

SPEECH BY THE CHIEF MINISTER AND MINISTER FOR  
LABOUR AND WELFARE, MR. LIM YEW HOCK, AT THE OPENING  
OF THE UNION JOB RELATIONS INSTITUTE AT THE LABOUR  
DEPARTMENT ON MONDAY, MARCH 17, 1958, AT 9.30 A.M.

It gives me great pleasure and satisfaction to welcome you to this Training Course. As you know, the T.W.I. Supervisory Training Scheme was adopted by the Government in 1954 and the actual training work began in 1955 by an I.L.O. expert in conjunction with the Labour Department.

This Training Scheme, which consists of a series of practical training courses, aims at helping management in industry, commerce and public organisations to help their Supervisory Staff understand the basic principles of good supervision, and to provide techniques towards assisting the development of supervisory skills.

So far about 4,300 Supervisors in Singapore have been trained under this scheme and 42 T.W.I. trainers are now conducting basic courses in Singapore. The Labour Department is rendering free service in training suitable personnel from large private firms and other organisations as T.W.I. trainers, and in conducting basic courses for Supervisors from small firms. These figures illustrate, in a concrete form, what has been done for managements so far.

However, the success of any scheme which aims at maintaining good human relations in industrial and commercial life depends on the full co-operation between industrial managements, trade unions and the Government. We are fully alive to this fact, and also the fact that supervisors and Trade Union officials, particularly Trade Union representatives on the shop floor, are the people who influence industrial peace.

The Labour Department, therefore, took a further step forward by bringing the Trade Unions into the scheme. It introduced the Union Job Relations Basic Training programme in September last year. This was not done earlier, and I hope it will not be assumed that we have ignored the interests of the Trade Unions. The reasons lay solely in the fact that the Labour Department had no officer to run such a training programme.

The Union Job Relations programme aims at developing the skill of Trade Union officials in minimising industrial disputes; improving human relations and in improving working relationships within the Union's own organisation as well as in the office or factory.

A sound and healthy Trade Union movement depends on sound and responsible Union leadership. The Union Job Relations programme helps Trade Union officials to develop skill in leadership. The Union official who is respected by his members and who, by using his skill in leadership, guides his members along the right course resulting in the development of a well-organised group, is an asset beyond price. He makes an important contribution towards the stability of his Union, the Trade Union movement, and industry as a whole.

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Furthermore, if Supervisors and Trade Union officials practice T.W.I. principles, they can acquire the skill of working along with people and of handling problems that involve people. They will settle many problems as soon as they arise, and not lean too heavily on the time-consuming process of negotiating machinery, which should be reserved for big issues.

Supervisory Training is a continuous and a cumulative process. Immediate results cannot be expected. A start has already been made. Its success now depends on your co-operation and efforts. For as trainers in Union Job Relations, you are the pioneers in this field. You will have to pass on what you have learnt in this course to your brother officials. It will be your responsibility to preach the gospel of good human relations and skilful management of Union affairs.

I understand that some of you are sacrificing your annual vacation leave in order to attend this course. This is most commendable. In fact, all of you are making some personal sacrifice in one way or another by coming here for this fortnight's training. The Government is appreciative of your response, and I am sure that your devoted service to the cause of trade unionism will be appreciated by your fellow Trade Unionists.

I hope you will find the course both pleasant and instructive, and I wish you every success in your training.

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MARCH 17, 1958.

(Time issued at 1000 hours)