

**SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER AT THE VIGILANTE CORPS**

**RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN AT**

**TANJONG PAGAR COMMUNITY CENTRE**

**ON 10TH DECEMBER, 1966.**

Friends,

Before I speak about the Vigilante Corps and why we want our youth to join the Vigilante Corps, let me explain to you what kind of Singapore it will be in 10 years' time.

Ten years from now, if we succeed in discharging our duty, then we will have a different kind of Singapore citizen: healthy, robust, rugged and with a sense of social cohesiveness and discipline; of belonging to a community. This starts from the day a boy goes to school at 6 years old. And it does not finish till the citizen has reached the grade. It is a constant process of education, training, social cohesion that makes a people an effective social unit.

This is from now: we start with the boys who are in school. But there are many boys who have gone to school under the old system -- during the British regime and before we were faced with these problems. You watch them: they lack that social cohesion; the physical vigour and discipline.

And you see the Vigilante Corps on parade tonight. Just a few weeks of training, and they hold themselves up erect: not stooping, not weak or flabby but with guts and gusto, and with cohesion. What they missed when they were in school to fit them as good citizens of Singapore, we now give to them. And, slowly, first on a voluntary basis, every Singapore citizen must learn how to be a good citizen; how to be fit; how to be honest, effective and deserving of belonging to a community with the highest social and living standards in Southeast Asia. Only in that way can we succeed. And the Vigilante Corps in a way, represents this.

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True, in the old days, they were supposed to look for Indonesian saboteurs during confrontation. Now, there are supposed to be no more saboteurs. But, there are other problems -- gangsters, illegal immigrants .... You know, people come in by sampans. They have no passport. They just pay the sampan man \$300 and try and make a living in Singapore. And, if we do not have a tightly-knit society, this society must eventually sag and collapse. And, the Vigilante

Corps will have a role to play as a vast reservoir of good citizens trained and disciplined to be an auxiliary arm of the police.

You will be trained in unarmed combat; weapons, how to shoot with rifles, pistols; unarmed crowd control; simple law about criminals and so on. In other words, we will tap a vast reservoir of people with a great deal of energy and a desire to serve their community.

The present Vigilante Corps contains many people over 25 years, and they cannot go through the kind of training that we have prepared for our younger generation .... You will see it on the cinema afterwards .... Gymnastics; unarmed combat; crowd control; weapons handling; boxing; judo... All these things, if you are over 30 or 40, it does not come so easily. So you will have to concentrate on the younger ones.

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And I hope that Tanjong Pagar, just as when we were recruiting for the People's Defence Force last year, will respond and give the best results of all the constituencies in Singapore.