

EMBARGOED UNTIL 8.00 P.M. ON 15.3.70

Speech by Inche Buang bin Omar Junid,
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Social
Affairs, at the Police/Military Table Tennis
Finals at Monk's Hill Secondary School on
Sunday, 15th March, 1970 at 8.00 p.m.

The Police/Military Sports Promotion Committee begins its 3rd year of promotion with the Table Tennis competition. Judging from tonight's performance I am confident that with the proper coaching, guidance and encouragement from the officials and coaches and with the perserverance and dedication by the competitors the Republic need not have to look far for its future champions. There is ample talent awaiting to be tapped within the uniformed services and I am convinced that given the right training and the opportunity for regular competitions at home and abroad there is no reason why the standard of Table-Tennis in our Republic cannot improve.

2. However, of late I have observed that some of our sportsmen have not been too gentlemanly in their conduct and behaviour on and off the field and have drawn the criticisms of our elders. This is not what we expect from true sportsmen. Sportsmen are normally admired and respected because they exemplify high moral qualities as well as physical ability and as such it is most shocking and disgusting to learn about sportsmen misconducting and misbehaviouring on the field. I know I can depend on our Sportsmen to behave well.

3. Today, the world is facing a very important problem. The true Amateur Sportsmen is surely and steadily fighting a losing battle in the modern world of semi-professionalism and professionalism. It is most unfortunate but unquestionably true that competitors expect payment of some sort in order to compete. The true spirit of sports for sports sake has been sadly sacrificed for monetary gains. The amateur who participated for love of sport, for joy of competition and for pride of excellence has been eclipsed by paid performers whose sole task it is to win at all cost be it by fair or foul means. This is probably due to over-emphasis on the false pride and honour of being a conquerer.

4. To-night's Table-tennis finals between *Special Constabulary* and *Army* brings to an end a series of matches played amongst the four uniformed services for 1970. I am happy to note

that the Police/Military Table-tennis tournament is an annual competition and is one of the fourteen major games which has come to stay. It is my candid opinion that the two years of Police/Military Sports promotion has been most fruitful. Many potential athletes have emerged and made their impact on the field of sports. This augurs well for the future of sports in general in the Republic.

5. I hope that those who have taken part in to-night's tournament will continue to train hard even if they have not won. I strongly believe that champions are men who have gone through the mill so to speak and who would eventually reached their goal through sheer hard work and perseverance. There is no easy way nor any short cut to becoming a champion overnight. It takes complete discipline, dedication and willingness to follow a proper training programme that would eventually bring out the best in the person and I am sure all participants to-night have played their parts well.

6. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the organisers of to-night's finals for a job well done and to remind all those involved in tonight's show to keep up the work and strive hard for better results.