

PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH AT THE KONG CHEW HUAY KUAN ON  
SUNDAY, 14TH NOVEMBER, 1965.

(TRANSLATION)

Mr. Chairman and friends,

Today is Sunday and I have been visiting several associations especially those which specialise in physical training, to appeal to their members to enrol as volunteers to help in the defence of our country.

I would first like to explain that our present position is different from that in the past. If our people do not understand what our situation now is and do not realise in what way we can ensure our survival, I think they will in time regret it.

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You remember the two riots that we had last year. Although I myself went to Police Headquarters, I was unable to do anything because the Police at that time were under the control of Central Government. The police had to take orders from them, and the troops did not sympathise with what we wanted to do. So this was the crux of the problem.

Now, we are in charge. But, if something is not done immediately about our defence position, there will be trouble.

I want to speak frankly about this matter. You see, our police force is multi-racial. And, because a policeman gets an initial salary of about one hundred and thirty dollars a month plus variable allowance -- which makes a total of one hundred and seventy dollars -- many Chinese and Indians are attracted to the service. On the other hand, a soldier's pay is only seventy dollars plus allowance which comes to only a hundred dollars. Therefore, those who want to earn more will definitely not join the army.

There is another problem -- a long-term problem which we must face; how to set up a more dependable regular or territorial army.

But for the immediate present, we need 10,000 citizens who are reliable, loyal to our country, loyal to our elected Government, to help defend our country.

If something happens in our country, we would then have ten thousand people who have been trained and who dare to face whatever situations that may arise.

It is only by doing so that we can settle things.

This is for the short-term, we have, as I said, a long-term problem. You know, Indonesia has a population of over a hundred million and an army of about four hundred thousand. With such a strong neighbour, we must under the circumstances, prepare to defend our interests in Southeast Asia.

The British Government may help us for the next five or ten years. This is because they have their interests here, and not because of us alone. But it is possible that some day, the British will leave. We have to prepare to protect our interests in our part of Southeast Asia in 10 or 15 years' time.

I would like to repeat what I said just now. The matter of our defence can be divided into 2 phases: first, the British -- who may remain here for the ten years to help our country and this because of their interests and not because of ours. The second phase will come when perhaps after ten years, they may feel that there is no necessity for them to remain here. We must, therefore, prepare to protect our interests in this part of Southeast Asia.

You have seen what has happened in Indonesia. There are about three million unarmed Chinese in Indonesia who have to suffer a great deal. But our situation is different. We are a sovereign country and we look after our own affairs. If our young people are not prepared to sacrifice a bit and are unwilling

to go in for training during week ends to defend our own country, they will surely suffer for it in the end.

I hope therefore that many members of the Kong Chow Huay Kuan will enrol as volunteers. They will receive training during week ends, carrying on with their own work on week days. They will be given an allowance of about forty dollars a month which will be enough to cover their transport expenses which they have to incur when they go for training. Uniforms will also be supplied to them free.

It is useless if one has only physical strength -- without training. We must know how to handle a situation properly and with discipline in order to protect our country.

I hope the young people of Tanjong Pagar constituency will join the volunteers and set up a regiment of their own. This will show that we are prepared to face reality and willing to shoulder responsibility in our new position.

Thank you.

14th November, 1965.