

SPEECH BY MR SIA KAH HUI, MINISTER OF STATE FOR LABOUR,
AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE TRACTORS SINGAPORE LTD.,
26 BENOI SECTOR (OFF PIONEER ROAD), JURONG INDUSTRIAL
ESTATE ON 29 OCTOBER 1976 AT 4.30 PM

It gives me great pleasure to have this opportunity of participating in the official opening of the new Jurong Complex of Tractors Singapore Ltd, the largest and most comprehensive Caterpillar equipment support facility in Asia.

Tractors Singapore Ltd is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Tractors Malaysia Berhad - a member of the international Sime Darby Group. The parent company was associated with Caterpillar as early as the 1920's, when it became Caterpillar's dealer for the British Borneo Territories. In 1955, it obtained the dealership for Singapore and Malaya and established its offices in Bukit Timah from where it operated for 21 years. Recognising a need for better and bigger premises to keep pace with its progress, Tractors Singapore Ltd initiated its own expansion programme and to-day we see the concrete results in this new Jurong Complex occupying 8.09 ha (20 acres), one and a half times larger than its former Bukit Timah location. The new Jurong Complex boasts not only of bigger size but better facilities as well. It offers modern administrative, training and marketing facilities, workshops and depot to serve the South-east Asian region.

As an island city state with no natural resources except a fine harbour and a strategic location, our Republic's economic well-being depends on its ability to encourage new or expansion of existing foreign investments as well as to sell its goods and services in regional and world markets. Efforts, as all of you know, have been stepped up to increase the flow of new investments. We are also at the same time encouraging the expansion of factories which are already here. It is therefore heartening to note that Tractors Singapore Ltd has decided to expand in Singapore. It has a long stay here and can therefore claim to know the Republic well. Its expansion demonstrates its belief in the Republic as an attractive place for investment and its faith in the future of the Republic. We feel that its decision is a correct one and hope that it will influence existing companies to expand and foreign investors to establish factories here.

We welcome foreign investments, in particular industries with high skill and technology content. We also welcome the development of our service industries. Singapore Tractors' expansion contributes significantly to our role as a regional distribution and service centre. The facilities available are not restricted to services in the Republic but are also available to industries in the region. The company has used to good advantage Singapore's strategic location, efficient economic infrastructure and political stability. Service industries which could profit from the Republic's geographic location are welcomed to set up plants here.

Our ability to prosper depends on the competitiveness of our goods and services. They have to be competitive not only in terms of prices and quality, but also promptness in delivery and other market requirements. Tractors Singapore's expansion is a testimony of its ability to satisfy its customers. The company indeed has a reputation for being a reliable, up-to-date and efficient service organisation. This reflects very well on the management as well as the whole workforce of the company.

While Government will continue to provide the necessary infrastructure and assistance to industry to enable it to be productive and efficient, the competitiveness of our goods and services will depend on managements and unions and workers. Employers must seek new markets, expand and consolidate existing ones. They have to continually look out for improvements in organisations and management techniques. Unions have to work closely with management to ensure continued industrial peace and pave the way for higher productivity. Workers, on the other hand, have to provide support to management by giving of their best, be responsible, hardworking and taking pride in their work and be ever ready for retraining and upgrading skills. In this regard, I am pleased to learn that the majority of the 400 technically-qualified, skilled workers employed and trained by the Company are locals. This shows that our young and educated workforce has the ability to learn new skills and to commit itself with industry to the jobs for which they were trained.

As I have said earlier Tractors Singapore Ltd has shown that it has faith in the continued growth of our Republic. It is now up to the Managers, executives, technicians and every worker in the company to do all they can individually and collectively to ensure that this faith is a well-placed one. I wish Tractors Singapore Ltd continued success in the years ahead.

It is my great pleasure now to declare this new Jurong Complex of Tractors Singapore Ltd officially open.

#0#0#0#0#0#0#0#0#0#