

SPEECH BY MR LIM GUAN HOO, PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY,  
MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, AT THE PASSING-OUT PARADE  
OF 247 FULL-TIME POLICE NATIONAL SERVICEMEN (PNSF)  
AT THE POLICE ACADEMY ON WED, 14 JAN 1976 AT 5.45 PM

It is heartening to note that our National Servicemen, both full-time and part-time, under the Police National Service (PNS) Command, have made headway at various fronts in the battle against crime.

The first batch of full-time National Servicemen, totalled 211, who passed out in October last, have long before the completion of their 3-month in-service training, achieved the break-through in their services, and have since been working enthusiastically to score further successes. Within a brief span of 2½ months up to the end of December, they were reported to have handled a total of 63 cases. Among those arrested, charged in Court and convicted are persons involved in armed robbery and drug offences. The initial success of the PNS(F) personnel augurs well indeed for their future achievements.

The Special Constabulary, another wing of the PNS, is being re-structured to provide additional brunt to combat crime. Part-time Special Constables in all the 8 land divisions will be re-deployed in accordance with a new unit structure for more intensive and extensive anti-crime operations. A large number of National Servicemen with leadership qualities, including of course those with tertiary education, will be selected and trained to join the leadership ranks. Following the re-organisation, there will be significant changes in respect of the training and deployment of SCs. Also included in a new plan is the formation of an Anti-drug Squad and other task forces.

The Community Security Force (CSF), also a branch of the PNS, has, in conjunction with its expansion in strength, extended its services to more areas. Its security coverage has been increased from the original 143 beats to 238 spreading all over the island. As at October 1974, there were on an average 21 nights a month during which the CSF-patrolled areas were free of crime. With public co-operation and proper planning by both Police and VC officers, residents in crime-prone areas have been able to enjoy an average of 29 crime-free nights a month since July 1975, due to the presence of the CSF patrol teams.

Last year, a total of 11,848 National Servicemen joined the PNS(F), the SC and the CSF. More will be joining us this year. By the end of this month, 600 PNS(F) men will be enlisted. These include 100 highly qualified men who will be trained as officers. On the whole, a total of at least

6,000 NS men, full-time as well as part-time, will be drafted into the various components of the Police National Service this year. This will be followed by many other subsequent intakes annually. With the constant inflow of manpower into these law enforcement organisations, the intensity of anti-crime efforts at all fronts will be increased. No affluent society can claim to have total immunity from crime, which in a way is a by-product of the highly rapid progress of society. But to allow crime to flourish as a course of nature will eventually lead to a disastrous situation where crime will become the overriding factor to impede social progress. We should therefore mobilize as many people as possible to help minimise the possibility of the growth of crime. In doing so, it is inadequate to channel our efforts merely to neutralising the law-abiding to keep themselves away from criminal activities. A more positive approach is to encourage them to participate actively in the fight against crime.

In this context, the Police National Service is virtually a rallying centre for a sizable number of our energetic young, who have the innate love for order, to pool their strength together to play a meaningful role in maintaining peace and harmony. The strength of these National Servicemen will multiply progressively. Those who have completed 2 or 2½ years of full-time service will be re-channelled to form a community-based Reservist Force. They, together with their part-time fellow NSmen, will become the backbone of a island-wide anti-crime network, well entrenched in each and every neighbourhood of all housing estates to help maintain law and order.

Whilst our youths within the National Service age group are being channelled to serve in the various branches of the PNS, efforts should also be made to safe-guard those below the age of eighteen from being contaminated by the criminally-inclined. These impressionable youths are as receptive to proper guidance as to ill-influence. It is therefore gratifying to note that a scheme is being worked out by the Ministry of Education to enable primary school pupils who cannot cope with their studies to receive some form of workshop training. This means by the time they leave school, they would have reached the age of 15 and would be capable of being apprenticed to some sort of job. Once usefully occupied in some kind of apprenticeship, the likelihood of them being recruited to the world of crime will be reduced to the minimum.

There is no panacea to crime. But a combination of effective detection, wise deployment of manpower, resourceful operational strategies, tightly knit organisation, sufficient but fair penalty, firm enforcement, good Police-Public relationship, and the unfailing keenness of the law enforcers including the officers and men, will definitely bring us closer to the answer. In this battle between the good and the evil, every bit of contribution a man makes does count. So may I wish you every success in your service.

DATED: JANUARY 14, 1976.

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