races of the world.

Like all developing countries, industrialisation is gradually being accepted as a prerequisite for highest standard of living and economic stability.

On the election to office in 1959, the Government decided to embark on a programme of industrialisation, and every effort is put in relentlessly to fulfil this commitment. Immense effort is put in to create a favourable investment climate to attract local and foreign investors, to develop sites for industries, to provide communication, finance and research services, to seek marketing outlets for our manufacturers, to implement labour legislation and technical training facilities for a stable progressive nation-oriented work force. The Government is going all out at full force to ensure not only the survival of the nation but also the best place for its citizens to lead a meaningful and worthwhile life. We are here to stay and we must make the best of it.

Our economy had a good run for the past years. This is reflected in trade statistics, port activities, manufacturing output, building construction, bank deposits, all of which show a healthy upward trend. Our economy has grown by 7.7% against a population growth of 2.2%^{since}/last year. This gives us reason for confidence.

Last year, over a million passengers passed through the Singapore Airport. This represents 13% increase over that of 1967. Jurong Town last year alone had 3,651 acres of industrial land with 137 factories in production, 33 under construction and 44 in the planning stage. It is estimated that for the next three years, at least 1,000 acres of industrial land must be provided annually. The Town is expected to treble in size over the next few years.

Against this background of increasing industrial tempo, demand for skilled labour and managerial personnel is at its peak. The Government through the Economic Development Board recently established the Prototype Productions and Training Centre to provide the much needed skilled personnel. Great emphasis is now placed on technical education and a shift is courageously made from a white collar to a blue collar preference. Four industrial training centres with facilities for about 2,000 apprentices will be open in April this year and the Singapore Polytechnic will increase its enrolment of technical students by over 30% this year. A total of 1,340 technical students will be admitted as compared with last year's intake of 1,016 technical students.

Simultaneously, the Economic Development Board is setting up more investment centres like the one in New York, and staffing them with high-powered officers. At present the E.D.B. has investment centres staffed by full-time officials in New York, San Francisco, Hong Kong and Stockholm. It has honorary representatives in Melbourne and Honolulu. The new centres will be in Chicago and London. A third one will be opened later in Central Europe. To seek the widest possible outlet for our products, the Government pursues the most liberal approach to international relations irrespective of political shades and sentiments.

Late last year, the Government moved into trading field in a grand scale, with the establishment of a \$50 million International Trading organisation called the INTRACO Ltd. which will conduct a relentless offensive to export our goods.

This Company will open a chain of offices in the major cities of the world to service, publicise, canvass, contact and do direct trade also. The Company will look out for trading opportunities abroad, particularly for our manufacturers.

To meet the demand for finance for investment and development, the Development Bank of Singapore Ltd. was set up with a paid-up capital of \$100 million. Its main function is to provide long and medium-term loans to finance manufacturing and other industries. Several local and foreign banks gave their full support and showed their confidence in this Bank with cash.

With the INTRACO and the Singapore Development Bank and other inducements and backings, our manufacturers will have more confidence and scope for expansion and new plants would be set up without fear of a backlog of indisposable products.

But all these efforts will come to nothing unless our manufacturers are trained to be quality-conscious and practise the most modern methods of manufacturing, managing and distributing their products. They must be able to meet buyers' deadline and ensure the best buyer-seller relationship.

Our people can take pride in the fact that the Texas Instruments Singapore (Private) Limited took only 50 days to physically implement the

project. A high degree of co-ordination and minimum of red tape is necessary in carrying out this project and succeeding in this exact and almost impossible requirement. During the seven weeks from November last year, the E.D.B.'s Investment Promotion and Projects Division, the National Productivity Centre, the Jurong Town Corporation, the Development Bank of Singapore and various government and private organisations swung into action to help this Company to meet its deadline, that was to produce electronic components to be shipped back to America by February this year.

From these concrete facts, we are justified in our optimism of greater prosperity in store for us. We are ready to welcome 1971 with greater confidence and a still higher standard of life than before. The Welcome decision of the Australian and New Zealand Governments to station their forces in Singapore and Malaysia without setting a time limit giving us an added boost to our industrial morals.

But work harder we must ensure the fulfilment of our expectations. We must not relax for a moment and be satisfied with our results so far.

I must congratulate the Working Committee and everyone here for introducing our products to all and thus helping to create a greater awareness of our high quality local products and break down the prejudicial barrier to our local goods. I would like to thank the various Sub-Committees of the new Ideal Exposition for the hard work that they have put in in making the Exposition a success. I would also like to especially thank the Competition Committee for their good support and the many prizes that they have been able to collect for the contestants. The prizes that they have collected will make this occasion really a memorable one, especially for the prize-winners. Thanks must go to the participating manufacturers, business firms, various organisations, helpers and patrons who have had contributed wonderfully to the success of this unique Exposition.

And I now bring this Exposition to a close.

MARCH 3, 1969.

Issued at 1830 hours.