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Speech by Mr. Ho Cheng Choon, Parliamentary Secretary
(National Development) at the official opening of the
4th Annual Seminar on Building Development and Control
in Singapore at the Shangrila Hotel on 28.11.75 at
9.30 a.m.

Seminars, symposiums, forums and workshops on various aspect of the building and construction industry are increasingly taking place in Singapore. This is an encouraging sign for it shows beyond doubt that the construction industry is aware of the changing circumstances facing it and are taking active steps to remedy the pitfalls.

The construction industry is at present in a lean period but there are indications that this period may be coming to an end. The industry must therefore prepare itself to meet the future demand.

It has been established that the productivity of the building industry is low when compared with other industries such as the manufacturing sector. Several aspect of the industry render it so; such as difficult working condition and low rate of mechanisation. In the field of mechanisation, it is gratifying to note that the industry is making some headway.

Greater productivity can be achieved if proper management techniques and control be applied in the design and construction of buildings. The management skill required to run successfully a nineteenth century building firm is inadequate to manage a complex organisation of a modern builder. Inadequacies such as poor project planning, poor project cost control, and inaccurate estimating techniques have made many building projects "sour" in terms of profitability. The construction team should address and seek to improve the construction management practice.

Construction management decisions are numerous and often complex, regardless of size of the construction project. The determination of the optional decision, subject to varying conditions, uncertainty and other decision (past, present and future), requires a systematic approach to the problem of practicing good construction management. The organisation of this seminar by BEMS, is certainly a reflection of the consciousness of the need to improve the skills and management techniques of the professional in the construction industry.

I am happy to note that this Seminar with the theme of "Building Development and Control" covers a wide range of subjects in improving the management techniques as practice in the construction industry. The participation of professional in the various fields of their specialisation is encouraging and makes it even more valuable for the exchange of practical ideas. I am sure that your deliberation will generate new ideas and useful solutions to the various management problems encounters.

It now gives me great pleasure to declare this Seminar open.