

dl 19990108d

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Subject: (EMBARGOED) Speech by Mr David Lim, 8 Jan 99, 7.10 pm

Singapore Government

PRESS RELEASE

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SPEECH BY MR DAVID LIM,

MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENCE  
& CHAIRMAN OF THE NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL

FOR THE CONCEPT LAUNCH OF

1ST ANTARCTICA EXPEDITION, FRIDAY, 8 JAN 99,

RAFFLES BALLROOM, RAFFLES HOTEL, 7.10 P.M.

Good evening,

Guests

Members of 1st Antarctica Expedition

Ladies and Gentlemen

Antarctica is the fifth largest continent in the world, almost twice the size of Australia. It is an island continent, east of the sun, west of the moon and south of everything else. Covered entirely by an ice sheet, it is the world's highest, driest, coldest and most windswept continent.

It is also the target for a group of Singaporeans who seek to make history under the banner of the 1st Singapore Antarctica Expedition.

The members of this expedition are not new to facing impossible odds. Some of them, such as Swee Chiow and Robert, can tell you about their adventures scaling the highest mountain in the world. They will tell you that adventures of this sort take superhuman effort. You must have mental and physical strength to persevere and succeed. And you must have excellent teamwork, for one man's strength alone is not enough, but together, the team can achieve.

But most of all, each one on the team must have a deep and steadfast commitment to the mission. Each one must have a reason why they must go on, if they are to find the energy and stamina to make it to their goal.

This is the stuff that dreams are made of. Lofty goals, which take us beyond what we think we can do. Seemingly impossible aims, that propel us to conquer greater heights, and venture beyond the safety of familiar boundaries. Great feats begin not with great plans, but with great dreams.

The 1st Singapore Antarctica Expedition Team carries with it the same spirit of "dare to dream" that lifted the Singapore Mt Everest team to success. All of you will remember David Lim, captain of our successful Mount Everest team. His spirit and gumption spurred and guided his teammates to make it to the summit, but he himself was struck with a rare and debilitating disease when they came home. But today, even as he continues to recover from his dreadful illness, he is already dreaming his next pursuit. This unquenchable spirit to go on, to keep on running despite the pain, to keep on climbing despite the falls, to keep on trying despite failures - this is the spirit that we hope to see in the youth of Singapore.

This is why the National Youth Council is fully behind this endeavour of the 1st Antarctica Expedition. We hope that their courage, passion, and "dare to dream" spirit will inspire all youths in Singapore to follow their own dreams, and in their own way climb their own mountains, cross their own seas, walk their own continents.

At this time in our nation's history, as we face an uncertain and foreboding future, we must continue to "dare to dream". We must look beyond our immediate

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circumstances, beyond the obstacles which block our way, and continue to press on to build a stronger economy, and a better life.

Today, we are here to salute 10 extraordinary people who will show us by their pioneering actions what it means to "dare to dream". The team will divide into two groups. One group will attempt to reach the South Pole on foot – something which only a small handful of people has done. The other group will attempt to scale the highest peak on this ice-cold continent – the massive peaks of the Vinson Massif.

Both teams have set themselves another goal - to reach their destinations on January 1, 2000 - the first day of the new Millennium. It is a colossal undertaking, a giant feat matched only by the unfettered fury of the elements they will have to do battle with, in a battle against time.

We need not wish them luck, for it is not luck that will enable them to succeed. But we wish them joy, and courage, and strength of body and spirit, to go on and on, against all odds, to reach the end of their rainbow. We want you, members of the 1st Singapore Antarctica Team, to know that all Singaporeans will be with you in spirit. Your adventure is also our adventure, your journey our journey. You will not be able to hear us, but we will be cheering for you. You will not be able to see us, but we will be lighting a candle, and praying for your safety and success.

On the dawn of the new Millennium, you may be at the bottom of the world, but you can be sure that the rest of us will be looking up to you, as you hold high the torch for Singapore. Bon voyage.

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