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SPEECH BY MR LIM KIM SAN, MINISTER FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS AND CHAIRMAN OF THE PUBLIC UTILITIES BOARD AT THE PUB LONG SERVICE AWARDS PRESENTATION CEREMONY AT PUB RECREATION CLUB ON 24.8.75

This year we celebrate Singapore's 10th anniversary as an independent Republic. We have had a decade of continuous economic development in which the Public Utilities Board has made a significant contribution and in which many of you who are receiving Long Service Awards today played your part.

2 The expansion of the PUB was accompanied by development in improvement of service conditions and upgrading of skills. Despite these measures to improve efficiency, we are not as productive as we should be. A comparison of the productivity of the PUB with similar utility organisations in Japan is revealing. In terms of population density Tokyo is comparable to Singapore. A recent survey by an utility organisation in Japan gives a ratio of 1 employee to 370 consumers and 1 employee in the Tokyo utility serves an area of 1 sq km. The figures of PUB show that 1 employee serves only 95 consumers and only 1/10 sq km.

3 We all know that the Japanese is an efficient worker but the survey has revealed how inefficient we are compared with him. We have much leeway to make and it is the intention of the Board to spare no effort to do so.

4           The Ag General Manager has mentioned that the Board will continue to provide incentives for employees to improve skills. Since the inception of our Apprenticeship Training Scheme in 1972, 191 employees have undergone training to improve themselves. It has been observed that they are keen and eager to learn and have a high output while they are under training but when they are appointed to their posts at the end of the training period, productivity diminishes. This is probably because their early desire to improve themselves is lulled by a feeling of security. Having obtained a job they now feel secure and can take things easy so they slacken in their efforts. The change in attitude may also be due to the influence exerted by some who have been long in the establishment. The enthusiasm of eager and zealous apprentices is dampened by those old-timers who do not wish their comfortable working pace to be highlighted. The demand for PUB's services is increasing and to counter rising cost, there must be increase in efficiency. It is time slackers and the complacent change their attitude for the Board will not allow such behaviour to continue.

5           The boom is over. The competition will be keener and if we do not increase efficiency and productivity with rising costs and wages, we will price ourselves out of the market and out of our jobs. Job hopping is not going to be easy. it is less painful to work harder than to go looking for jobs. The PUB has served the public well but we must and should do better in the difficult times ahead. I know Singaporeans will rise to it when the occasion demands and I know I can rely on the staff of the PUB to increase productivity and help us ride the difficult times ahead.

6           It is now my pleasure to present awards to 162 employees who have found satisfaction in remaining with PUB for 25 years. Their long service is warmly appreciated.

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