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**SPEECH BY MR YATIMAN YUSOF, PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY (FOREIGN AFFAIRS), AT THE 4TH CIVIL DEFENCE VOLUNTEER INSTRUCTOR COURSE CUM ADVANCED FIRST AID COURSE CERTIFICATE PRESENTATION CEREMONY AT HQ CDVU, JALAN RAJAH ON SUNDAY, 9 NOVEMBER 1986 AT 10.00 AM**

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I am happy to be here this morning at this Certificate Presentation Ceremony to present certificates to Civil Defence volunteers.

The Civil Defence Volunteer Programme, implemented four years ago, has been finally launched in 79 constituencies. As at 30 Sep 86, 28,814 volunteers have registered for training and some 13,139 of these volunteers have completed the Basic Course. The trained volunteers are being organised into Volunteer Companies to serve in each residential zone.

This programme, aimed at involving grassroots' participation in our national Civil Defence effort, has enabled many volunteers and residents to receive training in various aspects of Civil Defence (CD). The enthusiastic participation of the volunteers and residents has also over the years, helped to create community awareness of the importance of Civil Defence training to save lives and property in an emergency situation.

To sustain the momentum of the CD Volunteer Programme, the Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) realise that there is a need to raise more volunteer leaders who are committed to CD and are willing to help the SCDF to sustain and expand the volunteer programme. In order to achieve this, the SCDF has introduced the Civil Defence Volunteer

Instructor Course for training of CD volunteers who have the pre-requisite qualifications to qualify them to fulfil their tasks as a Volunteer Instructor and to conduct the Basic Course for newly recruited volunteers and refresher training at their respective constituencies. They will be able to complement the limited manpower of CD officers.

In this particular course, there are 23 volunteers from seven constituencies. The five-week course has been centrally conducted at HQ CDVU, Kim Keat CD Camp at Jalan Rajah, commencing on 24 Aug 86. I am told that at the end of the course, the participants went through an assessment by a panel of four highly professional examiners on their proficiency to conduct lessons in CD skills. I am pleased to note that all of them were successful in the examination.

Since the introduction of the Volunteer Instructor Course, 81 CD volunteers have graduated. This core of dedicated volunteer leaders are providing the training and ground leadership for other CD volunteers. Some have been absorbed to be members of the Civil Defence Co-ordinating Committees in their constituencies.

Having been trained and equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to conduct CD training, you will be the key elements in helping to establish a Civil Defence capability in your respective residential zones.

As the size of our Civil Defence group grows, there will be a greater need for more able leadership to make this group more effective. Apart from the administrative, organisational and local leadership requirements, we need to upgrade our capability to undertake more complicated rescue operations.

As demonstrated in the Hotel New World disaster, the life-saving operations involved highly delicate work, requiring those involved in the planning and supervision to

have the necessary knowledge, skills and stamina. Experience in other countries where civil defence had reached its maturity shows that the ultimate strength of the civil defence lies on both the muscle and brain power.

To achieve this objective, we need men and women of quality to come forward to serve. Such able people can be found largely from among our professionals and people holding supervisory and managerial positions. In Singapore, their number is sadly very small. From figures available on 30th September this year, there are only 30 such persons. These people - consisting of 16 doctors, 13 engineers and one management consultant - represent only 0.23 per cent of our 13,139 Civil Defence volunteers.

In view of the rather 'lop-sided' composition of our Civil Defence volunteers, I wish to take this opportunity to call for the young and able professionals to come forward to serve in the Civil Defence.

On this note, I would like to congratulate you and 21 other volunteers who have successfully completed the Advanced First-Aid Course on the 5th of October and who are also receiving their Certificate of Proficiency this morning. I am confident that they will continue to take up further CD courses and perhaps will also apply to attend the CD Volunteer Instructor Course so that they can contribute to speed up the training and build-up of CD volunteers in their constituencies.

The increasing participation by all of you through the Civil Defence Volunteer Programme, as demonstrated by today's Certificate Presentation Ceremony, will go a long way to make all Singaporeans realise the importance of participating in Civil Defence activities.

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